

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2017 – Binge Culture

Performance alchemists Binge Culture are a New Zealand based group of artists who are working to renew theatre for the information age by giving spectators real stakes in their experiences.

✘ What if you could step through a ‘digital looking glass’ and encounter your city as if for the first time? Binge Culture’s Ancient Shrines and Half Truths is an immersive outdoor audio-based theatrical experience which invites the audience to explore a seemingly innocuous urban area as a privileged outsider.

Based on a simple user-triggered app interface participants take the role of travellers seeking to ‘belong everywhere’, exploring a park and pursuing authentic experiences (before they become too popular). Each traveller carries an audio device through which they are guided by a cultural insider.

Real world elements, binaural soundscapes, actors, and objects installed around town intersect with the narration to blur the line between fiction and reality. In development for two years and premiering in Edinburgh, this show is a truly unique experience – a cross between En Route, Sleep No More and The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy. The adventure starts at Summerhall, but who knows where your journey will take you.

Break Up (We Need to Talk) is five hours of desperation, negotiation and emotional blackmail, improvised non-stop by five performers playing two characters having one very difficult conversation.

Dressed in banana suits, the durational aspect of the performance soon takes its toll, with the consequence of exhaustion and miscommunication lending itself to hilarious

and often unnervingly real moments of frustration and relationship manoeuvring.

Spectators can come and go from this event throughout the evening – or stay until everything is worked through, and are invited to live tweet commentary to #bingebreakup. Those who can't make it to the theatre can follow the anguish on Twitter. Break Up first premiered in NZ Fringe 2014, where it was “Highly Commended” at NZ Fringe Awards and praised as “a unique and powerful experience” (Theatreview).

Binge Culture was established in 2008, and is one of New Zealand's leading performance experimentalists. Highlights include performing at La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club in New York, and working with local communities throughout New Zealand to perform as Whales. The Edinburgh contingent consists of Joel Baxendale, Fiona McNamara, Ralph Upton, Rachel Baker and Oliver Devlin.

✘ Ancient Shrines and Half Truths is at Summerhall, Edinburgh Fringe – August 2-27 (not 7, 14, 15 & 21) at 15:15 and 18:15. [Tickets here](#).

Break Up (We Need to Talk) is at Summerhall Basement, Edinburgh Fringe – August 7, 14 & 21 at 18:00. [Tickets here](#).