

Edinburgh Festival Fringe – The Greenville Ghost ***



The stage, set up in one of C Nova's many studios, is simple. A female receptionist types and calculates behind a desk, dressed with sad table foliage and a melon sat in an otherwise empty fruit bowl as the audience file in. This instant immersion leads to the viewer being engrossed in the situation right away, as if she has been sitting there all day. As the lights dim, a flamboyant male character walks on, and the show begins.

For another night, Charlie and Edith's hotel lies empty, waiting for Greenville's guests to come and stay. Inspired by the morbid fascination the public has with the paranormal, the pair invent a ghost to haunt the hotel's rooms. But as a journalist arrives, eager for a story just as much as they are for guests, the concept soon spirals out of control.

The cast of The Greenville Ghost may be small, but everyone slips into their own roles rather seamlessly, creating a chemistry that works with their characters and not as the camaraderie of a theatre collective. I have no doubt that this group are all good friends, and thus this is a testimony to their rather impressive acting skill. Particular credit must go to Saffia Sage playing Edith, the female hotelier working with her husband who owns her moments, restrained and yet beautifully reactive.

As a production, it relies heavily on its script due to the low budget feel disallowing set changes. This works well, as the focus falls on the writing and not a grandiose set. When it works, The Greenville Ghost is indelibly funny, frantic and boisterous. Where it falters is with the introduction of a

character who stirs up the drama beyond its own constraints.

It ventures into slightly over-reactive territory that, to the audience, looks like improv going slightly sour and deranged. Its conclusion feels slightly underwhelming considering what comes beforehand. Perhaps, however, that's testimony to the production's ability to engross the viewer.

In a time where lies and deceit are often covered by drama, The Greenville Ghost offers a comical take on an ambitious fabrication. It may not be perfect, but a notable cast and a script peppered with wit and satire is more than enough to make this an enjoyable addition to any Fringe line up.

[For tickets, head to the Edinburgh Fringe's 2014 ticket site](#)