

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2017 – The Alien Chicken Remembers Galatea ***

The Alien Chicken Remembers Galatea is inspired by John Lyly's pastoral comedy, Galatea. Lyly's Galatea follows two maidens, disguised as boys and sent away to escape Neptune's monster, to Diana's Woods. They fall in love, not realising their mutual secret until it's too late. Mofsec's deconstruction focuses on a society that systemically sacrifices young women to Gods and their monsters and where women have limited options for survival, none without a cost. Using female-focused storytelling, Mofsec challenges their ensemble to peel back the layers of oppression and systemic violence that impact all genders.

[Mofsec](#) have created a comedic adaptation of an Elizabethan comedy that is a biting indictment of blindly following societal rules. While the original is set around Lincolnshire village and features Greek deities, [The Alien Chicken Remembers Galatea](#) is set on a planet governed by large corporations that expect the population to sacrifice fair, beautiful and talented young women for the 'greater good' and their common survival. There are lovely moments of black comedy throughout; I particularly enjoyed the priestess overseeing the sacrifice as if it was a TV talent show.

Hebe's reaction to not meeting the grade was also well handled and humorous.

☒ The cast deliver a very good performance throughout the play, especially during a final scene that's skilfully choreographed. The company's male actor deserves specific praise for his part in the scene, where he has to deliver a large part of its physical aspects.

One trouble I had with the production is the inclusion of two songs. While admittedly no fan of musicals, I thought both were unnecessary but at least the first one fitted the play's action and worked.

The chorus delivered wonderful close harmonies though, which made it less intolerable. The second song, featuring Galatea, was overlong and featured the type of histrionics female singers have felt necessary over the last thirty years. The actor has a good voice but not the range to pull off the quivering the performance includes.

I don't blame her for that, but rather the director; I also think a soliloquy would have worked better. I wish companies would include in their descriptions that a play is a musical; then again, if Mofsec had I might have given this show a swerve.

Despite my minor grumbles, I'm glad I didn't.