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Dispatches from The Fringe - Visceral, vulnerable, The Sh*t is sheer brilliance

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The Sh*t
Silvia Gallerano

The Sh*t

Rating: ★★★★★

The sound of a woman murmuring, in what appears to be gibberish, hits you as you enter the Demonstration Room at [Summerhall](#). Inside, seated on a small platform set on a pedestal about four feet off the ground, Silvia Gallerano sits naked with only a microphone. Her body twists as her voice struggles to get the strangled sounds out. People avoid making eye contact as they move to their seats. But Gallerano's presence fills the room, giving them nowhere to hide. She is going to be seen and heard and nothing is going to stop her.

In *The Sh*t*, written by Cristian Ceresoli, sexual and social politics meet in the naked female body seen as a site of pleasure and disgust, a mask, a metaphor and a source of strength and courage. The story of a young actress with a body issue getting ready to audition for a commercial serves as the central idea around which many more are interwoven. The desire to make it big, to be seen and approved of, and the lengths she will go to achieve this function as metaphors around which images of rapist dolphins and octopus' eating their own flesh inform a harrowing commentary. Being subjected to male abuse becomes self-abuse and, ultimately, a form of national tyranny.

In *The Sh*t* language becomes a force and the voice a tool which laughs, cries, sings, shouts, screams and whispers in an effort to create and express meaning. Alone, perched precariously at times on her pedestal, Gallerano twists and kicks as she delivers a powerhouse performance. *The Sh*t* is theatre pared right back to its basics, a body in performance. This is skin in the tradition of Artaud and it is powerful, politically and poetic.

*The Sh*t* runs nightly at Summerhall until August 26th. Doors open at 9.15 p.m. Admission is £10.00



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