



## Sounds goofy but it really is clever stuff

### COMEDY

James Campbell  
Octagon Theatre  
Review: Pier Leach

He's billed as "the world's only stand-up comedian for kids", but don't mind the kids — James Campbell milks quite a few belly laughs out of the grown-ups, too.

The British comedian was meant to play just one Perth date at the 750-seat Octagon as part of family day at the Writers' Festival, but two extra shows were added when it sold out well ahead of time.

His material is pitched at the 6-12 age group and involves a surprisingly minimalist portion of toilet humour; his one diarrhoea joke, woven into a few bars of a song (he's got a delightful singing voice), is actually one of the classiest moments in his 70-minute act.

Campbell has a sure-fire rotation of staples — like his hilarious opening meditation on the purpose of middle names, his (quite valid) reasons for liking dogs and loathing cats, and the clever tricks his mum used to cajole him into drinking water as a child.

But he also weaves in some material that's clearly fresh; like a rib-crackingly funny observational sketch about Australian pedestrian crossings, some bemused thoughts on AFL football, and a witty anecdote about some ill-thought-out sun protection on a trip to Rottneest the previous day. Of course, no comedy tour to Australia would be complete without the mention of sharks, and the sheer number of tangents he managed to zigzag through on that one subject proved, if there was any doubt, some seriously agile comedy chops.

The best thing about Campbell's comedy is it sounds goofy but it's really very clever, appealing to a sense of the absurd accessible to both children and adults.

## WHAT'S ON TODAY

**The War of the Roses (Part 2):** Sydney Theatre Company at His Majesty's Theatre, 7pm. Artists talk, 6pm.

**Giselle:** Fabulous Beast Dance Theatre at the Perth Convention Exhibition Centre, 7.30pm. Artists talk, 9pm.

**Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea:** 1927 theatre company at the Playhouse, 7.30pm.

**Antigone:** ThinIce at the Subiaco Arts Centre, 8pm.

**Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu:** Singer-songwriter at Beck's Music Box, 8.30pm.

**Films: Buddha Collapsed Out of Shame** (Somerville); **Lemon Tree** (Joondalup), 8.30pm.