

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2019 – Bobby & Amy

From Fringe First award-winner Emily Jenkins (*Rainbow*, Edinburgh Fringe; *Cookies*, Theatre Royal Haymarket) comes *Bobby & Amy*, a dark comedy about friendship, heartache and the repercussions of foot-and-mouth disease. Starring Will Howard (*The Archers*, BBC Radio 4) and Kimberley Jarvis (*Lear's Daughters*, Cambridge alumni Footfall Theatre), this powerful new play asks what happens when our way of life is threatened by those who don't understand it.

It's the late nineties: Take That, Tamagotchis, Dib Dabs and Pog Swaps. When 13 year old Bobby and Amy meet, hundreds of cows dot the fields and the sun always shines. But when foot-and-mouth disease hits the farming communities in rural England and the cows begin to burn, Bobby and Amy's sleepy Cotswold town faces a catastrophe that will change their home forever.

In February 2001, foot-and-mouth was discovered at an Essex

abattoir and it quickly spread across the UK. The highly infectious disease plunged the agricultural industry into its worst crisis for decades with over six million cows and sheep killed in an eventually successful attempt to halt the disease. However, the devastation the outbreak left behind lasted much longer with rural life being permanently eroded and areas of the country torn apart.

Having grown up in the countryside, writer Emily Jenkins has strong memories of the horrors of foot-and-mouth disease – the smell of burning and disinfectant and the bright yellow tape strung across every gate and sty. Communities were irrevocably changed by the outbreak and many farming villages have never been able to return to how things were. But, as well as looking at this catastrophe, *Bobby & Amy* is also a celebration of British agriculture, small rural communities and the huge amount they contribute to the wider world. Currently 71% of the land in the UK is being used for farming (it was a great deal more in 2000) which provides over 500,000 jobs to this country.

***Bobby & Amy* plays at Pleasance Courtyard (Upstairs) as part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The show runs from 31st July – 26th August (not 12th) at 12:45pm. Find out more and book tickets [here](#).**

