

White

Traverse @ Scottish Book Trust

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  - **Lyn Gardner**
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Giggly joyous ... White. Photograph: Paul Watt

There is something a little odd about seeing a show intended for two to four-year-olds and finding that the audience is comprised almost entirely of adults, but this delightful show from Catherine Wheels is a really grown-up piece of theatre with strong absurdist overtones. There is more than a touch of Godot's tramps in Cotton and Wrinkle, custodians of a dazzling white world where every day they polish the little white houses on stilts, and each other, while waiting for an egg to drop.

"Now?" asks Cotton. "Not now. Soon," replies Wrinkle. But change is in the air, and when Cotton catches a red egg, Wrinkle insists that it's thrown in the bin. At night, Cotton retrieves the rogue and soon hints of colour are invading the white landscape. A tap, which moos like a cow, delivers blue milk; Wrinkle's hat bobble turns pink, and Cotton's white comb is yellow.

If this is some kind of creeping infection, it is a benign and often giggly joyous one that eventually floods the stage with pulsating colour and showers the audience with brightly coloured confetti. Just as oranges are not the only fruit, white is not the only hue in this playful show that not only introduces the concept of colour, but also that of change and transformation.

Cotton and Wrinkle are discombobulated by the arrival of glowing pinks and oranges, but soon embrace the pleasure of variety. This is a beautifully acted and neatly thought-out show, as cleverly executed as a conjuring trick – and a reminder why this Scottish company is an innovator in children's theatre.

***At Burton Taylor Studio, Oxford (01865 305305), 25 September. Then touring.***