

HOW TO STARVE AN ARTIST - Rose Condo

Creativity needs nurturing and by the end of Rose Condo's wonderfully inspiring Spoken Word show, the audience feels positively pampered.

The Canadian poet and 2021 Buxton Fringe Award winner strikes a rather bitter tone at the beginning as her eloquent, hard-hitting poem of the same title as her show outlines the many ways in which society can 'denigrate dreams' and 'stifle inquisitive minds' from an early age.

But this event is fundamentally optimistic and individuals also bear some responsibility for the health of their artistic souls. People need to feel safe to feel creative and Rose is adept at fostering just such an atmosphere. This is a show with treats both edible and otherwise. I won't tell you what exactly as I would love you to feel the same childish surprise and delight that I did.

It is clever really how this show comes to feel all about us when it is full of Rose's own delightful, witty and accessible poetry, which is woven into her chatty anecdotes without pomp or ceremony. She shares poems about her habit of saying sorry, her misadventures in charity shops and even her breasts (which need support just like the rest of us). And as we might have expected there are poems about looking out for others, whether it is cooking for friends or trying to help people sleeping rough with their longings for 'walls and ceilings to house feelings'.

Each of her shows also feature a guest, the first boasting poet Tina Sederholm, who appeared at last year's Fringe with *This is Not Therapy* and whose friendly style perfectly complemented Rose's.

The audience for the first show was sadly small but more of us deserve this kind of pampering - and would be more productive for it - so do check out her other performances on the 19th (featuring singer Hannah Brine) and the 20th (with poet Kieren King). There is also a chance to buy her anthologies which are as chatty and reassuring as she is in person.

Stephanie Billen

