



## FOXY TALE IN URBAN LANDSCAPE

### UNDERCOAT: A PARAFOXICAL TALE

★★★

**Details:** La Mama Theatre,  
until June 18

**Reviewer:** Kate Herbert

**THERE** is something peculiar, unsettling and oddly engaging about *Undercoat: A Parafoxical Tale* by local writer Cynthia Troup.

The content is directly influenced by Portuguese writer Teolinda Gesão's story *The Red Fox Fur Coat*, in which a humble bank clerk buys a fur coat and gradually transforms into a fox.

Troup structures her poetic script as seven scenes, all of which are about foxes, their history, attitudes to humans, human responses to foxes and snippets and facts about things foxy.

The performance begins outdoors in the cold, dark lane behind La Mama with the audience standing surrounded by rubbish bins — a perfect environment for the urban fox.

Here a sassy, foxy character, aka Ruber that ruder Chicken Fox (Emma Annand), introduces the show with a rhythmic, poetic, rhyming rap prologue about “anthropogenic climate change” that humans are causing on this planet.

Inside La Mama, a woman (Caroline Lee) is trapped inside jumbled car parts as though she has had a car accident. She is like road kill as she peers out her damaged car window at the inquisitive foxes and, as she struggles to get free, she perversely recalls a fox caught in a trap.

There is no linear narrative but we are aware, as Lee struggles in her trap, that we are heading toward either her release, her death, her being eaten by foxes or her metamorphosis into a foxy creature of the night.

*Undercoat* is a quirky investigation of the fox in our urban world and its final, mischievous rap routine with four foxes leaves the audience smiling.

# bits te

As people know me for the different shows anything that I sing, I don't think you should see something you don't

I like to talk a lot in interviews and enjoy the process of figuring out what I say.”

As in *School of Rock* before going to Paris for a production of *The Ring of the Opera*, which was cancelled because the theatre caught fire.

I don't like to stay in a city for more than a year because I like to feel my life fulfilled when I'm moving on, not staying in the same place for too long.”

**GUESS, HAMER HALL,  
W. 1300 182 183 or  
melbourne.com.au**