

Edinburgh International Magic Festival review: Colin McLeod – Sheer Luck? (****)

Young Scottish mind-reader Colin McLeod's often mind-boggling one-off performance at the Edinburgh International Magic Festival took the deductive skills Sherlock Holmes for its inspiration. How the slightest body movements can betray what we're thinking, for example, or how information we're trying to conceal can be extracted with a few seemingly innocuous questions.

But it soon spun off into broader territory, showcasing McLeod's own seriously impressive abilities at prediction, observation and deduction. He's a charismatic yet sincere performer, and he found an ideal balance between being jokey and purposeful. He kept things light and fast-moving, yet his seriousness of purpose drew the audience in immediately and kept us captivated throughout.

There were tantalising glimpses of how he manages to pull off some of his extraordinary feats, especially the simpler ones, but they only made some of McLeod's more astonishing deductions all the more impressive.

Almost all the audience played a part in McLeod's warm and welcoming show – although he was at pains to emphasise that he wouldn't embarrass anybody. Most impressive was a feat in which McLeod guided an unwitting audience member to carry out a seemingly superhuman feat of memory – even now I can't begin to work out how he pulled it off. And the show finished with an astonishing place-switching trick that left everyone scratching their heads.

It's a shame that McLeod's show was a one-off, but you can catch him again as part of [The Colour Ham](#) on Thursday 5 July.

And there are plenty more shows to take in as part of the [Edinburgh International Magic Festival](#), which continues until 6 July.