

British Theatre Guide

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Pip Utton - Adolf

Pip Utton

The Assembly Rooms

6–13 August 2013



Pip Utton is celebrating his 20th year on the Fringe with two of his most successful shows that seem, by their titles, to complement one another perfectly: [Churchill](#) and just two performances of *Adolf*.

For the latter show, the audience enters between two banks of seating with a huge Nazi banner in front of them, and one of the venue's staff sends some to the left and some to the right. This may be accidental, but it is still a chilling reminder of how the Nazis filtered out those who were useful from those who were expendable.

It begins just as you would expect for a one-man show on the Fringe with this title. Hitler is preparing for the end, speaking to his most loyal servants and advising them how to escape if they do not wish to die in the bunker with him. Sometimes this is done as an intimate chat, and sometimes he is spotlit with reverb on his voice and the familiar Hitler gestures as though he is addressing a rally.

This is all fine but not particularly exciting or enlightening and a bit confusing at times as to where and when we are. However a huge change comes about in the middle of the piece. Utton steps out of character and becomes, it seems, himself, talking to the audience as a stand-up comic. However the jokes start to gain an edge that should make the audience feel uncomfortable, from *Daily Mail* xenophobia through 70s comedy racism and the sorts of comments you may often hear in the pub or the taxi.

Some didn't quite understand what he was doing and walked out, so Utton found it necessary to stop the show and explain that he was playing a character and not recruiting for the BNP, after which no one else found it necessary to leave.

It's clever and subtle enough for some people to make that mistake, although I thought he could possibly have gone further. We have the so-called Scottish Defence League marching this weekend, and I'm sure that Utton's comments are very tame compared to what they will be shouting at the Scottish Parliament and at the anti-fascist demonstrators.

But the idea is great and it works well, even if the final line was killed a bit by the ring of a mobile 'phone (for the second time—the same person's 'phone). It has already finished for this year, but is certainly worth catching if it comes around again.

Reviewer: [David Chadderton](#)