

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2016 Review: Hal Cruttenden****

☒ When Hal Cruttenden, a posh, camp sounding (and don't his teenage daughters tease him about it too!) Londoner in his mid-40s, walks on to Straight Outta Compton by NWA, you just sense this is going to be a pretty wacky show.

You wouldn't put Cruttenden down as your average angry rapper dude, however he is fairly furious about a host of things which he explores with gusto, including his delightfully perceptive and painfully truthful analysis of people who dramatise their lives on social media. (is that you then Mark? Ed.)

One can't help but to have a degree of sympathy for Cruttenden's long-suffering Northern Irish wife of 16 years though who is subject to his rapier wit throughout the show.

Cruttenden's tales bring laughs aplenty including how, as a republican, he was asked to appear on the Royal Variety Performance. Well, you know, he has a career to think about...

There aren't many subject matters that are off limits, including the death of his mother a couple of years ago. She passed away close to Christmas time a couple of years ago, which, Cruttenden notes to a cluster of sharp intakes of audience breath, was tragic as she was a late shopper!

As is the want of a comedian, the show also contains audience interaction. Which isn't for the faint hearted, so if you don't want to run the risk of being one of his victims, don't sit near the stage.

Tuesday night's show was however marred by people drifting in

and out of their seats. At one point it felt like I'd gone to a football game with those in front sneaking out ahead of half time for a pie and Bovril. Except there is no interval and it's only an hour for goodness sake.

"I hope there's no-one here to review tonight," bemoaned a beleaguered Cruttenden. There was and I felt your pain, sir.

Hal Cruttenden is on at Pleasance Courtyard until 28th August. Tickets [here](#)