

# The Scotsman (Children's Shows)

*Carol Main*



Review: Complete Nonsense and The Lady of Shalott – Lauriston Halls, Edinburgh Fringe  
Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2014

**In classic Fringe spirit, Daniel's Beard's Complete Nonsense and The Lady of Shalott is a hidden gem of a show**, tucked away in an unknown church hall up a side street. Despite being billed as for kids, Lenny Sayers' imaginative and enchanting scores for nonsense poetry by Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear along with Tennyson's popular poem, The Lady of Shalott, are readily enjoyed by audiences of all ages.

In Jabberwocky, narrator Jamie MacDougall is appropriately sinister in a friendly sort of way, although not always clearly heard, especially when the instrumental ensemble turns up the volume or in using an accent that's not his own in Lear's The Quangle-Wangle's Hat.

With a haunting beauty that matches Tennyson's familiar words, Sayers' atmospheric and magical setting of the 1842 version of the poem is enhanced by two dancers out front, who add graceful reflection to the sad tale of the mysterious lady who is cursed to solitary confinement in her island castle.

Written for just six instrumentalists, the music is completely complementary to the narrator and dancers in its own telling of the story, whether through eloquent solo lines or altogether.