

# The Return of Sherlock Holmes

August 25, 2021 | By [Hugh Simpson](#) | [Reply](#) [More](#)

★★★★☆ Genuine

Gilded Balloon Teviot (Venue 14): *Thurs 5– Sun 29 Aug 2021*

Review by *Hugh Simpson*

***The Return of Sherlock Holmes* is an enjoyable and convincing entertainment at Gilded Balloon Teviot and another convincing literary adaptation from Nigel Miles-Thomas and Fringe Management.**

It has long been a personal bugbear that 95 per cent of stage adaptations of Holmes seem to be 'original' explorations of the characters. These usually extrapolate wildly from the sources, rely on cliché, and produce explicit analyses of themes that are already in the stories if you can be bothered to look.



Nigel Miles-Thomas and Michael Roy Andrew as Holmes and Watson. Pic: Fringe Management

While some of these are successful, others are a waste of time, and at least one is a definite candidate for the oddest thing I have ever seen on a professional stage. When so many items in the canon are bursting with dramatic possibility, it seems a waste.

Congratulations, then, to Fringe Management for producing a two-hander that is taut, effective and thoroughly rooted in Conan Doyle. As the title suggests, this is derived from the story where Holmes returns from his presumed demise at the hands of Moriarty, *The Adventure of the Empty House* – the Honourable Ronald Adair, Colonel Sebastian Moran and all.

Faithful to the source, this adaptation is consistently involving, although a little talk-heavy, with the real action happening offstage. In true Fringe style, staging is minimal, with too many entrances and exits and some less than convincing use of props.

[genuine rapport](#)

It is in the performances that this production really triumphs. Michael Roy Andrew's Watson holds the stage alone for the first few minutes, and his decent, thoroughly human performance is a winning one. Miles-Thomas, meanwhile, makes the most of his huge stature as a towering Holmes, relishing the character's flair for the dramatic. While it is an appealing characterisation, he does not shirk from showing the less attractive sides of the persona.

~~There is also a genuine rapport between the two, and it is easy to believe that this is an old~~

The script's departures from Conan Doyle are generally excusable, although that famous line that never actually appears in the books – you know the one I mean – does make more than one appearance.

Conan Doyle was apt to self-deprecatingly say (supposedly quoting a 'Cornish boatman') that although Holmes may not have been killed on the Reichenbach Falls, he was never quite the same man afterwards. While the writer may have been reluctant to bring the great detective back, we are all glad he did, and there are enough gems in the later stories to give the lie to the statement.

The source material for this production is definitely one of those gems, and it is done justice here in a pacy adaptation.

**Running time 55 minutes (no interval)**

Gilded Balloon Teviot (Dining Room), Teviot Row House, EH8 9AJ (Venue 14)

Thursday 5 – Sunday 29 August 2021

Daily at 2.30 pm; Sat 21, 28 and Sun 22, 29 also at 1.00 pm

Information and tickets at <https://tickets.edfringe.com/whats-on/return-of-sherlock-holmes>

Company Website: <https://fringemanagement.co.uk>

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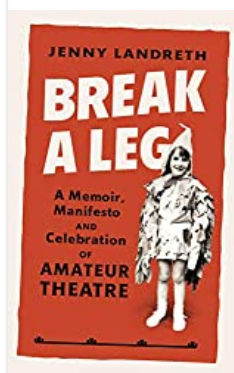
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