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# Dispatches from The Fringe – A Sad Sam Bites The Dust

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Sad Sam Lucky by Matija Ferlin

Nada Zgank

## Sad Sam Lucky by Matija Ferlin

Rating: ★★★★★

Described as a physical response to one of the Balkan's leading avant-garde authors, Srećko Kosovel, *Sad Sam Lucky*, by Croatian artist Matija Ferlin, produced by Emanat, promised a raw, physical, explosive performance that was visually stunning. The third in a Sad Sam trilogy, *Sad Sam Lucky* was indeed physical, even explosive on occasion. But unfortunately it was little else and certainly not visually stunning.

*Sad Sam Lucky* fell loosely into three segments. The first, a series of short, physical routines, each preceded by pages being stapled to a wooden table before a series of repetitive movements were executed, with Ferlin often speaking with his back to the audience or moving, dragging or flipping the table. The second saw a series of spoken word pieces delivered by Ferlin standing over the stapled pages, their comic absurdity reminiscent of early Steve Martin routines,

generating only speckles of laughter for the most part. The final segment, a turbulent dance as the auditorium was bombarded with loud music, saw Ferlin race, flip and roll about the dust strewn stage while engaging with the table with unimaginative predictability. Yes there was energy, raw physicality and turbulent intensity, but it just wasn't enough, for visually, *Sad Sam Lucky* was unimaginative and the dance sequences unexciting.

There were some interesting ideas at play on occasion. Religious motifs suggested possibilities, a crucifix, the smell of incense, prayers, but these were never fully explored. Ferlin's constant referring to his pages before each performance gave the sense of multiple performances being created within the overall performance. This created a heightened sense of the artificiality of performance, particularly text based performance. But this soon proved to be a one trick pony with the device being used constantly throughout.

A jack of all trades, Ferlin's multi-disciplinary, *Sam Sad Lucky* was not all it might have been. Having neither the rigour of dance nor the creative inventiveness of performance art, *Sad Sam Lucky* felt like a durational piece on occasion, despite being only a little over an hour in length. Ferlin has presence and intensity and by all accounts is an artist to watch. But when the dust settled, *Sad Sam Lucky* didn't deliver as promised and didn't live up to the hype.

*Sad Sam Lucky* by Matija Ferlin, produced by Emanat, runs as part of the [Tiger Dublin Fringe](#) at The [Project Arts Centre](#), Space Upstairs until Saturday, September 20th

Doors open 6.15 p.m.

Tickets €14.00 Concessions €12.00

For more information go to <http://fringefest.com/festival/programme>



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