

'The mysteries of 'Brody' are at every level concerned with demise. Most obviously, the characters are all constructed through their little deaths - petty realisations and transfigurations that are merely epiphanal, reduced in the end to plot cues garbed in ridiculous aggrandisements. All the more painful through their familiarity; and there is no salvation, only exposure and an excussion of mediocrity through amorality.

Structurally, each scena progresses through one or a number of contracting cycles, accruing energy only to collapse in exhausted and protracted tumescence. But there is a mustiness to the excess, a teleology based on the familiar rather than catharsis, furnishing a decadence to an already opulent surface. For every genre cue that requires a cadence, a glittering ejaculation mars its realisation.

There are deeper levels of decay. The Western canon is laid open as a corpse; from Purcell to Wagner and Holst's Mars the images are always of war and death, but are mocked, disfigured and made mute. Streams of popular culture from across the century are viscerally present, but serve either to inflate mundane cereals or emotionally legitimise beastiality. But also to leaven; patter-songs and bright metallic stars reek of false innocence, but entice all the same into wantonly guiltless pleasure. And there is a wantonness in the pleasure we are to find in such sensual banquets; to enjoy is to envy; to laugh express complicitness. Were it not for all our questionable allegiance to virtues in truth, honour and the time of the day, we would be forced to reject this piece as incoherent. But we can't - this is an amoral tale, and we are snared by its logic, and forced to enjoy.'

*Andrew Robbie*