

Titus, Fringe 2013, Review

By *Justine Bhundell* - Posted on *11 August 2013*

Venue: [Summerhall](#)

Company: Macrobert

Running time: 50mins

Production: Lu Kemp (director), Macrobert Arts Centre (producer), Emma Jones (lighting designer), Lou Turnbull (technician)

Performers: Joseph Arkley (Titus)

Titus, performed by Joseph Arkley in one of the more intimate Summerhall venues, is quite simply one of the best performances you are likely to see at this year's Fringe. It is an unlikely children's show: no props, no gimmicks, no attention-seeking opportunities. There is just a boy, standing alone on a table, delivering absorbing entertainment that relies solely on the expression of words.

Titus is the vegetarian son of a butcher. He is 10 years old and has climbed up onto the school roof, intending to jump off. With desolate eyes and a quirky humour Titus, through meandering anecdotes, indirectly reveals how he has ended up in this position.

Titus writes on his bedroom walls, talks to pigs, falls in love, gets dumped and shuts himself in his wardrobe for two hours while his dad cries on his bed. He has been told by Dr. Richard Head, who is probably a child psychologist, that there are two types of people: those who look out of the window and see the sunset, and those who close the curtains and switch the light on. Titus is apparently in the latter group. Not in the end.

The script, translated from Jan Sobrie's original by Glasgow-based Oliver Emanuel, is thoughtful and uplifting, poignant without resorting to sentimentality. The performance, directed by Lu Kemp, sucks you in and leaves you breathless.

Aimed at those aged ten years and over, this is an opportunity for young people to glimpse adult theatre at its best. Opportunities like this don't come along very often. I would urge you to seize it while you can.