Three Weeks Edinburgh





Edinburgh's first simultaneous farce: two venues, two shows, two audiences linked by a live video stream.

Pleasance Courtyard, 11:30am

Three Weeks







COMEDY

Aaron Twitchen's Quarter Life Crisis Aaron Twitchen / PBH's Free Fringe

Aaron Twitchen believes everyone has experienced a quarter-life crisis. But the good news is that he knows how to help everyone through it. Relying on his own past experiences of this phenomenon as well as those of the audience, he proves that life isn't so bad after all. It's definitely a show the audience have to get involved with, taking part in various Q&As and games. Twitchen is a wonderful host in these situations, both relaxing the participant as well as having the ability to make fun of them (in a nice way of course). The show itself is brilliant fun and, although you may not be rid of your crisis, you'll definitely leave with a smile. Southsider, 4-25 August, 7.00pm.

tw rating 4/5 | Anna McDonald

Rubberbandits

"This song is about shagging a fat bird after sniffing glue", says Blindboy Boat Club of the duo Rubberbandits, the bastard children of De La Soul. The Beastie Boys and Goldie Lookin' Chain. Aided (sort of) by the nefarious DJ Willy, the shopping bag boys blasted through a glorious hour of comedy hip-hop rave, halting only to shake sweat from their dripping masks. Backed by a vociferous crowd, the YouTube sensations from Limerick toe the line between crudity and cheek skilfully whilst taking a satirical look at the life of a certain type of young man. With solid beats and a sweet turn of rhythm, this would be a fine gig in itself; add the rapping and hilarious comedy and you have yourself a spectacle.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 8-26 Aug (not 13, 17, 20-24), 10.30pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Joseph Trotter]

Andrew O'Neill And Marc Burrows Do Music And Comedy And Hideous Murders

Blamed For Nothing / PBH's Free Fringe

Andrew O'Neill starts the entertainment by announcing that his band are putting the punk back into steampunk. If you're not clear on what steampunk is, it's a style that juxtaposes Victorian settings and perspectives with modern mores and technology - though powered by steam, of course - and in this performance O'Neill comes over like a lead proponent of the genre. The trio's act is a bizarre and geeky combination of music, song, jokes and fancy dress, and the whole set up makes you feel like you've been kidnapped by a cult, but with hilarious stand-up, surreal songs and dramatic Cockney personalities involved, it's a cult I'll quite happily succumb to. These over-the-top, English Victorian punks scream, dance and delight from start to finish

Canon's Gait, 4-26 Aug (not 13), 7.15pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Susan Ford]



SNAP OF THE DAY: Amateur Transplants frontman Adam Kay brings some 'Bum Notes' to the Fringe - catch his show at the Pleasance Courtyard. Photo: Paul Collins

Phill Jupitus Is Porky The Poet In 27 Years On Off The Kerb

Productions / PBH's Free Fringe I get the sense that the audience don't quite know what to make of Phill Jupitus's comic poems to begin with. There are polite titters for the 'Beano' poem, working up to actual chuckles by the time he gives way to guest comedy poet, Owen O'Neil. O'Neil's slightly more poetical, slightly more political work gets the audience going fully, then it's back to Jupitus to take it home with half an hour of cracking anecdotes about meeting your musical idols - something it seems flummoxes even Jupitus. The audience eat it up and Jupitus is in his element, working the crowd with practised ease. Funny, quirky and professional, this is a Free Fringe show well worth checking out.

The Jam House, 4-25 Aug (not 13), 4.00pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Andrew Bell]

Jarred Christmas: Let's Go MoFoMick Perrin for Just for Laughs

In one of the most original openers
I've seen all Festival, Jarred Christmas
comes bounding onto the stage, music
blaring, and proceeds to perform a Maori
tribal dance practically in the lap of one
stunned audience member. And that's the
thing with Christmas – although at times
throughout the show certain jokes fall
flat or punchlines take slightly too long to
arrive, he delivers everything with such
energy and originality that it's impossible
not to love him. Any audience members
still sitting on the fence will definitely be

converted by the brilliant ending to this show – I won't give anything away but it involved nerf guns and had this reviewer crying with laughter. Fantastic and energetic stand-up.

Gilded Balloon, Teviot 1-26 Aug, 9.30pm tw rating 4/5 | [Charlotte Ryan]

Joel Dommett - Nunchuck Silver Medallist 2002 Phil McIntyre

Entertainments by Arrangement With Lisa Thomas Management From the moment Joel Dommett walked on the stage with a giant grin plastered on his face he was dancing around madly. laughing at himself and generally having the time of his life - there's probably no happier stand-up. Luckily this was reflected by the audience, who found themselves in permanent fits of laughter. In an act based around being bullied at school and the ways in which he tried (and failed) to stand up for himself, Dommett is self-deprecating yet personable, and very easy to relate to. It's a show that is full of life and action from the outset, and includes a brilliant surprise conclusion. Simply hilarious and highly recommended. Pleasance Courtvard, 1-26 Aug, 8.15pm.

Austerity Pleasures

tw rating 5/5 | [Lauren Houghton]

Alex Chapman, Ben Morgan

This 50 minute set was divided evenly between relative Fringe veteran Ben Morgan and newcomer Alex Chapman, although such experience would be indistinguishable on set. The show is entertaining, although the jokes sometimes become laboured and can lose the interest of the audience, while the use of multimedia sadly detracts from the impact of this political stand-up and Chapman does better when he leaves it be. While this may not have you roaring with laughter, it is undoubtedly enjoyable; the two different comedians sit well together, Morgan dealing in more lighthearted comedy, which is a nice contrast to Chapman's more satirical set. This was their first performance so I can imagine a lot of the kinks will be ironed out as the show progresses.

Finnegan's Wake, Aug 13-18, 20-25, 12.00pm. tw rating 3/5 | [Miranda Cannibal]

Bec Hill Is More Afraid Of You Than You Are Of Her Bec Hill

Bec Hill has many fears in life: the greatest and most irrational being her audience - she need not be so scared, as she's bloody bonzer! Hill doesn't just stand in front of a microphone: she engages with the audience and makes good use of an interactive flip-chat art in delivering her witty anecdotes. The Australian YouTube sensation is not afraid to tell ridiculously embarrassing stories and it is this that makes her an instant hit with the crowd. Taking a deeper look at the art of stand-up and heckling, Hill points out in her show that compliments are way more powerful than insults, so I will say this: she is absolutely fabulous and well worth a stalk on Twitter.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 1-26 Aug (not 15), 2.45pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Emma Obank]







David Mills Is Smart Casual -Free David Mills

Looking dapper, while perched on a stool in "a sweaty basement". David Mills delivers a set filled with celebrity references and camp; I tittered rather than belly-laughed but was astonished at how quickly time passed. Although Mills originally hails from America this has a distinctly British feel - he covers the Queen, the Olympics and, of course, the weather; he also discusses the brilliance of bad Fringe shows, telling us what he thinks are this year's worst (which I won't name here). Yet in between the frivolity he occasionally makes perceptive remarks on current affairs, which makes one wonder just what he is capable of. But largely we just sit back and enjoy the feeling of having a bitch with the perfect boy best

Alternative Fringe @ The Hive, 2-27 Aug, 3.45pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Lia Sanders]

Discover Ben Target

Phil McIntyre Management

Only at the Fringe would playing a game of 30-a-side beach ball in a darkened room during a comedy gig feel like it was perfectly ordinary. Likewise, following a pink man in frilly pants up Cowgate is probably at the tamer end of things happening at the Festival. Ben Target is a true eccentric, and his hour of madness is weird but really quite wonderful. Though they quickly warm to the knowingly awkward on-stage persona, the audience are never quite sure exactly what will happen next. Surrendering to Target's whims is all part of the fun. Crazy and colourful, 'Discover Ben Target' is for those who like their comedy on the unpredictable side; an absolute riot.

Underbelly Cowgate, 2-26 Aug (not 13), 4.55pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Rebecca Low]

Ladies and Gentlemen

Ladies and Gentlemen / Laughing Horse Free Festival

Join four improvisation comedians in an hour of quick-witted and fast-paced goofball sketches featuring word play, silliness, and spot-on comedic timing. Sketches tackled topics such as the creation of a Last Words Epitaph app for Facebook, dialling the afterlife and receiving a switchboard, and clouds going on a blind date. Most of the sketches are clever and well delivered but others surpass the goofy mark and become more strange and awkward the longer they go on. Each individual improviser is very talented and their facial expressions are perfect, although the sound effects are occasionally too loud and mistimed. Despite this, however, it's a great familyfriendly show.

Laughing Horse @ the Counting House, 2-26 Aug, 3.30pm. tw rating 3/5 | [Ellie Willis]

The Look Of An Angel On The Devil Himself

Vinny McHale

Vinny McHale admits he's not bursting with self-confidence and he's not rolling in riches from his gigs. He is, however, brutally honest and open about his life and his experience of the inevitable fork in the road. For McHale, the Festival provides a chance to put some structure into his life, meet new people and engage with them. Unfortunately the audience small to create any real stir, transforming the atmosphere of the performance to more of an informal chat with a friendly Irishman over a Guinness. McHale is a man with potential, but his art has not yet been perfected. If you want an unpolished but intensely honest hour then McHale is the man for you.

Sweet Grassmarket, 2-27 Aug, (not 18, 25), 1.25pm.

tw rating 3/5 | [Alice Taylor]

Marcus Brigstocke: The Brig Society Off The Kerb Productions In Association With Corduroy **Productions**

In his 'The Brig Society', Radio 4 favourite Marcus Brigstocke gives audiences an eloquent and informed hour of vitriolic Coalition-bashing, peppered with an array of clever and laugh-out-loud

punchlines. Fortunately, you do not need to be a habitual listener of the 'Today' programme on Radio 4 to understand most of Brigstocke's incisive social and political commentary. He tries to simplify complex theories through silly and comprehensible analogies; for example, explaining the recession by comparing Greece's ill-advised and suspicious entry into the Euro with a minor having an awful time after sneaking into a nightclub. This show is plenty of fun, despite its critical and weighty content. It is a rare treat. Assembly Hall, 2-25 Aug (not 13), 9.10pm tw rating 4/5 | [Joseph Fleming]

Tom Lauri: Good With His

Fingers Tom Lauri

This show is truly eclectic. Uniting standup comedy and magic tricks, nobody in the audience is initially sure what to make of German-born, Switzerland-inhabitant, Britain-frequenter Tom Lauri. His comedy is mediocre, stuttering and seemingly without much continuity; but whilst his comic timing is offbeat, his magic certainly isn't. Although he repeatedly pretends to be hapless and incompetent (which does seriously wear thin), the tricks he does complete are impressively slick and as baffling as good magic should be. The show ultimately suggests that while Lauri has enough gift of the gab to be on stage, he should confine his showmanship to conjuring first and foremost; the comedy isn't worth the bother.

Sweet Grassmarket, 11-27 Aug (not 18, 25), 2.20pm

tw rating 3/5 | [Olivia Sleet]

MUSIC

The Showhawk Duo

Describing themselves as a musical mixing bowl, this talented acoustic duo certainly throw together some wildly different ingredients. Mikhail is a classically trained guitarist with a dizzvingly fast playing style, while Jake is a metal head who adds driving power chords to every track. Their combined sound is complex and unique, and their up tempo takes on everything from Jimi Hendrix to Django Reinhardt to a 'Jungle Book' medlev are infectiously catchy, and if they spend too long chatting between tracks, it doesn't detract from their accomplished musicianship. At one point they affably complain about their constant comparison to similar high speed guitar duo Rodrigo v Gabriela. The truth, though, is they're a lot dafter, and a lot more fun. SpaceCabaret @ 54, 3-25 Aug (not 10), times

tw rating 4/5 | [Dave Fargnoli]

MUSICALS

Riot! The Musical

About Turn Theatre Company

Despite only being a group of four, the About Turn Theatre Company created a huge amount of dramatic, fiery energy on stage. A musical about London's riots in 2011, 'Riot!' makes a clear attempt to show the rioters' motivations, depicting four specific characters and giving their backgrounds building up to the riots. The show lacks a specific plot, and there were moments of uncertainty during the physical theatre parts, but it is an arresting portrayal of city dwellers' attempts to regain control in a society they feel is dominated by police, politicians and upper class capitalists. The music is decent, but whole thing could have been longer, to build on some of the more effective ideas

the Space @ Surgeon's Hall, 13-25 Aug, 3.20pm. tw rating 3/5 | [Grace Hardy]

Company

One Academy Productions (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland)

The music of Stephen Sondheim is brought to the Edinburgh stage in 'Company', a show which offers a startling look at the nature of relationships; Bobby is turning thirty-five and is surrounded by his married friends who want him to settle down with a girl. The singing and timing is impeccable - especially on '(Not) Getting

Married Today'; the tracks are Broadwaylike and the acting is amusing to watch, while the costumes really evoke the 70s. I felt that Joanne was possibly a little miscast - her attitude was not as sarcastic as the script calls for - vet despite such concerns, the show delivers excellent story and music; you would definitely want to be surrounded by the company of this production.

C, 1-27 Aug (not 13, 20), 4.20pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Ana-Claudia Magaña]

THEATRE

Burns: Rough Cut Gavin Paul

Based on Donald Smith's novel 'Between Ourselves', which tells of famous Scotch poet Robert Burns's time in Edinburgh, 'Burns: Rough Cut' attempts to unpick Burns' moment of crisis. Beguilingly, the play begins with a video of Gavin Paul (Burns) speaking; think low-budget BBC period drama. Yet from there on in Paul is wrong-footed as he struggles to regain the momentum, even though his performance is admirable and his acting is more or less faultless. In its favour, the play provides an interesting history of Scotland and Scots literature, but many of the literary references went straight over my head, and I struggled to stay engaged. Hardcore Burns fans will take much from the show. however, as will anyone with a passion for Scots history.

the Space @ Jury's Inn, 3-25 Aug (not 5, not 19),

tw rating 3/5 | [Alexandra Wilks]

4.48 Psychosis

Fourth Monkey

Sarah Kane's last published work is widely considered her suicide note. Written shortly before her death, the play documents the inner psyche of the playwright and this production represents the dialogue through the medium of interpretative dance. Fourth Monkey's production features heavily stylised costumes and staging, which felt too much for the text, nevertheless the work was captivating, the acting piercingly strong. The large, all-female cast representing fragments of Kane's mind or those directly affecting it at the time of her demise (doctors and nurses), made a good effort to get behind the existential considerations of the play, and the sincerity evoked by all was believable and heartfelt. A testing watch, but a must-see. the Space @ Niddry Street, 1-10 Aug, and then 17-25 (odd dates only), 7.20pm, tw rating 4/5 | [Adam Bloodworth]

As of 1.52pm GMT on Friday April 27th 2012, This Show Has No Title Daniel Kitson

This is probably a perfect example of what the Fringe can do. It's a very low budget one-man show with no set, which manages to not only work, but to be incredibly funny and clever at the same time. A man sits at a table and reads out a script, which starts out funny, then gradually unfolds to reveal layers of story, and ends up being one of the most intelligent, self-aware pieces you're likely to see. A lot of this of course is due to the writing - sharp, hilarious - and the poignant, slightly mysterious end leaves one satisfied. But without the brilliant performance of its writer, Fringe legend Daniel Kitson, it would be nothing. Traverse Theatre, 7-26 Aug, times vary tw rating 5/5 | Katherine Cunningham

The Boat Factory

Happenstance Theatre Company Northern Ireland was once the shipyard of the world. Harland and Wolff produced 1,700 ships and had an immeasurable impact on Belfast, employing more than 30.000. In 'The Boat Factory', Michael Condron and Dan Gordon (also the author), present the domineering impact of Harland and Wolff's shipyard on the lives of Belfastians and the intrinsic links between them. It has a compelling narrative and brilliant script, and the onstage chemistry of Gordon and Condron leaves you laughing and crying, as the latter shifts through the many characters that Gordon meets. They document the shipyard's stunning history

through the friendship of two apprentices, whilst brilliantly constructing a social history of Belfast in a passionate and informed way.

Hill Street Theatre, 2-26 Aug, 6.30pm tw rating 5/5 | [James Valentine]

The Boy With The Cuckoo **Clock Heart** Jimmy Grimes

Walking up the many stairs to Pleasance Attic, lactic acid burning in my legs, I thought to myself, "this show better be worth it." And it so is. 'The Boy With The Cuckoo Clock Heart' is simply magical, combining puppetry, singing, humour and pathos: there's something for everyone. Jack is born on the coldest night of the vear and his heart is frozen: in order for it to beat, Doctor Madeline fits him with a cuckoo clock heart but this heart means he can never love. Jack is played by a puppet and the manipulation of that puppet is incredible. This performance is fun and fast-paced, so children will enjoy it, but it will also keep adults thoroughly entertained.

Pleasance Courtyard, 1-27 Aug (not 13), 12.45pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Alexandra Wilks]

Flâneurs Jenna Watt

Would you intervene if you saw someone being attacked? This is the question behind Jenna Watts' most recent work. Cheerily presented by a funny woman playing on a swing and representing the friend who got attacked with a small plastic giraffe, it nonetheless manages to chill. Voiceovers describing other attacks and projections are given greater meaning by Watts' interplay with them. The show combines her passion for walking the streets of Edinburgh with ideas about the bystander effect: it is clearly an issue that she cares about. Her friend's experience is a starting point but never do we get the feeling that Watt has taken advantage of him to create the performance. An impressive show but an important one

Summerhall, 3-26 Aug (not 17, 18), 2.00pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Lia Sanders]

Hervé - A Collection Of Songs, **Dances And Stories**

Hervé and Underbelly **Productions**

This 75-minute piece is a mixture of the above, but should maybe consist of one ingredient, perhaps two. Herve's personal stories are naturally emotional, performed with a gentle beauty. His physical confidence can't hide a vulnerability that is quite stunning - I was pleasurably transfixed by his face for the duration of the play. Plumes of melancholy are fanned away by fond recollections of Hervé's family, and I left reflecting on my own. Some of elements of the show (eg. 'Hammer Time') are unnecessary and it may have been misguided to include them. Though Hervé's physicality is a weakness, his tales and their delivery redeems his collection of songs, dances and stories.

Underbelly Bristo Square, 1-27 Aug (not 15), 4.25pm. tw rating 3/5 | [L Clarkson]

Forever Young

Red Cloak Productions

It is with energy and talent that this young cast tumbles headfirst through scenes of love and idealistic aspirations, creating a montage of a couple's memories, looking back on their relationship. The narrative flow is dynamic, and the nostalgia of building dens and watching horror films in the dark gets warm smiles from the audience. In particular, a scene in which the young couple guess film themes played on the ukulele is sweet and humorous. A live soundtrack performed by musicians around the stage features covers of The Kinks, The Rolling Stones and Jimi Hendrix, and songs work well within the narrative. This looks like it was great fun to perform - it's certainly fun to

the Space @ Symposium Hall, 13-24 Aug (not 19), 11.15am. tw rating 4/5 | [Colette M Talbot]

Night Of The Big Wind Little

Cauliflower Theatre Company 'Night of the Big Wind', a beautiful and wordless tale of a young boy battling

against a tempestuous storm, is the new production from the ever-innovative Little Cauliflower Theatre Company, It is simply stunning - the set and costumes are subtle and tonally cohesive and the mesmerising cast moved fluidly around the space. Some sweet comedy during the first quarter sadly didn't re-emerge, but was happily replaced by poetic puppetry and theatre. As wide-eyed children, three main actors promote a wooden puppet to a fully-fledged character of pathos through skilful manipulation. The large rhythmic set pieces complemented the cast's subtle, character-led physicality and Irish music. This beautiful production is a must-see piece of visual theatre.

Othello - The Remix

tw rating 5/5 | [Sarah Macartney]

Q Brothers, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Richard Jordan **Productions And Pleasance**

Underbelly Cowgate, 2-25 Aug (not 13), 1.15pm.

'Othello - The Remix' is a sheer joy. Fusing Shakespeare's tale of love and jealousy with modern day hip-hop, the show starts with a storming number that gets the staid Edinburgh audience throwing our hands in the air and just gets better from then on. With everything in hip-hop rhyme, 'Othello - The Remix' could get confusing, but the exceptionally talented cast carry us along with ease. Every line crackles with energy and wit, every scene fizzes with emotion and every song is a smash hit. There are no stand-out moments, but only because the entire show is such a knock out. Go and see it, right now. Now! Seriously, why are you still here? Go!

Pleasance Courtyard, 1-27 Aug (not 7, 14, 21), 1.55pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Andrew Bell]

Poe's Last Night

David Crawford / Laughing Horse Free Festival

Fans of Poe will enjoy this piece, which would be better described as a dramatic reading of his poems than as a play in itself. Crawford is a talented actor who gives it his all in a venue not ideally suited for theatre. However, his abilities would perhaps be better used in a faster-paced, more exciting play. Nevertheless, this was an enjoyable glimpse into the life of a very complex man and Crawford coped well with the slightly problematic venue and the added challenge of making Poe's famously dreary poetry come alive for a modern audience. Overall, this was by no means unmissable but still a pleasant way to spend an afternoon (although not if you're looking for something uplifting!). Laughing Horse @ Espionage, 3-26 Aug, 1.15pm. tw rating 3/5 | [Charlotte Ryan]

Swordy-Well

University of Manchester Drama Society

Swordy-Well Slaughterhouse has hit hard times and its owner must decide whether he can betray his morals in order to save his beloved business and protect his employees. This production deals with the difficulties of staying true to your ethics in corporate Britain, while also struggling with philosophical ideas surrounding the balance of nature. These concerns (and more if it can be believed) are all interwoven and connected through a narrative strand made up of unpretentiously sharp dialogue. Juggling so many issues should be more than a collegiate drama group can handle but every performer is more than capable: physical theatre, character commitment and comedic timing are all present in perfect equilibrium. Ambitious, original and highly thought-provoking.

the Space on North Bridge, 1-25 Aug (not 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24), 5.05pm

tw rating 5/5 | [Lewis Wade]

ThreeWeeks

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