

**The Importance of Being Oscar, Connaught Studio, Worthing**

Thursday 19th June 2014 in [The Critic](#) By [Barrie Jerram](#)

HAVING been fortunate enough to have seen Irish actor, Micheal macLiammoir perform his devised and highly personalised homage to Oscar Wilde, I was keen to see how local actor Ross Muir would tackle this mammoth one-man show. His interpretation, under Mitch Jenkins' direction, carefully avoided impersonating macLiammoir's highly flamboyant theatrical delivery style.

Instead the life and work of Wilde was presented through the eyes of an enthusiast visiting, perhaps, the very hotel room in Paris where Wilde died. Here he wandered through a ghostly twilight world, picking up old books and documents, quoting and reciting.

Key moments of Wilde's life were put across in a gossipy, confiding manner that allowed the dramatic recitation of poems, plays and other writings to be heard in sharp contrast.

Muir's performance was a tour de force that kept his audience mesmerised. The amount of words committed to memory was formidable as was the diversification of the characters (from Dorian Gray to Lady Bracknell) that he brought to life. The sadness and passion of De Profundis gave way to the humour of Wilde's description of his prison warder's penchant for literature.

For many the highlight was Muir's emotive telling of The Ballad of Reading Gaol.