

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2016 REVIEW : Marcus Brigstocke – Why The Long Face? ****



The frankness, honesty, humour and sarcasm of Marcus Brigstocke unfolded over the course of sixty thought provoking minutes, when the critically acclaimed comedian took us on a journey of whinging about the little things to try and make the big things go away.

After appearing from underneath the table on stage which hosted a cheeseboard and record player (kids – ask your parents), Brigstocke kicked off proceedings by remarking that as a ‘straight white man’, life is fairly peachy. But why the long face?

Other than being born with it (he likened his above shoulder profile to Beaker from the Muppets and an Easter Island head) the Radio 4 regular embarked upon a mission to share with the audience why he’s mad about the small stuff whilst flipping it round to find out what in fact makes us happy.

Brigstocke extracts narrative from chapters within his 43 years so far – some of which are deeply personal and poignant – whilst looking through the decades of when we are at our most happiest in life, albeit laced with, at times rightfully so, cynicism of the highest order.

Is it during our years as babies when we are cuddled during feeding time? Or as toddlers when can run about with gay abandon dressed in nothing more than a vest? Being a teenager seemed a challenge for happiness with the chemical imbalance

of the journey into youth.

His advice for those in their 30s was wise – ‘don’t have an affair’. It’s a strikingly personal admission that delivers audible silence from the audience as he notes it’s “the worst thing I’ve done”

Alas, Brigstocke enthused, it’s whilst being in your 60s where you are undoubtedly having the best time of your life.

Before then, it’s back to the simple life that he enjoys. His beloved record player and a well stocked cheeseboard. The latter he welcomes his paying public to join him in consuming as they leave the hall.

Witty, thoughtful and warm, Brigstocke may have had his backside battered by the revolving door of life in recent times, but you can sense a feeling of turning the corner and getting back on track whilst doing the thing he loves – making people laugh.

At The Pleasance Courtyard.