

## Fanboy

**Written and performed by Joe Sellman-Leava (one part of [Worklight Theatre](#)) Fanboy takes its audience on a journey of self-discovery – with a Star Wars-themed twist.**

There's no two ways about it. Joe is a geek.

Standing in his childhood bedroom, which is chocka with the memorabilia of days gone by, Joe (played by Joe Sellman-Leava) gives us a rundown of the pop culture items that he's particularly enthusiastic about. From *The Lord of the Rings*, to Mario Kart, to David Attenborough and Studio Ghibli, it's a full-fanboy-house – and our protagonist is more than happy to admit that his tastes are of the nerdier variety.

But despite his appreciation for Tolkien and Nintendo, nothing holds a candle to Joe's one true love. Because for Joe, all roads lead back to *Star Wars*. He loves everything about Lucas' universe of 'space wizards'. Even Jar Jar Binks. *Even* (as will become important) The Dreaded Prequels. And when he stumbles across an old cassette tape that takes him back to that first foray into Skywalker territory, our protagonist finds himself on a journey through time and space – revisiting the past, before taking an unplanned detour into the future.

So much is packed into *Fanboy's* speedy 65-minute run that it's easy to miss the quiet brilliance of Sellman-Leava's script, which swings a surprisingly effective emotional left hook. In one of many well-observed moments, Sellman-Leava comments on how divisive society has become. We're in a period of cultural civil war, Joe suggests, in which you're either in a club (/fandom) or out of it. There is no middle ground, conversation, or empathy; instead, we've grown fond of building walls and using them to keep people separate from one another. It's a timely topic approached through a novel lens, and successfully provides a nice bit of weight to a show that, on the less-serious flip side, features a lengthy (but excellent) re-enactment of *The Muppet Christmas Carol*.

Sellman-Leava's is a confidently executed piece about coming to terms with who we really are. Perhaps I can amend the opening sentence of this review. Joe is, was, and always will be a fanboy. He wouldn't have it any other way – and neither would we. A charming, one-man ode to fan culture and enthusiasm.

**Fanboy is playing at Tobacco Factory Theatres until 8 September. Tickets are available at [tobaccofactorytheatres.com/shows/fanboy](http://tobaccofactorytheatres.com/shows/fanboy)**