

Edinburgh Festival Fringe REVIEW – Trash Cuisine *****

In this morning's papers, we read of allegations from Guardian Editor, Alan Rusbridger, that GCHQ officers oversaw the destruction of computer hard drives containing material possibly relating to the NSA story being researched at the newspaper. We have also read of the nine hour long detention at Heathrow Airport of David Miranda, the partner of the American reporter who broke the Snowden story. (In a delicious irony, Miranda is the name given to the rule governing an American suspect's right to receive notice of his or her Fifth Amendment rights.) For this reviewer at least it's an absurd, frightening world out there – and around here.

Fortunately, it's Festival time, and we can find distraction all through the town. Our security forces and free press leave us free to do so. But what happens when our security forces are the instrument of oppression and death, and when the press are complicit in this? When this is the case, not just in the former Soviet republics, but in the American Georgia, and as close to home as The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland?

What happens when Belarus Free Theatre use all the tools of theatre, including dance, poetry, Shakespeare, operatic arias, funny impressions and illusion, together with the testimony of witnesses and victims, to bring us face to face with our absurd, frightening world?

In Trash Cuisine, strawberries and cream are things over which executioners can compare war stories. A thread count of 375 indicates the optimal density of towel to be used in waterboarding, as recommended by special forces. Haute cuisine means the succulent torture of tiny birds for our pleasure, in an echo of the torture of a young, innocent, Irish chef in

Belfast.

Belarus Free Theatre has truths to tell, and doesn't flinch from telling them. But during Trash Cuisine, the company never forgets that it can reach the most people by providing a compelling theatrical experience. The result of this juxtaposition is a poetic, provocative and powerful piece of theatre that anyone who wants to be engaged in the human experience should see before the run ends on 26 August.

[You can help Belarus Free Theatre campaign for the release of the bodies of executed and "disappeared" individuals in Belarus, for the release of political prisoners and for an end to the death penalty by signing the petition at freebelarusnow.org/bodies]

Trash Cuisine: 20-26 August at 3:30pm, The Grand at Pleasance Courtyard

Submitted by [Ricky Brown](#)

