

Edinburgh Festival Fringe Review: A Slow Air (****)

☒ The fact that the two actors, Kathryn and Lewis Howden, who play the brother and sister in David Harrower's quietly gripping new two-hander are themselves siblings, only adds to the piece's intensity.

It's a tale of everyday family break-up that slowly expands to assume epic proportions. But it never loses the specifics of its location (Edinburgh) and time (now), as you are gradually drawn into its world of long-held grudges, half-remembered quarrels and unbreakable bonds.

Siblings Morna and Athol speak separately, narrating their individual stories that gradually come together as Morna's unseen son Joshua attempts a reconciliation. Harrower's radiant language is at once colloquial and poetic, very much of its place, yet also resonating with a heightened sense of meaning.

Likewise, Kathryn and Lewis Howden's compelling performances are convincingly naturalistic, yet they also seem to speak more widely of human relationships in general. By the play's overwhelming yet unassuming conclusion, you will be hanging on their every word.

[A Slow Air](#), Traverse Theatre, until 21 August, times vary

Here is a video introduction to what else is on at the Traverse during the 2011 Festival Fringe