

## Miss Julie



*Midsummer delight*

**Venue** Number 7. **New Town Theatre, Freemasons' Hall, 96 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 3DH.**  
**28 August 13:10 (1 hour 5 minutes).** **Suitability: 12+.**

An absolutely captivating production of one of Strindberg's best-loved plays. The casting is a little more senior than is usual but that's of no import - Louise Seyffert's feisty and troubled Miss Julie is the perfect foil to arrogant servant Jean (Bart Vanlaere - outstanding). The lesser but essential part of Kristin, Jean's God-fearing fiancée, is also excellently played by Robin Steegman.

The story unfolds in the servant's quarters of an aristocratic mansion somewhere in 19th-century Sweden. It's Midsummer Night, a time when Swedes traditionally let their hair down. But in Strindberg's hands, this night of celebration is revealed to have an ugly side - witchcraft, trolls and mind-altering potions all come into play. Miss Julie, a woman with a scandalous reputation, wanders in and allows herself to be seduced by Jean. And then, for Act 2, matters take a decidedly dark turn as the power dynamics are switched.

It's delicious seeing Jean's transformation from obedient servant to domineering bully and, as a metaphor for the abused underclass, he's perfect. 'You spat at me,' he shouts. 'Don't be surprised if I wipe it off on you.' Strindberg probably didn't have texting hoodies looting flatscreen TVs in mind when he penned his masterpiece, but the issues he explores are still sadly relevant today.

All round, a fabulous production and one of the best pieces of theatre I've seen at this year's Fringe.

*[Ian Winterton]*