



# Adelaide Theatre Guide

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## **BELT UP THEATRE'S 'THE BOY JAMES'**

### **C.I.T. in Association with Jethro Compton Ltd**

Adelaide College of the Arts – Tiny Lounge

Until 18 March 2012

Review by Jamie Wright

In the same tiny space as they perform "Outland" – a Lewis Carroll inspired work – and using the same concept of having the audience sit surrounding the performers, Belt Up Theatre draw on another classic fantasy author for "The Boy James": "Peter Pan" creator JM Barrie.

A boy (Jethro Compton) is waiting for his friend James (Dominic Allen) to arrive so they can go on an adventure together; while he waits he engages the audience in a parlour game. Then the girl (Serena Manteghi) – who the boy met in the park and invited to join them – appears. But when James arrives, he informs the boy there are to be no more adventures, though he doesn't explain exactly why, only alluding to a loss – an explanation that does not satisfy the boy, who gets angry – and that's when it all starts to go wrong.

Dominic Allen directs this very dark, thematic and at times confronting work, which features sudden shifts in pace and mood, as well as long moments of silence – enough to make the audience uneasy. The performances are excellent, with both Compton and Manteghi both almost unnervingly convincing as children.

An unsettling, thought-provoking and imaginative work from a theatre company to keep an eye on; here's hoping they'll make the Adelaide Fringe a regular destination.

Rating: 4 stars (out of 5)