

Edinburgh Festival Fringe REVIEW – Dandy Darkly's Gory Hole ****



Coming at you – yes, like *that* – from New York City, Dandy Darkly takes to the stage extravagantly made up, in an intricately patterned, sparkling frockcoat. A tiny top hat teetering atop his head, he looks every inch a master of macabre cabaret. His shtick of Southern Gothic and Noo Yawk schlock is well suited to our somewhat camp and certainly spooky city. In the tradition of Deacon Brodie and Burke and Hare, Mr. Darkly and his unhinged characters inhabit a world that seems far removed from the bagpipes skirling on Princes Street, while suggesting the darker secrets of our guildsmen, doctors, teenagers and clergymen.

The Dandy's carefully constructed tales of supernatural sleaze and homosexual horror are filled with wordplay. The "boys and ghouls" in attendance hear the stories of Portly Patton the "bear" skinner, Zachary the Zombie, and Moloch the Masochist, and this Time Out New York-recognized show gets knowing chuckles from the Edinburgh audience when he includes references to Tilda Swinton, Top of the Pops and Graham Norton, as well as NYC's all-knowing matriarch of Project Runway, Tim Gunn.

After a hour-long one-man feat of endurance, in which carefully scripted alliterative allure and rhyme – both internal and outré – are matched to a funhouse of horrors cabaret soundtrack, Dandy Darkly builds to a shuddering, juddering climax of orgiastic transgression before sending his audience home. It was lovely, but he has to go to work tomorrow, you know?

Like the best sex and horror, Dandy Darkly's Gory Hole is equal parts funny, uncomfortable and, in its evocation of contemporary homophobia, "bare-biting", and issues of shame and acceptance, thought provoking. ****

Dandy Darkly's Gory Hole

4-24 August, 8:30pm

SpaceCabaret @ 54, North Bridge

Submitted by [Ricky Brown](#)

