

British Theatre Guide

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Adolf Hitler: My Part in His Downfall

Spike Milligan, adapted by Ben Power and Tim Carroll
Darlington Civic Theatre and touring
(2010)

Adapted from six volumes of his wartime memoirs by Ben Power and Tim Carroll, Spike Milligan's *Adolf Hitler: My Part In His Downfall* chronicles his experiences between September 1939 and March 1944. Rather than being performed as a play, it adopts the format of an ENSA-type revue with whimsical sketches, monologues, and musical numbers.

This is effective to the extent that the audience is treated to gems from the era including Lily Marlène, I've Got A Gal In Kalamazoo, Chattanooga Choo Choo and Pennies From Heaven.

The cast of five - Sholto Morgan (Spike), Dominic Gerrard (Edgington) William Findley (Goldsmith), David Morley Hale (Kidgell) and Matthew Devereaux (MC) - are certainly a talented bunch and they perform with vigour and enthusiasm. Indeed, Sholto Morgan in his first professional role demonstrates a great deal of future promise.

The humour, as you might guess, veers towards the surreal and, often, downright zany - having said that, much of it passed me by. I should probably have known it would. After all, Milligan is the comedy hero of a twit who talks to his plants and prefers a woman who looks like Audrey Roberts from *Coronation Street* to the beauty of the late Diana, Princess of Wales. I fear for the future of the monarchy!

The transitions between sketches are anything but slick and there is much moving of props by very visible stage hands, which tends to detract from one's possible engagement with the piece. A further annoyance and distraction came from four people in the row in front of me whose sole purpose was to rustle and crinkle sweet wrappers continually and disturb everyone else in the vicinity, rather than to watch the show.

Not even the exaggerated promise of bad language, themes of an adult nature and nudity were enough to get me through this dismal production.

Philip Fisher [reviewed](#) this production at Hampstead. It was also [reviewed](#) by Peter Lathan in Newcastle.

Reviewer: [Steve Burbridge](#)