

British Theatre Guide

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Murder by Misadventure

Edward Taylor

Phil & Ben Productions

Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham

29 July–2 August 2025

Things can get nasty when partners fall out, so when those partners are specialists in murder, well...

But for all the thrills—and there are more devious last-minute twists than in a Trump trade policy—there are as many laughs in Edward Taylor's larky, witty murder mystery that kept me guessing to the final curtain.

And talking of curtains, it looked earlier like that could have been it for either of the TV thriller-writing duo, George Telfer as the possibly too insouciant schemer Harry, or Pete Ashmore as the gleefully wicked-minded Paul. The two have fallen out because Harry wants, wouldn't you know, to write a stage play on his own, but Paul needs him to turn his undeveloped ideas into marketable hits.

The piece is a slightly tongue-in-cheek celebration of a great British stage tradition, and a variation on the locked room scenario. In true trooper style, Simon Pothecary as the inspector calls after the interval—sardonic manner, white raincoat and down-country accent, you know the type—while Katy Dean as Harry's glamorous leather-clad wife tries to hide the evidence.

It may be the table-turning ending that audiences will remember, but the play's success is built on wonderful dialogue that establishes the main characters early on. "Persuade is such an ugly word, let's just call it blackmail," says one. To which his adversary helpfully offers to "restore some blood in your alcohol stream."

Julie Godfrey's set exactly matches the mood of a stylish 1980s apartment with trendy pictures and a sea view, the only ill-judged effect being some cartoonish plastic bloodstains stuck on the glass doors that seem almost to cry out SPLAT!

Reviewer: [Colin Davison](#)