

PRESS FOR THE DEATH OF BRIAN:
A ZOMBIE ODYSSEY

The Death of Brian takes its subject surprisingly seriously, presenting the start of the ghoulish apocalypse from the flesh-eater's point of view with both mordant humor and an unexpected depth of feeling.

Under the direction of K. Brian Neel, Coates gives a gut-munching master class in physical commitment, baring himself (literally and figuratively) as he beats himself senseless, suffers shock therapy, zips himself into a body bag, and hobbles around on a shattered ankle.

If, like me, you've seen Dawn of the Dead a couple dozen times, you definitely don't want to miss this emotional intestine-eating epic.

-Seth Kubersky, *Orlando Weekly*



From Seattle's theater simple comes Ricky Coates' grizzly one-man tour de force! As the typical Brian who finds his world unravelling due to his new "medical condition," Coates prowls the stage like a cross between a Balanchine dancer and a feral animal; turning this gory story into a surprising tale of self-actualization, due to Coates' thoughtful and thought-provoking script and his winning on-stage presence. Never has an audience cheered on an impending apocalypse more!

-Todd O'Dowd, *l'etoile Magazine*

This was an exceptionally well-performed, entertaining and grisly story of one man's difficult passage through the land of the undead. Although most of the zombie business feels a bit tired by now, this show is so energetic, physical and visceral that it feels remarkably fresh and original. Ricky Coates has incredible range, great dramatic focus and amazing physical vitality. He carries us in a very irresistible manner through the travels of a young man who has been involved in a terrible accident, only to awake dead in a hospital with a terrible hunger for surgically excised body parts and those who might carry them still intact. The show passes very rapidly and is engaging throughout. Even at its most gruesome there is always an element of pleasure in the sheer energy of the performance. Director K. Brian Neel has done a terrific job of balancing the likable and the terrible and gotten a smartly effective, wonderfully vivid performance out of this excellent talent.

-Jerry Kraft, *seattleactor.com*

For a play about a zombie, Ricky Coates' frenetic one-man romp has plenty of life. We meet his Brian as something of a zombie already, a tired salary man his boss accurately describes as a "good cow." Not for long. After a car accident, Brian's slide into the undead world unfolds in the fragments between his blackouts as he evades a curious doctor and begins to find a strange new freedom in his newfound taste for flesh.

There's no denying this actor's energy and commitment to the role. Horror is a tough thing to achieve onstage, and he gets the gasps he's going for by gulping bits of raw egg (a gateway drug of sorts), among other things. The humorous moments hit their mark as well, with Coates contorting fearlessly through fight scenes and revelations. A mix of fright, philosophy and humor, it's compelling just to watch one man pull it all off.

-Tod Caviness, *Orlando Sentinel*

Brian is dead. Sort of. He's definitely naked, and...what is that he's eating?!

The Death of Brian is a one-man zombie show, told from the point of view of an infected, reanimated zombie corpse. I happen to love zombies, so this was an easy sell for me.

However, never mind the deliciously gruesome subject matter. As a play...well, it's believable. And that's high-praise for a one man zombie-themed character drama. It's surprisingly easy to feel a real connection with Brian, even as he is ravaging the corpses of the homeless, or stuffing medical waste down his gullet.

There is a certain amount of gratuitous shock-value elements. But after all, it's a zombie show. And the shock and the gore is half the fun.

...And as I'm sure zombie-Brian would agree, why chew the scenery if you could chew some intestines instead?

-Fringe Review Canada

That writer and performer Ricky Coates is a bit of genius in a slick and muscled body is without question. From the second he first shambles onstage and clicks on the TV — faking us into thinking he's dead — the control of his body is successfully crucial to telling his story.

It's quite a fun ride as Brian Smith suddenly finds himself dead, perhaps the world's first zombie. But he's a fully sentient one, turning doglike only in moments of gastronomical passion, eating, say, a transplant heart in the hospital, or the finger of an aggressor.

I won't wreck anything. This is worth a look, especially if you're into the zombie genre, which so fits the selfie age with its idea that we are both the monster and, as individuals, better than the monsters who look like us.

—Fish Griwkowsky, ***Edmonton Journal***