

# Yes, it is okay to laugh

**Spastic Fantastic!, Tullie House, Carlisle**

With a title like that you knew you were in for an unconventional, non-PC evening. This was Paul's Betney's struggle with Parkinson's, where he found it almost harder to come to terms with the solution, in the form of a drug that controlled his condition, than the onset of the disease. However, being a stand-up comedian, there were loads of laughs along the way.

Next up: Lawrence Clarke - referred to by Cherie Blair, somewhat insensitively, as a 'sit

down comic' because he has cerebral palsy. The evening was ostensibly about his crusade to reclaim the term 'spastic'. In fact it was much more than that. By drawing attention to the discomfort felt by many able-bodied people when confronted by disability, he found a rich vein of comedy.

What could have been uncomfortable viewing was, in fact, hilarious. I was in tears of laughter throughout and applaud Prism Arts for bringing this hilarious and thought-provoking show to Carlisle.

**ANDY MCKAY**