

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2023 – Machine Man Spectacle

Shahar Marom told us about his Fringe show, the Machine Man Spectacle at the Hill Street Theatre.

He explains: “ I try to answer seven questions by using seven machines that were built especially for that purpose: Why do we look for fame? Can we live with our mistakes? Why can't we laugh about death? What gives us pleasure? Are we substance or spirit? Can we confront our biggest fear? Will we ever return after dying or transforming?

:These questions must have really bugged me for a long time, because one night I dreamt about seven machines and a lonely machine man who operates them to get seven answers.

“This show is very personal to me and filled with mystery and risks. It takes a lot of me to maintain it, but since I haven't yet found my answers, I gladly put the effort into it.

“Working on it almost killed me. While planning the spirit-or-matter machine I almost broke my neck due to bad planning, and one time I lost the remote control to the machine that hangs me upside down from the ceiling and thought people would find me dead in the morning.

“It's still full of risks – I literally have four opportunities to die or injure myself during each show, so I have to wake up at 5am every day to maintain a strict workout routine so I won't lose my leg while hanging upside-down, fall off of a spinning board or break my ankle on stilettos. I also

learned many physical things for it – tap dancing and circus among other things.

“Like the Machine Man, the show also comes to life and dies each time. The set has to be rebuilt once a show ends (I’ll be doing this twice a day in Edinburgh). Some of its props are only good for one go, like a plaster head that I smash (I already sent the mold to Hill Street theatre, where I’ll be performing, so they can make enough of them ahead of time). And since It’s based on audience involvement and there’s a different audience each time – no two shows are alike.

“Machines are becoming a bigger part of life every day. I love machines, and I think that on stage they’re dramatic heroes. But they are meaningless without a mind behind them. Or at least, they can’t reach their full potential without that human touch.

“The Machine Man is lonely and very naive. He really searches for answers through these unique machines, but he needs the audience to take part in order to operate them. It’s only through this human connection that his journey is possible.

“The audience is the most important part of my show. They are the ones who allow me to begin the show, they are the ones who operate the machines, they are the ones who help me end it and they are my real directors and guides. I wait for the audience on stage with a bucket on my head, and the show can’t begin unless someone volunteers to remove it. I have no way of removing it myself.

“Interaction with an audience on stage is the whole essence of the show, and I I love the different reactions. Some love it so much and really get into the scene and start cooperating and it’s simply magic. I had people confess all kinds of things on stage. I also had people write to me after the show with their thoughts and asking follow-up questions and these became very interesting correspondences.

“The audience also helps me figure out what I need to change or do better. The last thing I want to do is embarrass someone or make them feel like a fool and I worked very hard on how to make them comfortable, so every feedback I get on this is gold to me. But this goes for other aspects in the show as well.”

The [Machine Man Spectacle](#) will be performed in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival during August 19th, 20th, 24th, 25th, 26th at 23:50 PM, and August 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th at 10:00 AM, at Venue 41: Hill St. Theatre – Alba Theatre, 19 Hill Street, EH2 3JP.

For tickets: <https://tickets.edfringe.com/whats-on/machine-man-spectacle>



PHOTO Eyai Radushizki



PHOTO Ela Kehat