

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2017 – The Giant Jam Sandwich

The picture book that generations of parents and children still refer to as their all-time favourite, THE GIANT JAM SANDWICH, is coming to the Edinburgh Festival as a first ever British stage adaptation.

After a hugely successful national tour earlier this year, this madcap production with an original score by composer James Atherton, the show will run for a month at the Pleasance Courtyard.

It must have been a cathartic process for Derbyshire born author John Vernon Lord, a man who is allergic to wasps, to write his bestseller, The Giant Jam Sandwich. Now in its 45th year, readers of all ages have been enthralled by this timeless tale of a village community's inventive plan to trap a swarm of wasps in an enormous sandwich.

Having been endlessly translated and adapted for radio, television and large scale orchestra, it had not been adapted for the stage until earlier this year. This new stage adaptation by New Perspectives' Artistic Director – Jack McNamara – toured venues in England following its premier at the Derby Guildhall back in February.

Bursting with humour for adults and children alike, New Perspectives' production evokes the vivid brilliance of the original illustrations whilst expanding the story with original songs by James Atherton and a host of new characters.

John Vernon Lord is among the production's fans, commenting: "I enjoyed it from beginning to end...a very clever way of extending the

story.”

The play’s adapter and director, Jack McNamara, said : “When we saw the excited reactions of children and parents to this production on tour we knew we had to bring it to Edinburgh. It has a real festival energy about it and seems to really mean something to people of very different ages”.

While aimed at audiences 3+, the production doesn’t shy away from some challenging themes, including the moral dilemma of trapping wasps, the marital problems of one of its characters and even a short scene that hints at the current Brexit situation.

Jack continues: “It feels wrong in the 21st century to tell a story about an invasion of outsiders without exploring the complexity of what that means. So in our production we decided to give our wasps a voice, to hear their side of the story, and children have completely appreciated that. The style of the original book is beautifully messy and human and we wanted to capture that in our production, rather than sanitise it.”

The show is at the Pleasance Above at the Pleasance Courtyard, from 2 – 28 August at 10.20am daily.