



# CORR BLIMEY

REVIEWS, NEWS & EVENTS ACROSS SCOTLAND

HOME · REVIEWS · NEWS · FRINGE · ABOUT · CONTACT



## BULL – THE SPACE @ NIDDRY ST.

August 16, 2019  
Leave a comment



Written by Mike Bartlett

Directed by Adam Tomkins

Runs at The Space @ Niddry St until August 24th (not 18th), 17.20pm

Bullying doesn't stop when you hit adulthood – they just change up the tactics. With such a fine line between workplace harassment and genuine levels of manipulation, Mike Bartlett's *Bull* examines the insane power of the spoken word, the ferociousness of human fulfilment and elements of elitist office politics.

'A *cull*', that's how *Bull* refers to the difficult decision of ending someone's employment. Eradication of the weak or even just the unfortunate? Three employees Tony, Isobel & Thomas await their fate. For Tony & Isobel, the choice is clear, Thomas has to go, and they will ensure he does.

Ravenous, though slick in their attack, both Tony and Isobel bring different tactics in a way to psych Thomas out, tripping over his insecurities. Tony, from the outset, is disgustingly smooth – a viper, coiling, biding its time. Jamie Stewart's control is enviable, loathsome, treacherous and sneaky.

Teetering on the edge of capturing the role perfectly, genuine hate though eludes in moments. They're a little too funny, too human to spit venom at. Certainly not from lack of trying, it takes Isobel a touch longer for us to begin to antagonise her, as Nayia Anastasiadou's performance seems irritable rather than calculating, it's only in the closing moments we gain a sense of the terror beneath, drawing blood with smirks.

Bartlett's text is a staple of not only the Fringe but performing arts. Relentless in its aggressive demonstration of power play, it's about tearing someone down onstage, yet still making your audience laugh. Its characters are sickening, manipulative, but hilarious. That is, except for Thomas.

Thomas is, in use of gross terminology, the 'beta' male. Far from innocent, one must note the misery in his performance, pathetic is a tricky angle – at the risk of having yourself, a performer, seen this way rather than your character. Ignoring this, giving Thomas a distinctly pitiful, but far from heroic portrayal, Jake McGarry finds a balance in which you want to run onto the stage and slap him into fighting back.

Adam Tomkins' direction pits the three in chess-like manoeuvres. Every movement's methodical, a counteract from another character's step. There's a dance element to it, elegant in their dedication to locking their prey into each trap set.

A fascinating look into the length's people will go to for self-preservation, *Bull* is an eye-opening dark comedy which pushes the envelope in its characters likability. A series of humorous, though perhaps too identifiable performances make Arbery productions a must-see for those searching for an intelligent laugh while exploring the vices of human nature.



Tickets available from: <https://tickets.edfringe.com/whats-on/bull-1>

SHARE TO SUPPORT:



- SEARCH -

Search ...

- RECENT REVIEWS -

August 2019

July 2019

June 2019

May 2019

April 2019

March 2019

- FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER -

Tweets by @Corr\_Blimey\_

**Corr Blimey** @Corr\_Blimey\_  
A Crown of Laurels ripples communities in a way often untouched. Tackling the history and glorification of sexual abuse in Arts history. #edfringe2019corrblimey.blog/2019/08/12/a-c...

**A Crown of Laurels – Paradise in ...**  
Written & Directed by Ryan Hay Co...  
corrblimey.blog

**Corr Blimey Retweeted**  
**Dominic Corr** @Dominic\_Corr91  
Deer Woman carves its story into the bone and sinews it exposes, brutal theatre. @theweereview #edfringe2019 #CanadaHubtheweereview.com/review/deer-wo...

**Deer Woman | Review...**  
Review of Deer Woma...  
theweereview.com

**Corr Blimey** @Corr\_Blimey\_  
Where family legacy collides with myths, stunningly produced.  
★★★★★  
STYX @ZOOvenues #EdFringe19  
[https://twitter.com/Dominic\\_Corr91/status/1161977921130639362](https://twitter.com/Dominic_Corr91/status/1161977921130639362)

**Corr Blimey Retweeted**  
**Dominic Corr** @Dominic\_Corr91  
Finally got around to Burgerz @traverse theatre.  
This isn't a pat on the back for the middle-class, cisgender white people who 'get' this production. This is a relentless, unforgiving future of performing arts.  
★★★★★  
[#edfringethereviewshub.com/burgerz-traver...](https://www.edfringethereviewshub.com/burgerz-traver...)

**Burgerz – Traverse Theatre, Edin...**  
Written by Travis Alabanza Directed...  
thereviewshub.com