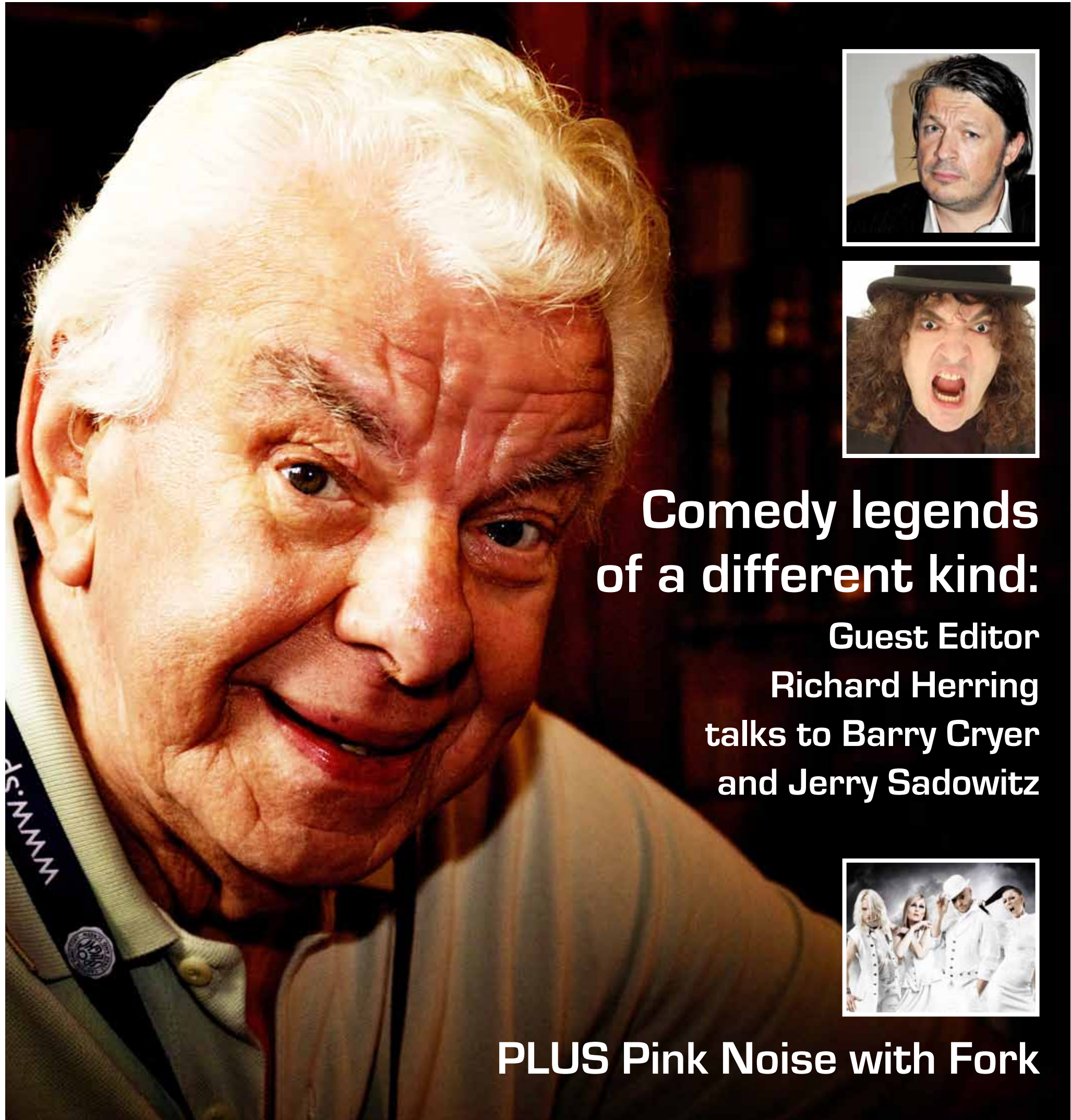


ThreeWeeks_{IN EDINBURGH}



Comedy legends of a different kind:

Guest Editor
Richard Herring
talks to Barry Cryer
and Jerry Sadowitz



PLUS Pink Noise with Fork

ALSO INSIDE THE THREEWEEKS 2011 WEEK ONE/TWO ISSUE: Luke Wright, Rosie Wilby, Anthony Rapp, Paul Nathan, Joe Simmons, Lorraine Kelly, Peters Productions, Theatre Ninjas plus lots of tips for avoiding Fringe Flu, ThreeWeeks Book Festival recommendations and comedy, cabaret, theatre, musical, music and physical reviews

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'DANGEROUSLY FRAGILE, AN EXCEPTIONAL VOICE'
EDINBURGH EVENING NEWS

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IT'S AS THOUGH
HER BREATH IS
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threeweeks presents the king's speech

Welcome this week's ThreeWeeks Guest Editor Richard Herring

“Hello, it's me, the King of Edinburgh. This is an unofficial title that I have decided to bestow on myself, partly because I know no one else ever will, but mainly because I think if people begin to refer to me by that moniker (even ironically) it won't be long before the name sticks.”

“Have you seen the King of Edinburgh?”

“Who is that?”

“Don't you know? It's Richard Herring.”

“Oh right. OK, if you say so.”

I'm sure this tactic is the explanation for the success of some of our more notable comics. They started spreading fantastical statements about themselves, which eventually got

quoted as fact. So do your bit by only referring to me as the King of Edinburgh from now on. As if that's what everyone does and only an idiot wouldn't know that. If nothing else it will piss off Prince Phillip.

And maybe I almost deserve it. After all, this is my 20th Edinburgh Fringe. I first came up here in 1987 with a sketch group called 'The Seven Raymonds' (there were six of us and none of us were called Raymond - genius) and have created or co-created 32 different shows since then. Some of you are here to get discovered or get on TV - good luck with that (you fools) - but you soon sort the phonies from the slightly less phony by looking at who keeps coming here once opportunity has knocked.

On the face of it the two comedians I have chosen to interview in this edition of ThreeWeeks could not be more different: the avuncular, loveable Barry Cryer and the vitriolic, terrifying Jerry Sadowitz. But they

are two of the comedians that I admire most in the world, despite their wildly contrasting styles and outlooks.

Barry has worked with all the comedy greats for over 50 years and clearly still loves comedy and other comedians. Many others from his generation became bitter about the kind of comedy that came after them, but Uncle Baz has stayed engaged and interested and happy to pass on his undoubted wisdom. I aspire to still be working when I am his age, and to still love the business of making people laugh as much as he does.

Jerry, on stage at least, is twisted with anger and bitterness and seems to hate other comedians almost as much as he hates himself. He turns profanity and offence into an art form. He will leave you gasping for breath with laughter and then just gasping at the awful things he has said. You will certainly be offended, unless you are a moron, and yet in a

sense you'd have to be a moron to be genuinely offended. Some shock comics seem to be bullies punching downwards (when a millionaire comedian mocks an actual 8 year old disabled boy it surely becomes just cruelty rather than humour), but Jerry is so low status that whoever he attacks he is punching upwards and his material is so artfully constructed that he always ends up hitting himself in the face. He is, I believe, the most underrated comedy genius that these islands have ever produced. But perhaps the success he deserves would destroy the whole conceit.

By the way have you seen my ThreeWeeks quote? Apparently I am “the King of Edinburgh”. I'm putting that on all my posters. This is the most humble day of my life.”

Richard appears in 'What Is Love Anyway' at Udderbelly's Pasture from 3 - 28 Aug at 8.50pm, fpp 140.

He also records a daily Edinburgh Fringe Podcast at The Stand each day at 2.20pm.

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“Only a fool would expect to come away from an August spent in Edinburgh with a golden tan, but some years the weather really does take the piss.”

Zoe Lyons on Edinburgh's wonderful weather, one of her bad bits - www.threeweeks.co.uk/zoelyons

THE CARO HELLO

Is it really only Week One of the Edinburgh Festival? Yes, I can confirm that it is, though frankly, it feels like it might be about Week Seven. I suspect that happens for anyone actually working at the Fringe, in whatever capacity. The final week or two before it kicks off are a tiring rush, and the first week feels less like the start and more like the culmination of something: the huge push to be ready to go on time.

Anyway, here we are, with our Week One/Week Two issue, featuring the guest-editorial stylings of newly crowned comedy-king Richard Herring. In addition to his interviews with two legends of comedy, we've



also got Q&As with people from some of the shows that attracted our attention during preview week – namely dance/physical theatre piece 'A World Without Words' and a capella extravaganza 'Pink Noise' by Fork – as well as an article from the director of 'The Girl With The Iron Claws' all about what real fairy tales are like, and a piece by poet Luke Wright on the best and worst of the festival.

This week we also put some questions to Broadway star Anthony Rapp, talk to musician-turned-comedian Rosie Wilby, and discuss children and magic with Paul Nathan, the man behind the 'I Hate Children Children's Show'. Elsewhere, Edinburgh veteran Joe Simmons talks to his 2011 chat show co-host Lorraine Chase, and our team of book correspondents offer you their top tips for the upcoming Edinburgh International Book Festival.

All this, and lots of reviews too. Enjoy.

Caro Moses, co-Editor, ThreeWeeks

FRINGE PEOPLE

the free shows app is back: theatre ninjas

At last year's Edinburgh Festival those fashionable apps were everywhere you looked, as smartphone ownership became the norm. But the one that stood out for us was the Theatre Ninjas free tickets service. In fact we liked it so much we gave the team behind it a ThreeWeeks Editors' Award at the end of the festival month. The Theatre Ninjas are back again bigger and better for 2011, so we interrogated team members Rajiv Nathwani and Caitlin Albery Beavan to find out more.

TW: For the uninitiated, what is the Theatre Ninjas service?

RN: Theatre Ninjas provides free tickets to shows that have not reached their maximum capacity. It allows audience members on a budget to see a greater variety of work and, most importantly, to take a risk, and see a show they would not have otherwise picked out of the programme: because they have little knowledge of the company, or lack awareness of the venue, or because it's a genre that they haven't previously explored. The benefit for



the performers and their venue is a larger audience, which will in turn generate publicity through word of mouth. Lots of Fringe companies 'paper' their shows early on in the festival to build audience and word of mouth, but that involves handing out tickets randomly to people near your venue. With Theatre Ninjas you are reaching people keen to see shows all over Edinburgh. Plus shows also get exposure on our site and app.

TW: Where did the idea come from?

CAB: The original idea was formulated by a group of friends in a pub who had just seen a theatre show for free via the Arts Council's free tickets programme for young people, A Night Less Ordinary. We created a secret Facebook group to make each other aware of other free tickets available via this programme, and to share them out between us. From that the idea took off, why not create an app that offered a similar service to everyone? We then noticed that IdeasTap had relaunched their Innovators Fund, which could give us a little funding – so we decided to bring our idea to the largest arts festival in the world and see if the public liked it as much as we did!

TW: Why would performers want to give away tickets?

CAB: As Rajiv said, comps have always been circulated at the Edinburgh Fringe because it helps to raise awareness of your show and bring in an audience. Theatre Ninjas is just an innovative way of 'papering', which can ultimately help bring in box office sales. First, because once the free tickets have gone, more people might come having heard about your show on our app, and then buy tickets. And second because, if you've got a good show, the people who saw it for free will then spread the word to paying ticket buyers.

RN: Edinburgh was the perfect launch pad for this service. We had all experienced the Fringe ourselves, as performers or directors, and knew the heartbreak of creating a great piece of work and to then have the curtains open to six people. Ultimately, we want people to have

the work they have lovingly laboured over to be seen by as many people as possible. Feedback showed that the groups that used Theatre Ninjas to fill up early performances both enjoyed good early date audiences, and also found those free ticket holders spoke about their production helping to cultivate future audiences.

TW: Why ninjas?

RN: There was beer involved. It created an identity: you bag your free ticket with stealth. You have to keep the secret codeword close to your chest, keep it discreet and not let on to others in the box office queue that you're about to get a free ticket! That's ninja-like, right?

TW: How was the service received last year?

CAB: It was unbelievable. We hadn't expected the amount of attention it would receive. During the festival we had over 3,500 downloads, 240 companies register with us, and together they advertised 10,000 tickets with box office reports suggesting an 80% take up. We hope that this year we can boost these figures!

TW: Ah yes, this year. You're describing the 2011 app as being "new and improved" – what's different?

RN: There's a better interface, a filter to look at just comedy, music and theatre shows, improved functionality and a clearer website designed in HTML5 with better support for Blackberry and Android users. The new app and website have more personality, wit and charm and will [hopefully!] contribute a great deal to the excitement in the journey of getting hold of a free ninja ticket. We wanted to keep it simple to ensure the app and website can be used quickly and accurately by users on the move.

More information about the Theatre Ninjas service is online at www.theatreninjas.co.uk



READ MORE

ThreeWeeks.co.uk/theatreninjas



CtheFestival

The Edinburgh Festival
fringe



Cambridge University ADC
Babushka

4-26 Aug at 9.40pm



Daniel Cainer
**More Jewish
Chronicles**

4-29 Aug at 8.20pm



TheatreM
Commencement

3-20 Aug at 1.15pm



Hint of Lime Productions
**Are There More
of You?**

4-29 Aug at 5.25pm



Backhand with C theatre
The Velveteen Rabbit

3-29 Aug at 11.00am



Kipper Tie with C theatre
**The Mole Who Knew
it was none of his business**

3-29 Aug at 10.00am



The Effort with filmro
Theseus is Dead

3-29 Aug at 6.15pm



Hint of Lime Productions
The Trials of Galileo

4-29 Aug at 6.50pm



C theatre
**Red Riding Hood
and the Wolves**

3-29 Aug at 12.15pm



C theatre
This is Soap

3-29 Aug at 1.15pm



C theatre
The Ugly Ducking

3-29 Aug at 11.15am



C theatre
**Shakespeare for
Breakfast**

3-29 Aug at 10.00am

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Q&A: WHEN RICHARD MET BARRY

Does Barry Cryer need an introduction? He's a familiar face from TV, a familiar voice from the radio, and he's written comedy for most of the big comedy names of the last half century (and more) as far as we can tell: Morecambe and Wise, The Two Ronnies, Richard Pryor, Les Dawson and Tommy Cooper, to name but a few. He's a legend in the comedy business. It's therefore no surprise that this week's Guest Editor Richard Herring, wanted to put a few questions to him.

RH: Hello Baz, thanks for agreeing to answer my questions. Over the last half a century you have worked with seemingly all the greats of comedy from Stanley Baxter to Richard Pryor – is there any one attribute that unites this disparate group of people? Can you home in on what makes them the

geniuses that they were?
BC: They have one thing in common: They have nothing in common.

RH: You are possibly the only act on this year's Fringe to have had a number one hit record in Finland. How did that come about?
BC: Sheb Woolley, country singer and actor – he was one of the baddies who was going to kill Gary Cooper in 'High Noon' – had a big hit with the 'Purple People Eater' in 1958. For some reason, his version was not released in Scandinavia, so they pushed out my English cover version. I then got a phone call: "You're number 1 in Finland". I stayed there for three weeks – I believe they gave away a car with each record.

RH: One of the things I most admire about you (and there are many) is that you still seem to love comedy after all these years, and are interested in the new generation of comics rather than complaining that they're all rubbish these days. Many comics get bitter about their lot and annoyed by the formulas and mechanics of

comedy. How do you keep it fresh after all these years?
BC: I have no knowledge of my limitations.

RH: You always come across as a calm and polite gentleman and no one bitches about you behind your back (which is unusual for a comedian). But there must be a dark side to you. Come on, what's the nastiest thing you've ever done?
BC: I once trashed a hotel room by throwing a crumpled tissue on the floor. Please don't open these old wounds.

RH: You've seemed to be happy in your career working behind the scenes as much as in front, writing gags for other people – did you ever envy them their fame and riches or is the real trick of this job to be able to constantly work?
BC: There was no envy – if you were writing for Eric Morecambe how on earth could you do it better?

RH: You were great mates with Michael McIntyre's dad – what do you make of Michael's breathtaking rise to fame?
BC: He seems to have provoked

some reaction from other comedians... they know who they are and I know where they live. Nuff said.

RH: According to Wikipedia you played the waiter serving the wine in the original Four Yorkshiremen sketch on 'At Last The 1948 Show'. Did you have a hand in the writing of this all-time classic sketch? And if so can you remember your contribution?
BC: No, I had no hand in the writing of the sketch, but I believe an older Oscar Wilde was involved.

RH: I am a few years younger than you and yet still find performing at the Fringe enormously draining. Do you have any tips to surviving this stressful occasion for the less youthful comedian?
BC: (1) Sleep. (2) Sleep. (3) Get Up (4) Sleep

Barry Cryer's show is on at the Gilded Balloon Teviot from 5 - 18 Aug at 6.45pm (7.45pm), fpp43.



READ MORE

ThreeWeeks.co.uk/
barrycryer

beyond compare / free festival present two remarkable free shows

LIAM MULLONE
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COMEDY REVIEWS

Golden Showers Of Love

Nick Sun And Dick Moon Deep Star Space Mining And Exploration Corps Ltd

Nick Sun's show is failing miserably when a miraculous party of Spanish school children drag his stand up show from dreadful to merely not very good. Sun's prepared material is woefully unfunny; he frequently confuses swearing with humour, he gets lost regularly and his punchlines go missing. Even when gags do turn up they are only mildly amusing and his gimmick - a reverb pedal - should burn in a fire. Yet, when the Spanish kids arrive he goes off-piste, and we get a glimpse of a genuinely funny man. Interacting with the audience, he displays a sharp wit and good timing. Sun shows potential, he just needs to ditch all his jokes. And that damn pedal.

The City Cafe, 4 - 28 Aug (not 8, 15, 22), 8.00pm (9.00pm), free, tw rating 2/5 [ab]

Huggers – Free Festival Family Fun

Nik Coppin and Mike Belgrave

'Huggers' perform free at the City Cafe on Blair Street, and in that sentence lies the only glimmer of a compliment I will give this show. Smacking of desperation and making themselves thoroughly unlikeable, the two emcees who stumble through the introduction and middle of each act are somehow even less funny than Ant & Dec. Spending more time indulging themselves than the audience, their style is heavy on patter but low on laughs. The only real laughs at 'Huggers' are between the comedians themselves, who seem to

be doing it from mutual pity rather than genuine amusement. They claim that it's a family friendly comedy show, yet even your children won't laugh. Would I see 'Huggers' again? Frankly I'd rather jam a pool cue up my urethra.

City Cafe, 4 - 28 Aug, 1.45pm (2.45pm), free, fpp89, tw rating 1/5 [cd]

John Scott: Totally Made Up – Totally Free

Lee Martin for Gag Reflex Management

Multi award-winning comedian John Scott has a lot to be made up about: certainly he knows how to extract laughs from a small crowd, conjuring up gags on the spot while admitting, "I dunno where that came from". And it is refreshing to know that this genuinely gifted comic is performing for the love of doing it, as opposed to reward. From American tourist-spotting to Scottish Tourette's, Scott's well-polished and wide-ranging routine gets the audience chuckling. That said, there is nothing especially unique about his material: the all-too-familiar topics of class-division and social-stereotyping pop up again and again. You are guaranteed a laugh if you go along, but do not expect anything groundbreaking.

Laughing Horse @ The Beehive Inn, 4 – 28 Aug (not 7, 15, 22), 17.00 (18.00), Free, fpp101, tw rating 3/5 [fm]

Just Havin' A Fiddle

Shetland Fiddlers
Shetland Fiddlers are not from Shetland. Nor are they fiddlers. They are in fact a



rather poor sketch comedy troupe from the south of England. The performances are energetic enough, but the writing is weak, particularly during the momentum sapping video clips, purportedly broadcast live from the dressing room between sketches. They would be wise to ditch these, not least because they allow bored audience members a convenient window to sneak out. They have their occasional moments though, and do a good gag in groan-inducing puns, but it's no coincidence that their best received sketch features a Mastermind contestant whose specialist subject is bad taste jokes – none of which were written by the Fiddlers themselves.

Laughing Horse @ The Three Sisters, 4 - 28 Aug (not 15, 16), 3.45pm (4.45pm), free, fpp103. tw rating 2/5 [jm]

Just The Tonic's Afternoon Delight

Just The Tonic

Down in the dark caves of Just The Tonic waits 'Afternoon Delight', a showcase of five acts from around the Fringe who attempt to entertain and attract you to their full shows at the festival. 'Afternoon Delight' is not a particularly bad example of the form – acts like 'WitTank' and 'Piff The Magic Dragon' stand out from the pack, one a threesome of sketchsters, the other a wonderfully grumpy magic dragon. However, the show is let down by an indifferent and uncharismatic compere who begins the show hungover and muddling around on stage, leaving the audience cold for the first act. Considering many shows that do this better are on at the Free Fringe, the ticket price doesn't feel justified.

Just the Tonic At The Caves, 4 - 28 Aug (not 17), 13.00pm (2.15pm), £5.00, fpp103. tw rating 2/5 [jfb]

Kerry Godliman – Wonder Woman

Bound And Gagged Comedy

Modern women have to be superheroes with mile-a-minute minds and manic multi-tasking skills – or so runs the cliché. Godliman plays on this, flying from the start with a routine which flings more words and tangential sideswipes than the audience can safely handle. But she eventually exhausts even herself and realises she shares little with her hero in the blue hot pants. Lines like “I wear so much make-up it's like a burqa” cleverly begin to let the mask slip and, as she slides into confessional mode, she remains just as entertaining yet more humane, and easier to relate to. Kerry surmises that she's no superhero, but at least she's happy and trying. It's funny, not hilarious, but a charming way to spend an hour.

Pleasance Courtyard, 3 - 28 August (not 17), 6.00pm (7.00pm), £9.50 - £12.00, fpp104. tw rating 3/5 [JH]

TW RATINGS

1/5 Bad

2/5 Mediocre

3/5 Good

4/5 Very Good

5/5 Brilliant

INTERVIEW

rosie wilby: the accidental comedian

Rosie Wilby has become a bit of a ThreeWeeks favourite in recent years, charming our reviewers with her shows 'I Am Nesia' and 'The Science Of Sex'.

What our writers may not have known (although they probably did, they all being very well informed and very good at research) is that Wilby did not begin her career in comedy, but in music, starting out as a singer during those heady Britpop days of the 1990s. It was a period that saw her playing at Glastonbury, and at the legendary Ronnie Scott's venue in London, appearing alongside the likes of Jamie Cullum and Bob Geldof, as well as writing about music on the side.

It's those experiences that form the basis of Rosie's new Fringe show. “It's the first time I've ever combined my music and my comedy in one show”, she explains. “I'd always assumed that, as my songs were a bit serious and wistful, they were a completely separate thing that should be put to one side once my comedy took off. But then, last year I dug out an old cuttings folder during a clearout and found copies of my 'Rosie's Pop Diary' column, which ran from 1996 to 2000 in Making Music magazine and detailed my experiences trying to make it in the music business. I realised that there was a funny and charming story there that the songs were a part of. And in context it seems to work really well”.

As with many musicians, Wilby's journey through music began when she was very young. “I wrote songs from age eleven on a tiny synthesiser”, she recalls, “and did my first gig in my parents' Lancashire front garden with the kids from next door roped in as backing vocalists. One of my hits of the time was entitled 'School Is Out'. It sounded not dissimilar to the Tears For Fears track 'Shout'. It was my dream to get down to London and play music in a band”.

It was a dream that she ultimately realised. After finishing college, Rosie headed for the capital to study film, and began responding to 'singer wanted' ads in the fondly remembered but now long defunct music weekly that was Melody Maker. But it wasn't long before she was making her own music. “I finally mustered up the confidence to write my own songs and get my own band together”, she explains, “and we released an album and toured under the name Wilby. At the same time I blagged my way into music journalism, firstly writing for local newspapers in North London, and then Time Out, and then NME and others”.

But not everything went swimmingly for Rosie's music career, as you

might hope if she's turning it into a comedy show. For starters, her house burned down two days before her big album launch at Camden's Monarch. “The soot stained CD I rescued from my semi melted player was the first Elbow album” she recalls, going on to note more logistical problems that stemmed from the fire: “I took to the stage wearing an assortment of borrowed clothes from friends. One friend donated her Brownie Uniform! Maybe because I'm small she thought I could get away with wearing that”.

It's certainly rich comic material, but comedy itself seems so different to music unless your songs are comedic, which in this case they clearly weren't. So how did Wilby end up doing comedy instead of music? “It really WAS an accident”, she explains. “I unintentionally started telling funny stories and anecdotes between my songs once my band had all left me and I'd gone solo. I felt that without the oomph of a band I needed to add something extra to my performance”. And the links between the songs, it seems, started to take over.

Rosie Wilby's show Rosie's Pop Diary is on at Just the Tonic at The Tron from 3 - 29 Aug (not 15, 16) at 6.20pm (7.20pm), fpp144.

READ MORE
ThreeWeeks.co.uk/rosiewilby



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■ CAMPAIGN

Amnesty International earlier this week announced its Edinburgh Festival campaign for 2011, which will focus on the fate of five men in the United Arab Emirates – the UAE 5 – who have been jailed over charges of “insulting officials” after they criticised the country’s government and called for democracy, mainly online.

Amnesty supporters are encouraging Fringe-goers to text the word FREEDOM and their name to the number 81222 to add themselves to a petition that will be handed to the UAE embassy in London ahead of the five men’s trial in September.

Announcing this year’s Fringe-focused campaign, Amnesty International Scotland Director John Watson told ThreeWeeks: “The UAE 5 should be released immediately and unconditionally. Their case is typical of the thousands of people in other countries across the Middle East and North Africa – from Egypt to Syria, Libya to Bahrain – whose right to freedom of expression has been denied”.

He continued: “In other countries in the Middle East people have been jailed and tortured just for speaking out; or beaten and shot at just for protesting peacefully in the streets. Here in Edinburgh we can use our freedom of speech to help free the UAE 5. Just by sending a text, people can join our petition to demand their release, which we’ll deliver to the UAE’s London embassy. We’re hoping that thousands of people will join us and speak up on their behalf”.

As well as taking to the streets of the Festival, Amnesty will rally support for their campaign at the annual Stand Up For Freedom gala show, which will take place on 17 Aug at the EICC, featuring the likes of Mark Watson, Ed Byrne, Russell Kane, David O’Doherty, Holly Walsh and Roisin Conaty.

Confirming his support for the Amnesty project, Watson told ThreeWeeks: “Poking fun at officials and questioning the authorities is a stock-in-trade for all comedians. We’ve got to stand up for people’s right to peacefully express their opinions. I hope plenty of people send a text and this campaign puts some pressure on the UAE authorities to let these guys go”.

Tickets for Stand Up To Freedom 2011 are available from www.venue150.com



COMEDY REVIEWS



5/5 SHOW: Margaret Cho – Cho Dependent

Bound And Gagged Comedy

Women talking crudely about sex. We are often threatened by it as entertainment. So, too often we get some pathetic ‘Sex And The City’ Samantha-type saying something mildly surprising about a penis. Not Margaret Cho. Her outrageous routine focuses mainly on her desire to continue having sex into old age, if only so she can remove her false teeth to fit two cocks in her mouth. A statement that effectively induces uproarious laughter from the audience, along with a hand-to-the-face sharp-intake-of-breath: “Oh God, she actually just said that”. I laughed so hard a little bit of pee came out. Go see Margaret Cho, but do not, for God’s sake, take your Granny.

Assembly George Square, 3 - 29 Aug (not 10, 17), 9.00pm (10.00pm), £13.00 - £16.00, fpp113. tw rating 5/5 [sm]

Lewis Schaffer Is Free Until Famous In A Smaller Room At An Earlier Time

Lewis Schaffer

Clearly experienced and armed with a backlog of jokes, Schaffer instead opts for off-colour conversation with the audience. Finding yourself in a one-on-one conversation with the comedian at a standup gig is awkward; Schaffer knows this and capitalises on it. Climbing over chairs in the small dark room at the top of The Counting House to get closer to his victim, he locks you with an intense stare and dares you to break as he talks to you for the next few minutes. While not laugh-out-loud funny, it is an entertaining 45 minutes that is over in a flash. That is not to say it should be any longer.

Laughing Horse @ The Counting House, 4 - 28 Aug, 4.45pm (5.45pm), free, fpp109. tw rating 3/5 [jfb]

Shmozle

Workshed Productions / Laughing Horse Free Fringe

How can you be a double act if you’re only one man? Simple. Create a partner by pre-recording your own voice and perform sketches opposite yourself. That’s what Moz does in this highly original show. Unfortunately, things go awry when Shmozle, his eponymous comedic partner, suffers an existential crisis upon realising he is in fact just a voiceover with his every word predetermined by a

script. At this point he rebels, forcing Moz into a metaphysical conflict with his own words. The exceptionally clever writing is counter-balanced by enjoyably puerile humour, which consistently amuses without quite hitting the heights of hilarity. Very enjoyable, and you have to admire the amount of work which has clearly gone into it.

Laughing Horse @ Espionage, 4 - 20 Aug, 2.15pm (3.15pm), free, fpp151. tw rating 4/5 [im]

SomeNews - The Free Topical News Show

Steve N Allen

Nestled in the basement of a New Town pub is this little gem of a comedy news show hosted by the charmingly affable Steve N. Allen, who bounds on-stage, determined to make the best of a small, slightly rain-sodden crowd. He opens with some chat before launching into riffs and rants on hot topic news stories, a couple of fun musical interludes and a handful of varying-in-quality impressions. His patter with individual audience members is witty and well-honed, instantly allaying the small audience syndrome. Allen hits the mark more often than not, with an effusive mix of biting satire and gleeful mud-slinging that recalls Russell Howard by way of Ian Hislop. More than worth a look.

Laughing Horse @ The Newsroom, 5 - 28 Aug, 5.15pm (6.15pm), free, fpp153. tw rating 4/5 [rss]

BEST BITS, BAD BITS: LUKE WRIGHT

Aisle16 co-founder and Poet In Residence on Radio 4’s ‘Saturday Live’, Luke Wright on the best, and worst, of his Edinburgh Fringe experiences.

THE BEST BITS:

Arthur’s Seat: There’s a mountain in the middle of the city! I’m from Essex and you don’t get that sort of thing around there. Every year I make time to climb Arthur’s Seat, the 251m hill in the middle of Holyrood Park. You get amazing views of Edinburgh and a real sense of escape from what can otherwise be a pretty unrelenting festival. Once in a while we go at night, usually after a few rounds of Tennent’s, and one year we even took a night time dip in Dunsapie Loch on our way back down. Though my companion, Paul Foot, did later find a small dead fish in his underpants, that presumably swam in there while we bathed, so that bit is possibly not recommended.

Taxis: I’m not usually a taxi man. In rural Suffolk, where I live now, they cost about £300, so no one bothers. Besides, everyone drinks and drives in the countryside, it’s

how we cull our stupider males. However, in Edinburgh, and certainly by Week Three, I get taxis everywhere. I’m chalking this up as a PRO point because, even though my reluctance to walk even a few hundred metres these days is probably a sign of dark mental malaise, it’s a blessed relief in the miserable humid rain. And you can pretend you’re a chauffeured star, even though Chortle said you were “over-rehearsed and stifled”.

Brooke’s Bar: I played The Pleasance every year from 2003 to 2007, then they stopped calling. I don’t let this worry me. I’m not welcome at plenty of more impressive theatres than that. However, I do still make it my mission at the beginning of the Festival to blag a pass to their performer’s bar, Brooke’s. Upstairs in the Dome, Brooke’s seems somewhere between student common room and nursing home. They always leave the lights on too bright and my ‘cooler’ friends always hated it there. But I love it, a place where performers can get together and drink over-priced fizzy lager, bitch about our reviews and audience numbers, and get hideously pissed.

THE BAD BITS:

The Weather: The stinking, bastard weather. It never used to rain this much, did it? Did it? Really? Well, maybe I just notice it more now I have to wear a suit to my gigs. One of my strongest memories of Edinburgh is just feeling hot, cold and wet all at the same time – and not just while watching the Caesar Twins.

The Whole Review Thing: “It’s three stars, but it reads like a four”. We all want reviews. We need them to sell tickets. We especially like it when they are nice about us. Hey, we can even stomach the criticisms (Steve Bennett, you were right, we were “over-rehearsed and stifled”). But when a year or two of your life has gone into making something (not to mention the decades you’ve spent getting good at what you do), you can’t help but feel a little helpless and sad when it’s judged on a scale of 1-5 by someone who can’t string a sentence together.

Loneliness: I love what I do and I want to take it to a bigger audience. I also love the

challenge of making a piece of theatre work night after night in a less than ideal space for that piece of theatre. I love the excitement of being in a new place, I love the sense of adventure. But I’m married. I’m a dad to a very young boy who misses me when I go to put the toast on. This Edinburgh is going to be hard on us all. I hope this will make me appreciate the challenges and excitement of doing the Fringe that little bit more, but there will also be tears before bedtime.

Luke’s show ‘Cynical Ballads’ is on at Underbelly from 4-28 Aug (not 16) at 4.15pm. Tickets from edfringe.com.



Luke’s other show ‘Aisle16 R Kool’ is on at The Banshee Labyrinth from 5-27 Aug (not 16) at 10.00pm. It’s a free show.



Q&A: WHEN RICHARD MET JERRY

In the first year of ThreeWeeks, way back in 1996, both Richard Herring and Jerry Sadowitz graced our cover. Fifteen years on, the former uses his stint as ThreeWeeks Guest Editor to ask the latter some questions

RH: In the 1980s you started out doing magic in pubs. Were you always telling jokes as well, and was your style immediately vitriolic and in your face, or was that something that you worked towards gradually?

JS: Magic and comedy are very separate to me. I love close up magic, which I cannot do in the show without a screen, projector, etc. But I used to do busking for a bit of money and the comedy came out while I was performing. Then, as now, it was very bitter, because I didn't like 'prostituting' the magic. People have a romantic notion that buskers love what they do. Maybe some do, but I didn't... I needed the money.

RH: You were one of the first stand up comedians I saw live, at the Gilded Balloon in 1987 (on a mixed bill). Alternative comedy was all being about right on and saying the right thing back then and yet you went your own way and did the opposite. How did the other acts respond to you at the time – did they accept you or were you ostracised? I can't imagine that many of them approved.

JS: No, they didn't accept me at all. Throughout the eighties I think I worked in only two comedy clubs... The Comedy Store and The Tunnel. With few exceptions, they were the only two clubs that would book me.

RH: Your raw personal pain runs through all your comedy, do you think a comedian really needs to have suffered physically and emotionally to be good at this job?

JS: No I don't, and I don't recommend pain to anybody. Eddie Izzard and Phil Kay are two examples of great stand ups who I can't imagine are very unhappy.

RH: You profess bitterness at the success of other comedians, but do you really crave what they have? And if so is it the money, the fame or the recognition that you covet?

JS: I have long reached the stage where I am not going to experience happiness or success. What I want is for other people to be brought down to my level of unhappiness, which is something I still think is achievable. Whatever anyone

thinks of me, it does not grant Channel Four and the BBC the right to allow my comedy to be syphoned, tweaked or 'refined' through others. Most comics are HAPPY to compromise because they have so little to begin with. For most of them, every day and every offer is a bonus... but I'm certainly not jealous of them or their 'acts'. I am envious of their income and their regular workload. Work is especially important... sets you free, apparently.

RH: Many comedians have clearly been influenced by you. Who were your comedic influences and are there any comedians working now who you actually like?

JS: I rarely go to see comedians. I'm embarrassed to associate myself with an industry overrun with corporate whores, chancers and children. It's crazy that most comedy commissioning editors now are FEMALE!! How are they ever going to know what's funny?? My influences were Python, Derek and Clive and Alexei Sayle, in that order. The first gave me a love of comedy, the second showed me the possibilities, and the third showed me that it could be done in public.

RH: I enjoy it when you slag off Stewart Lee – could you do some of that now please?

SL: I hate it when you meet someone and they turn out to be really nice. It just clouds your opinion of them artistically. Stewart is a lovely guy... the problem is me. I have an intense dislike of the over privileged ruling classes controlling everything, especially in a domain which so obviously DOES NOT BELONG TO THEM. Chris Addison, David Mitchell, and all the rest. I just can't get past it.

RH: When I saw you in London earlier this year, I felt the show and the character you were portraying was like something from Shakespeare or Beckett. I was appalled, amused and offended in equal measure – but if you were a character in a play then everyone would love that stuff. Why do you think people are so dismissive of comedy and get upset by things which they wouldn't be upset about in theatre?

JS: Theatre and character comedy are both safe... audiences know to suspend their disbelief, and that it isn't real. Stand up is both direct AND 'real'... so it could be said that audiences should suspend their BELIEFS in order to extrapolate the comedy without getting bogged down by analysing the right from the wrong, the real from the irony. That's why I can enjoy Bernard

Manning and Alexei Sayle without having to make judgements on their politics.

RH: At that gig I also felt that the extent with which you live your comedy and your determination to say whatever you like, regardless how unpalatable, sets you far above almost any comedian I can think of. You made all other comedians seem like phonies (and I include myself in that), I have never seen someone put so much on the line for their comedy. When you have a supersoaker supposedly full of urine it is totally believable that that might actually be the case. Is there anywhere you wouldn't go for comedy – I don't mean subject matter, because clearly everything is fair game to you – but is there some part of you that you keep protected and secret?

JS: It's easy to do what I do when you have nothing to lose. I fail to understand how I've even got this far and why. But I do believe in the art of comedy, and that there are no boundaries, and that it is sacrosanct. I'm a coward in real life. But when I was in Montreal about to walk on stage and the comedy muse said "Open with 'good evening moose fuckers'..." I had to go with that even though I was conscious that it might ruin the gig before it started. (Which it did). If I went back to Montreal in the future, I would absolutely open with that same line and expand on it as a theme, the cunts.

RH: Your friend Ian is quoted as saying of you: "He seems angry and aggressive, but underneath there's a layer of the vulnerable romantic. But he's not going to say that because that would really make him vulnerable". I think that this is possibly the key to why your comedy works so well. The onstage character can be a monster, but ultimately we see his humanity and his pain and we identify with it. For most of us the voice you project on stage is something the rest of us are trying to repress. Isn't the truth that in real life you are a shy and polite gentleman?

JS: I'm a truly lousy, ungrateful, mistrusting, supremely fearful, failed human being and I believe ultimately that the harsh judgement placed upon me by God, mankind, women, the comedy industry and the magic fraternity is probably deserved. So you're all off the hook.

Jerry's show 'Comedian, Magician, Psychopath' is on at the Assembly Hall, from 6 - 14 Aug at 9.00pm (10.00pm), fpp97



CABARET

Q&A: JOE SIMMONS AND LORRAINE CHASE



One of those shows that could frankly appear in any section of the programme (it's listed under comedy, today we're saying cabaret, sometimes it can be quite theatrical), Edinburgh Tonight returns to the Fringe this year, this time with a second host joining Joe Simmons: a certain Lorraine Chase. To get both in the mood for their daily Fringe chat show, we asked Joe to interview Lorraine for ThreeWeeks.

JS: Have you ever interviewed other people?

LC: No, I haven't really done it before. Though I am always interested in meeting new people, and I suspect I slip into a kind of interviewer mode whenever I do. I've been a guest on many chat shows over the years, of course – Des O'Connor, Terry Wogan, Michael Parkinson – and each time if I found a question difficult,

I tended to flip the interview on its head and becoming the interviewer. It's a good survival instinct.

JS: Do you think you'll be a sensitive interviewer?

LC: I think I probably will be, yes. Because in life, if you've had great sadness or great joy yourself, then you can see that in others... so I will observe, and look to see something, and if I've had the experience, then I'll be able to work with that.

JS: Which interviewer have you faced and most admired?

LC: I loved Parkinson. I was very honoured to be interviewed by him twice. It's the style. Laidback. In fact, Parky said to me after the interview that he had three hours with a researcher and never touched on any of it. He wanted you to shine, and if you were shining that was great for him.

JS: People will have seen you most recently on 'Emmerdale', though many will still remember those Campari 'Luton Airport' adverts that first brought you to our TV screens many, many years ago. It was kind of the 'viral' of its

day. Did you have any inkling that it would become so big?

LC: No, not at all, it was a commercial, and I'd done plenty of commercials before that.

JS: What was the public response like?

LC: Overnight everybody knew you. I wasn't overly beautiful, or overly sexy, so women would come up to me and say "Lorraine, you could be our daughter", or "sign this, my ole man thinks you lovely".

JS: When you did the Campari advert – did they ask specifically for the cockney accent?

LC: They auditioned about 2000 models, and we were told that they wanted a regional accent because Campari was seen as a drink of toffs, and they wanted to put it on the optics in pubs with the gins and tonics, so that's what their remit was. Most people think the first one was the 'Luton Airport' ad, but it wasn't. The first one was 'Nice ere, innit' – which was set in Venice on the Grand Canal – and the guy said to me "have you ever read Pygmalion?" and I'd say "Pig Who?" I wore a Zandra Rhodes dress coming

out of a gondola, and I had curly hair, so I'd travel out on the plane in rollers. I didn't have any idea!

JS: What's your biggest fear for our show?

LC: I met you when you interviewed me on last year's show. You're a lovely interviewer. Though when I was asked by producer Terry to come on board with you, I was very nervous! But in the old days, when I hadn't been in this business so long, when I wasn't so tarnished, I feel I sparkled more. I think the best way to restore that sparkle is to try things that are really new, do things you've never done before. I think doing this show will help me get back a little, I don't know, a little joie de vivre. The Edinburgh Festival is a joyous thing for all ages – across the board – 15 or 90. I feel this is a great opportunity, and I know I'm in good hands.

Edinburgh Tonight is on at Space Cabaret from 5-27 Aug (not 15, 22) at 4.50pm. Tickets from edfringe.com



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CABARET REVIEWS

The Bitch Doctors

Bitch Doctors

If you are suffering a sprained ankle, broken heart, or even symptoms of Festival fatigue, the Bitch Doctors are worth a visit. In an interactive show of this kind, a lively audience - as present in this case - proves a necessity, as they are required to share their ailments, and are rewarded by the doctor's 'bitchy' advice in the form of banter and song. Despite the title, however, our hosts did not prove as 'bitchy' as expected: they were mostly laughing with the audience rather than at them. Though the humour in the music routines can be somewhat repetitive at times, the hosts give a notable performance and provide an overall entertaining way to spend the hour.

The Voodoo Rooms, 3 – 28 Aug (not 8, 15, 22), 5.30pm (6.30pm), £10.00, fpp8. tw rating 3/5 [ma]

The Lady Boys of Bangkok – Fur Coats and French Knickers Tour

Lady Boys of Bangkok

Firmly established Festival favourites the Lady Boys once again sashay sparkling across the stage. From hypnotically nimble choreography to campness manifest in its most extreme form by 'Tuck That', prepare to be dazzled by the Bangkok beauties. Although poor lip-syncing detracts from their mystique, all is forgiven when an ogre-like Marilyn Monroe clammers from the curtains. However much you try and fight it, you simply won't be able to resist jumping to your feet and clapping along to

a rendition of 'Five-Hundred Miles'. Make no mistake, this show isn't everyone's cup of tea, but if you have a sneaky suspicion that it might be, you're in for a night of outrageous fun.

Meadows Theatre Big Top, 5 – 27 Aug (not 8, 9), times vary, £15.00 – £20.00, fpp11. tw rating 4/5 [fm]

More Jewish Chronicles

Daniel Cainer

Those who are unfamiliar with Jewish ways of life will adore this moving portrayal offered by Daniel Cainer. More than just a history class, 'More Jewish Chronicles' is nothing short of artistic brilliance; the effortless integration of song-writing with that of charming story-telling invites the audience to a night of light-hearted genius. From the start, Cainer's jovial persona welcomes you, his accompaniment providing rhythmic tones for comical tales of Jewish culture. It's fast-paced, incredibly amusing, and even a little bit naughty; you cannot fail to become immersed in every lyric. The sound of the audience's disappointment at the signalling of the closing song truly demonstrates its impact. This show oozes a feel-good factor, and will leave you wanting more.

C aquila, 4-29 Aug (not 8, 9), £7.50-£10.50, ffp12. tw rating 4/5. [mj]



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16th	Hayes Beck Theatre	8pm	02085618371
17th	Brighton Theatre Royal	8pm	08448717650
19th	Oxford New Theatre	8pm	08448471585
21st	Manchester Palace Theatre	8pm	08448472277
22nd	Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall	8pm	08703207000
23rd	Chesterfield Winding Wheel	7.30pm	01246345222
24th	Grimsby Auditorium	8pm	08448472426
25th	Glasgow Kings Theatre	7.30pm	08448717648
27th	Birmingham New Alexandra Theatre	7.30pm	08448472302
28th	Leamington Spa Royal Spa Centre	7.30pm	01926410410
29th	Southend Palace Theatre	8pm	01702351135
30th	Stevenage Gordon Craig Theatre	7.45pm	01438363200

OCTOBER

1st	Northampton Royal & Derngate Theatre	8pm	01604624811
3rd	Dartford Orchard Theatre	7.45pm	01322220000
4th	Worcester Swan Theatre	8pm	01905611427
5th	Stafford Gate House Theatre	8pm	01785254653
6th	Wimbledon New Wimbledon Theatre	7.30pm	08448717646
7th	Reading Hexagon Theatre	8pm	01189606060
8th	Liverpool Empire Theatre	8pm	08448472525
10th	Blackpool Grand Theatre	7.30pm	01253290190
11th	Peterborough The Broadway Theatre	7.30pm	08448500850
12th	Ipswich Regent Theatre	8pm	01473433100
13th	Bedford Corn Exchange	8pm	01234269519
14th	Newcastle Journal and Tyne Theatre	8pm	08444939999
15th	Stoke-On-Trent Victoria Hall	7.30pm	08448717649
18th	Doncaster Civic Theatre	8pm	01302342349
19th	Leeds City Varieties	7.30pm	01133917777
20th	Burnley Mechanics	8pm	01282664400
21st	Cheltenham Town Hall	8pm	08445762210
22nd	Worthing Pavilion Theatre	7.30pm	01903206206
25th	St Albans Arena	8pm	01727844488
26th	Folkstone Leas Cliff Theatre	8pm	08448471776
27th	Cambridge The Junction	8pm	01223511511
28th	Newark Palace Theatre	8pm	01636655755
29th	Torquay Princess Theatre	7.30pm	08448472315

NOVEMBER

2nd	Harlow Playhouse	7.30pm	01279431945
3rd	Derby Assembly Theatre	7.30pm	01332255800
4th	Carlisle Sands Centre	8pm	01228625222
5th	York Opera House	8pm	08448472322
6th	Hull Truck Theatre	8pm	01482323638
8th	Yeovil Octagon	7.30pm	01935422884
9th	Bournemouth Pavilion Theatre	8pm	08445763000
11th	Croydon Fairfield Hall	8pm	02086889291
12th	Swansea Grand Theatre	7.30pm	01792475715
13th	Preston Charter Theatre	7.30pm	01772258858
14th	Barnsley Civic Centre	8pm	01226327000
15th	Middlesbrough Town Hall	8pm	01642729729
17th	Bristol Hippodrome	8pm	05448713012
18th	Leicester Demontfort Hall	8pm	01162333111
19th	Hastings White Rock Theatre	8pm	01424462288
23rd	Swindon Wyvern Theatre	7.30pm	01793524481
24th	Jersey Opera House	8pm	01534511115
25th	Jersey Opera House	8pm	01534511115
26th	Jersey Opera House	8pm	01534511115
28th	Dunstable Grove Theatre	7.30pm	01582602080

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Q&A: ANTHONY RAPP

Anthony Rapp is your genuine 'Broadway type', having risen to fame as the star of the original run of 'Rent', and reprised the role in the 2005 film version and a subsequent stage tour. His film credits include 'A Beautiful Mind' and 'Six Degrees Of Separation', he's been on 'Law & Order: Special Victims Unit', and played Charlie Brown in another Broadway production, the 1999 revival of 'You're A Good Man Charlie Brown'. What is this big name doing in Edinburgh? Appearing in '3D Hamlet' at theSpaces on the Mile, that's what.

TW: You began your career when you were very young – how did it all happen, and how did you end up on Broadway?

AR: I was the youngest of three kids, and my mom was a single mother nurse, who above all else was fiercely committed that we all grow up as happy and active as possible. One summer when I was six, she was a nurse at a summer camp, and we kids joined her. It was there that I auditioned for and was cast in my first show: I played the Cowardly Lion in 'The Wizard of Oz'. I was

hooked, and started doing community theatre around my home town, outside of Chicago, for a couple of years. At one point, a director recommended to my mom that I start auditioning for professional work in Chicago, and my extremely supportive mother made that possible, and I started getting work. I was extraordinarily fortunate in so many ways that I appreciate now even more than I did as a kid. So many kids in showbiz are thrust into it kicking and screaming, or have controlling and obsessive parents who suck all of the joy out of everything. My mom was nothing but supportive.

TW: Do you think you might have chosen an alternate career, had you not met with success at an early age?

AR: It's beyond impossible for me to think of that after the fact, because everything worked out the way that it did. But I suppose I probably always would have been drawn to some sort of artistic pursuit. Or I would have been drawn to work with animals in some capacity.

TW: You've appeared on stage, on film and on television during your career. Do you have a favourite, or do they all have their pros and cons? If you really had to choose one element, which would it be?

AR: I don't say this only because I'm currently participating in the world's

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THEATRE REVIEWS

Lullabies of Broadmoor - Wilderness

Stepping Out Theatre and Chrysalis Theatre
Part of a quartet of closely linked plays, 'Wilderness' tells the true story of Dr William Chester Minor, a brilliant but troubled man incarcerated in Broadmoor for murdering an innocent man during a paranoid delusion. Stepping Out Theatre produces work exclusively dealing with mental health issues, and their experience shows, as Minor's condition is authentically realised. It is examined through his relationships with his guard and victim's widow, both in reality and within the confines of Minor's mind. Also shown is his relationship with his victim's ghost. It's compelling stuff, performed by a strong cast. Genuinely moving one moment and darkly funny the next, this is a great way to round off your Festival day.

C, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 24, 26, 27 Aug, times vary, £6.50 - £10.50, fpp278. tw rating 4/5 [jm]

The Trials Of Galileo

Hint Of Lime Productions

"You could have heard a mouse fart". Galileo Galilei, wonderfully outlined by Tim Hardy in this one-man show, lets the audience look into his heart when he takes them on a most personal discourse of his famous trials. Deeply Catholic, Galileo has indubitable proof that the Sun is the central point of our universe; Catholic dogma, on the other hand, states that Earth is the centre of God's creation. So how do you live with knowledge? Do you choose truth or life? With a delicious dollop of sarcasm and wit, Hardy attempts to describe

such inner conflict. A fine and sarcastic play full of thought-provoking contradiction, it is as soul-breakingly bitter as it is heart-breakingly humorous.

C aquila, 4 - 29 Aug (not 15), 6.50pm (8.05pm), £7.50 - £10.50, fpp306. tw rating 4/5 [vk]

Kaddish For Pinter

Studio Earth, Scotland

Despite a strong cast and a script from respected writer David Ian Neville, this flawed tribute never comes together. Drawing heavily on 'One For The Road', the play reveals how the captors are as much in the dark as the captive. The three performers are assured and playful in their roles, determinedly drawing out what emotion and humour they can, while brief interactions with the audience add a sharp and appropriately isolating edge. However, it sets aside Pinter's sparse style in favour of dense language, hairpin power shifts, and an uncompromising refusal to give anything away, leaving the audience with little to cling to. Ultimately bewildering, it leaves you wondering if it's come to bury Pinter, not praise him.

Spotlites @ The Merchant's Hall, 4 - 28 Aug (not 10, 22), 5.45 pm (6.45 pm), £10.00 - £12.00, fpp273. tw rating 2/5 [df]



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MUSICAL REVIEWS

The Improvised Musical

No Shoes Theatre

A pianist, a drummer, a lighting director and six actors – this is the perfect equation for an on-the-spot, improvised musical. Here, the viewers run the show, from the where, when and what; it's a concept which essentially puts human ingenuity and wit to the test, and it turns out to be a natural crowd-pleaser with excellent rapport between the cast and audience. For those who cannot tolerate a musical without a solid storyline – avoid. For all others looking for a bit of fun, you can go for it again and again and not be bored, simply because it will be radically different every single time. As last minute as this musical may get, do not wait till the last minute to book your tickets.

C, 3 - 29 Aug (not 16), 6pm (7pm), £5.50 - £11.50, fpp226. tw rating 4/5 [cm]

Toulouse-Lautrec: The Musical

Sawaki Productions (Japan)

Flamboyant and turbulent, the life of artist Toulouse-Lautrec is anything but boring. Brought to the Fringe this year with enthusiasm and gusto, this one-man musical by Japanese company Sawaki Productions seems an unusual medium to portray the life of this French artist. Yet Jun Sawaki's charisma and personality transcend the language barrier, and his animated acting creates a convincing performance. However, this piece of musical theatre often feels more like a disjointed recital than a musical in itself and lacks some of the body one can usually expect from a musical. Without Sawaki's competent performance and voice, this

show's success is dubious, but his emotion and passion will certainly not be lost in translation.

C Aquila, 4-29 Aug, 4.10pm (5.10pm), £7.50 - £10.50, fpp234. tw rating 3/5 [ck]

Shhh...

Right Here Productions

The debut rom-com musical from Alison Telfer and Dan Greavey is an entertaining venture into the lives of ordinary people, complete with laughter, tears and a little something in between. With a tasteful score orchestrated by Sam Shearer, showcasing a variety of numbers from the soulful to the uplifting, this is a no frills musical that can be enjoyed by all. With strong performances from the cast - most notably Joe Whiteman as the quintessential gay best friend and Lisa Leonard as the young love interest - this is an impressive first production from the young company. Its only let down is the sub-plot involving an abusive step-father which is not explored in enough detail to make it a worthwhile addition to the show.

TheSpace @ Venue45, 5 - 13 Aug (not 7), 20.10 (21.25), £6.00- £7.00, fpp233. tw rating 3/5 [aq]

Apply Within

Modus Operandi Theatre

In this period of economic discontent, you'd think a topical musical dealing with the road to employment would be a winner. Sadly, you'd be wrong. This musical has the potential for witty social commentary, but songs about CVs and the nervous habits that can develop in an interview waiting-room lyrically leave much to be desired, and are at times overly simple or rely on

nonsensical rhymes. The choreography is disastrous – clumsy, poorly executed and not befitting the small space or small-scale production. The performers do their best with the piece and there is some outstanding singing from the two male characters. Ultimately, however, to borrow a phrase from Lord Sugar – 'Apply Within', "You're fired!"

Pleasance Courtyard, 6 - 28 Aug, 1.30pm (2.30pm), £7.50 - £9.50, fpp224. tw rating 2/5 [am]

Spring Awakening

Gordonstoun School

Be reminded that talent has no age limit, as this cast of 18 teenagers come together to perform in this musical rendering of controversial play, 'Spring Awakening'. Set in the context of 19th century German society, it revolves around the all too familiar woes of growing up – from questioning morality and approaching sexuality to challenging conformity. With an incredible blend of rock music and singing, this show is every bit as electrifying as it claims to be. Despite a few slow moments towards the end of the production, the cast successfully make a swift comeback with a climactic finale. Above all, this is a truly enjoyable performance by a group of promising young adults, who genuinely enjoy performing.

C, 5 - 13 Aug, 1.30pm (2.50pm), £5.50 - £10.50, fpp234. tw rating 4/5 [cm]



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most famous live performance festival, but there is nothing at all as special as theatre to me. I love being an audience member of quality films and television programmes, but even when filming is on, it's never as fulfilling as the best theatre experiences are. The only con I can think of regarding doing a run of a show on stage is that it can be a bit of a grind physically and emotionally, depending on the show. But I also welcome that challenge, and love the opportunity to tell the story from start to finish, with heart and soul and commitment, every performance.

TW: You have also written a book, a memoir. Was that an enjoyable thing to do?

AR: I can't say it was always enjoyable. It was daunting, exhausting, emotionally draining, and lonely. But I am very proud of the end result, blown away by the wonderful response the book has received, and gratified that many people are finding comfort and resonance in its story.

TW: What made you decide to do a show in Edinburgh?

AR: I was invited to be a part of '3D Hamlet' by Sam and Nicola, the Fundamental Theatre Project's artistic team, and jumped at the chance. The timing was perfect, and the opportunity to try my hand at one of the greatest

roles ever written looked like a once in a lifetime occurrence.

TW: Is it the first time you have been to the Edinburgh Fringe? What do you expect from it?

AR: I came to the Fringe a few years ago when my brother, Adam, directed his play 'Finer Noble Gases' here. They were extremely well received, and I had a blast for the few days I was in town. I thought the city was gloriously beautiful, I loved the energy everywhere, and I left terrifically inspired. I'm hoping that this year's experiences will top all of that.

TW: Tell us something about the show, and the character you play.

AR: It's a muscular, passionate, resonant 65-minute adaptation of one of the most famous plays ever written - Hamlet - that demonstrates its enduring power and relevance all these hundreds of years after it was written. I have the great good fortune of being given the chance to do my best to bring to life the Dane himself, which is an actor's dream. Every time I get to live inside of Shakespeare's language I discover new colours, depths, and ideas, and I only hope my version does at least a little justice to the Bard's intentions.

Anthony is appearing in '3D Hamlet: A Lost Generation' at theSpaces on the Mile from 5 - 27 Aug (not 14, 28) at 8.40pm (10.00pm), fpp303.



5/5 SHOW: The Adventures Of Alvin Sputnik

Underbelly Productions

Tim Watts certainly lives up to expectations of presenting the highlight of the Fringe Festival this year – the Adventures of Alvin Sputnik. There is not a dull moment in this exceedingly enjoyable one-man show. The heart-broken lover, passionate environmentalist and unconventional hero – he is all of these in one. In Alvin's quest to discover the way to the core of the earth, Watts tells the tale through an eclectic mix of puppetry, animation and mime. Not forgetting the sporadic humour and soothing tunes on a ukulele, he showcases creativity which brings theatrics to greater heights. It is simple but not uninspiring, playful but not childish. This production will be sure to delight the youngest to the oldest – highly recommended.

Underbelly, Cowgate, 4 - 28 Aug (not 16), 6pm (7pm), £9.00 - £12.50, fpp236. tw rating 5/5 [cm]

CaLARTS Festival Theater - 8th Season on the Fringe!

11:45

dir by
Leila Ghaznavi

broken Wing

The love of two men — one American, one Iranian — for one woman culminates in a stirring

16:00 19:00

CalArts Center for New Performance

Daughter of a Cuban Revolutionary

Written and Performed by Marissa Chibas

14:45

INFINITE COAST'S

Hôtel de l'Avenir

infinitecoast.blogspot.com

20:30

little Eyolf

a play by HENRIK IBSEN

Silken Veils

by Leila Ghaznavi

5 Aug - 28 Aug 2011
no shows on the 8th or 16th
3:30 p.m.

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5-20 August
not 8,15,16 Aug

Broken Wing 11:45
Hôtel de l'Avenir 14:45
Daughter of a Cuban Revolutionary 16:00
Flesh Eating Tiger 19:00
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THEATRE

■ EIF TICKET OFFERS



The Edinburgh International Festival reckons that the number eight is its lucky number this year.

The theme running throughout the EIF, this year, of course, is the cultural interchange between Asia and the West and, they note, 8 is a lucky number in Chinese culture and was a holy number in ancient Japan. Plus, they add, the festival takes place in the eight month

and, erm, there are eight notes on a diatonic musical scale, and there's music in the festival.

If this new found obsession at EIF about the number eight sounds like some sort of publicity ploy to promote an eight pound ticket promotion, then you'd be right. The Festival announced this morning that a number of tickets for various shows in this year's programme will be available for just £8 for festival-goers under the age of 26. Shows included in the promotion will be announced each day at www.eif.co.uk/8.

The 2011 Edinburgh International Festival kicks off on Saturday.

■ CAN YOU SPOT THE FAKE BLURB?



With Festivals Edinburgh offering easy open access to show listings data for Edinburgh's various summer festivals this year, one web developer has created a fun game for Fringe-goers to play – Fakefringe.

The new website shows you listings for four Fringe shows. Three are real, one is fake. Your challenge, to spot the made up show.

Fakefringe creator James Baster told ThreeWeeks: "Fakefringe was sparked by a memory I had of an improv group I saw at the Fringe a few years back. They picked show titles out of a hat, all suggested by the audience, and made up a show based on the fake title".

"The website is a playful project, though we will collect some useful data about what show blurbs work and what doesn't, which we will share with performers".

You can test your own fake blurb spotting skills by playing Fakefringe at fakefringe.com

MORE THREEWEEKS



Look out for our **Weekly Editions** packed with news, reviews, interviews and guest columns every Tuesday of the festival, pick up your free copy at venues, cafes and bars all across Edinburgh.



The **Daily Edition** come outs daily, so that's seven days a week, from Friday 5 Aug, available to pick up each evening from ten central Edinburgh locations with all the very latest ThreeWeeks reviews.



The **eDaily** will land into inboxes every day from Friday 5 Aug, with news, interviews and all the latest reviews. Join 25,000 other festival fans and sign up to the eDaily for free at www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/eDaily



A new edition of the **iDaily** podcast will go live every week day of the festival from Monday 8 Aug. Each thirty minute show will have the latest news, gossip and chat. Stream or subscribe at www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/iDaily



www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk is one of the most read Edinburgh Festival websites in the world, and will be overflowing with content throughout August. Follow us on Twitter or Facebook for regular updates.



And talking of Twitter, don't forget the ThreeWeeks **Twittique** service, mini-critiques of four and five star reviews at twitter.com/twittique. This is the very first place you'll get to hear about the shows we love.



And finally, do not forget that all ThreeWeeks previews and reviews also appear in **ifringe**, the very best smartphone app at the festival. Check your app store of choice or go to www.ifringe.co.uk

biggest festival, biggest reviewer

THEATRE REVIEWS



5/5 SHOW: Daughter Of A Cuban Revolutionary

CalArts Festival Theatre

Being the 'Daughter Of A Cuban Revolutionary' comes, as you might expect, with some emotional baggage. Not only was Marissa Chibas' father, Raul, a major figure in the Cuban revolution, but her uncle, Eduardo, was also a popular politician who shot himself on air as a protest against government corruption. I arrived expecting something plaintive and earnest, but instead was instantly won over by Chibas' wry wit and energy. In this fascinating multimedia-laced piece of theatre, Chibas traces her compelling family history and slips on different characters so convincingly that you almost forget there's only one woman standing on the stage. With a winning combination of stirring subject matter and an entertaining presentation style, this show is an enthralling experience.

Venue 13, 5 - 20 Aug (not 8, 15, 16), 4.00pm (5.00pm), £5.00 - £8.00, fpp254 tw rating 5/5 [km]

Elegy

Transport / A Summerday

This play stretches out and attempts to tackle some fairly harrowing and poignant issues, as performer Jamie Bradley uses storytelling and movement to tell us of the murder of a gay Iraqi refugee exiled in Syria. The message, however, is lost in stylised dialogue and monotonous elucidation. As Bradley travels through the story, he's aided by occasional echoing sound effects from lone trucks to screeching alarms. Whilst being a noble attempt to escape from the predictable war-time narratives which dominate so much international theatre about the Middle East and Africa, the show's over-production and pretentious composition eclipse its intriguing investigation. And ultimately, I couldn't help but feel disappointed that it was merely a story and not a truer examination.

Whitespace, 4 - 28 Aug (not 9, 16, 23), 8:30pm (9:40pm), £7.00 - £10.00, fpp259. tw rating 2/5 [cij]

Fragments Of Ash

Notional Theatre

Spine-tingling and intense, this striking piece of new writing and moving production will have audiences gripping their seats from the first second. It focuses on the parallel stories of two mothers' experiences of war. Clér Stephens gives a stunning performance as Eleanor, whose narrative is cleverly interwoven with scenes from her past. The corresponding story of Rashida is portrayed through physical theatre. The dramatic staging can be unsettling and the use of both live and pre-recorded music is hugely effective in heightening the tension at the climax of the play. Emotionally charged throughout, it deals with issues such as terrorism, war and grief, giving it a distinctly ethical

message. Not for the faint-hearted but certainly a rewarding experience.

Venue 13, 5 - 27 Aug (not 15), times vary, £5.00 - £8.00, fpp 263. tw rating 4/5 [am]

Black Slap

Nisus Plays In Association With Fringe Management And The Lantor Theatre

It's 1964 and Harold Wilson has just won the election, ushering in an age of modernisation on a mildly enthusiastic public. The old times are over. So what will happen to this black and white minstrel show? At first, like all non-racists, I of course did not care. But it's a testament to the Alan Bennett-esque script that I slowly invested in the characters. The show's evident demise is set against plenty of timely social themes: a black stage-hand helps the boys black up, an argument breaks out about the merits of The Beatles against music hall traditionalism, and there is prejudice against Australian and gay minstrels in the troupe. A pleasant, if occasionally dragging way to spend an afternoon.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 3 - 28 Aug (not 15), 1.00pm (2.45pm), £8.00 - £11.00, fpp244. tw rating 3/5 [jh]



5/5 SHOW: On The Bench

Class Stage Productions

This wryly entertaining satire on the lifestyles of over-paid, over-sexed and over-exposed footballers entirely exceeds expectations. Inventive and thought-provoking, the all-female casting is far from gimmicky, and each skilled and versatile performer is as adept at capturing the mannerisms of swaggering sportsmen as the bored prostitutes who service them in the backs of limousines. The punch-lines come thick and fast throughout Kirsty Eyre's well-crafted and witty script, and a bittersweet ending plays on the audience's investment in the characters. Ultimately, it is a comment on the self-destruction of love-rat multi-millionaires who court the paparazzi whilst expecting their smuttiest secrets to be wiped with a man-sized super-injunction. This show deserves big audiences, of football fans and feminists alike.

C, 4 - 29 Aug (not 16), 8.30pm (9.20pm), £6.50 - £9.50, fpp286. tw rating 5/5 [fw]

Chips On Shoulders

Penguin Pie Productions

This heartfelt and humorous production leaves you feeling thankful to be out of high school. An overweight teenager decides he has had enough ridicule and takes measures to turn his life around, despite his obese mother, who wants only to feed him chips. Talent oozes from these young performers, though many of their characters are slightly too predictable. 'Chips On Shoulders' delivers more in the way of physical theatre than it does dramatically, making creative use of the most basic props. The play is overly narrated: it includes several third person

accounts from the protagonist, which leave the audience being told how to feel instead of experiencing it. Enjoyable, nonetheless, largely due to the talented group of young performers.

Zoo Roxy, Aug 5 - 20, 12:45pm (1:30pm), £5.00 - £7.00, fpp249. tw rating 3/5 [ae]

Constantinople

Theatre Beating

Charming semi-historical absurdity from two New Zealanders in togas. They mime, pun and fantasise their way between pairs of characters - Constantine and his DJ slave, or an insecure horse and his masseur. Their timing is impressive, and the show spectacularly ends with They Might Be Giants' 'Istanbul', sharing its gleeful anachronism. The non sequitur structure is mostly brilliant - the narrator is marked out from other characters only by his wearing a tie, made of newspaper, a sign, an asp, or a sheet). The Conversion of Constantine (in the world's first disco, 'Studio LIV') is overlong, and Barnie Duncan's Mediterranean accent is sometimes dodgy, but on the whole, this is wonderful, unpretentious postmodern slapstick.

Electric Circus, 5 - 29 Aug, times vary, free, fpp251. tw rating 4/5 [gl]

5/5 SHOW: Silken Veils

Ines Wurth Presents / Cal Arts

A story of war, childhood, laughter, loss - and, ultimately, love. This multi-layered production explores the Iranian Revolution, powerfully relayed through a deeply personal journey of self-discovery for central character Darya. Torn between the haunting ghosts of her past and present-day life, her story is told through a beautiful interplay of sound, visuals, puppetry and live performance. Despite touching on some harrowing subjects, the mood is cleverly lifted at crucial points throughout, providing the audience with respite when the material becomes dark. The lecture theatre venue is suitably appropriate as the cast impart insight into Iranian culture and literature, including eloquent poetry recitals from Rumi. 'Silken Veils' captures the true essence of the Fringe at its very best.



Assembly George Square, 4-28 Aug (not 8, 16), 3:40pm (4:40pm), £8.00 - £10.00, fpp297. tw rating 5/5 [efs]

TW RATINGS

- 1/5 Bad
- 2/5 Mediocre
- 3/5 Good
- 4/5 Very Good
- 5/5 Brilliant



THEATRE REVIEWS

After The End

Dundee Rep Theatre Company

How much do you owe somebody when they save your life? Your gratitude? Your love? Your life? Popular Louise is 'saved' by paranoid obsessive Mark. Years of unrequited love hatch into a well thought out plan, involving a conveniently stocked shelter that makes for a harrowing 75 minute power struggle. The atmosphere is suffocating; whilst Helen Darbyshire (Louise) is starved, chained up and eventually raped by her kidnapper, it becomes clear that this is sadism. However, Darbyshire as Louise refuses to lose her integrity and remains the stronger actor and character throughout. This performance by 'Dundee Rep' does Dennis Kelly's thrilling script proud, resulting in a performance that will haunt you after you leave.

Pleasance Courtyard, 9, 11, 15, 18 Aug, 1.50pm (3.05pm), £5.00, fpp236. tw rating 4/5 [dg]

Alma Mater

Fish And Game

Provided with iPad and headphones, you step into a white room and close the door behind you. Alone, you watch a beautifully composed, evocatively scored, wordless short film shot mostly in the room in which you stand. As you see the empty room fill with two charismatic, spritely children who look directly through the camera into your eyes, a strange kind of intimacy arises – you are acknowledged by the silent characters and drawn into their dream-like experiences. 'Alma Mater' is a carefully crafted, imaginative show and a refreshingly unsentimental depiction of a child's view of the world. At times its emotional impact wavers, but it should

nevertheless be applauded for confronting both the darkness and light of childhood.

St George's West, 5 - 29 Aug (not 15), times vary, £5.00, fpp237. tw rating 3/5 [dp]

Darkness

Lakeside Theatre / University of Essex / Escalator East To Edinburgh

This intricate, fast-paced piece explores the nature of sacrifice and the boundary between faith and madness, ultimately leaving the audience with a set of unanswered questions. Tensions simmer as a family gathers to celebrate Ascension Day on a remote hillside, their motivations and relationships are at times ambiguous and contradictory, as exasperation fuels sexual desire and violence is justified as spiritual guidance. Potential weapons and cringingly provocative comments stack up with improbable speed. Whilst this stoking of suspense feels unsubtle at times, it is certainly effective, and the characters' myriad complexities and alienating unpredictability make any outcome seem possible. As a result, the dénouement leaves a deep sense of unease, more troubling, thought provoking and lingering than any desired catharsis.

Zoo Roxy, 5 – 29 (not 15, 22), 3.30pm (4.55pm), £8.00 - £10.00, fpp253. tw rating 4/5 [fww]



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5/5 SHOW: Pip Utton Is The Hunchback Of Notre Dame

Pip Utton

"When you peel the skin off Paris's back, ugliness is brought to the surface." I paraphrase, since I was too busy drying my eyes to remember the precise words. Pip Utton's one-man performance is a rare and beautiful confessional in which, after 200 years of oppression, Quasimodo is given a voice more powerful than the bells of Notre-Dame. Esmeralda lies upstage, a noose curled around her neck, as the character viewed as half-human, half-beast tells us of his suffering at the hands of a seemingly perfect people. Utton's delivery is painfully authentic, drawing attention away from his deformities and onto our own moral imperfections. Under Quasimodo's hump is a universal outcast begging for acceptance; under Utton's costume stands a national treasure.

New Town Theatre, 4 - 28 Aug (not 16), 6.00pm (7.00pm), £7.00 - £10.00, fpp288. tw rating 5/5 [pc]

darker and wilder – fairy tales as they should be

The Wrong Crowd are performing 'The Girl With The Iron Claws' at Underbelly this year, and it's already drawn significant praise from our reviewer for its eerieness and the strong performances of its cast. Director Hannah Mulder explains what inspired the show, and why fairy tales are still relevant in the 21st century.

"I first heard the story that inspired 'The Girl with the Iron Claws' in a yurt on Dartmoor, in midwinter. Twenty of us huddled around a wood-burner, to hear it told, in an oral tradition that surely stretches back as far as human beings have had language.

Stories, myths, folk tales and "fairy tales", as they are so often dubbed, were designed as tools for living. It was only in the Victorian era that they were relegated to the pages of children's books, de-sexed and sanitised.

The Victorian version of our story involves the heroine winning her man by washing his shirt cleaner than any of the other women who might be his bride.

Whereas in our earlier, wilder version she has a pair of Iron Claws made for her so that she might climb a glass mountain, in order to rescue her beloved – surely an image of feminine power if ever there was one.

I believe that the stories a culture tells itself profoundly shape that culture and its people. Because many of these stories were written down by the Victorians, they have become frozen in that period.

Of course, we're very grateful that they were recorded, otherwise we might have lost them altogether. But it's time to reclaim their fluid, shape-shifting roots and unearth some of the darker, less saccharine versions and retell them for our age.

Of course children love fairy stories – they're fantastic pieces of craft and mystery, honed over millennia to speak directly to something deep inside us. But shouldn't we all reclaim these stories, young and old and use them in the way they were supposed to be used – as a route map for a more dignified and soulful life?

The Girl With The Iron Claws is on at the Underbelly from 4 - 28 Aug at 1.35pm (2.35pm), fpp266.





Q&A: PETERS PRODUCTIONS

Following successful runs at the Durham Drama Festival, and at the Old Red Lion Theatre in London, 'A World Without Words' has arrived for a run in Edinburgh. With a very impressed reviewer raving about the show, we decided to put some questions to the two brains behind it – choreographer Frances Teehan and director Jonathan Grande.

TW: Starting with the basics, what's 'A World Without Words' about?

JG & FT: 'A World Without Words' recounts the story of a relationship between two ordinary people. Telling their story from painfully awkward first meeting through to a heart-breakingly tearful conclusion, we explore themes of desire, passion, and betrayal, but all without a single piece of dialogue. Telling the whole story through contemporary dance and movement, the piece highlights the beauty and power of the physical language of relationships, and shows how often actions can speak not only louder than, but on behalf of, words.

TW: It's listed in the dance and physical theatre section of the programme – would you call it dance, or physical theatre?

JG & FT: The whole piece is told through dance, and we have a stunning soundtrack to accompany the entire show. But we have also kept an emphasis on 'theatre' and 'drama' throughout. We have avoided adding fantastical or abstract elements to the story, and the 'dance for dance's sake' that this would create. Instead, the story remains real and human, with every step furthering the emotional or dramatic path of the piece. So while we have never thought of it as a piece of physical theatre, we have never thought of it as purely a dance show either.

TW: How did the show come together? How does your partnership work?

JG & FT: It was originally put together for the International Durham Drama Festival to give dancers in Durham the opportunity to be involved in a piece where there is more to engage with than just the choreography. It took off from there and the piece was extended and re-rehearsed in order to be performed in London and Edinburgh. We have never come across a choreographer and director working together on a fully-choreographed like this before. So it was very much a case of working it out as we went along! But it seems to be going well so far. Frances choreographed the entire piece, but all other aspects of the show, from the story, song

choices and design to working with the cast as actors, has been a result of successful collaboration.

TW: Is it collaborative? Have the performers been involved in creating the piece?

JG & FT: The piece is not a devised work, and was not created through a workshop process. In most instances, they have had little involvement in creating the story or choreography but in many cases, the steps were shaped to their strengths and they have brought everything beyond the choreography to life.

TW: You've performed it at the Durham Drama Festival and London's Old Red Lion theatre. What made you bring it to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe?

JG & FT: The Fringe is renowned for accepting and embracing original pieces and we felt that the audience was there for its reception. Given the unique nature of the piece, we wanted to perform it to as large and wide-ranging an audience as possible, and felt that the Fringe was the perfect place for this.

Frances and Jonathan's show 'A World Without Words' is on at C from 3 – 20 Aug at 2.15pm (3.05pm), fpp179



READ MORE

ThreeWeeks.co.uk/
petersproductions

DANCE & PHYSICAL THEATRE REVIEWS

Flame'n'co

Doneduendes

This intimate flamenco show attempts reinvention of the genre, but ultimately attempts too much and loses its cohesion. In sublime moments, music and movement fuse, anchored by the percussionist and an enthusiastically clapping audience. Danielo Olivera's expressive, evocative vocals convey the narrative of passion hanging in the air as Mayte Beltran's liquid arms twist above an athletic core. His balance lost for just one second, it nevertheless results in a skilful performance. Jazz infusion brings a swing to the beat and a smiling looseness to the previously intense and rhythmically stern dancer. However, this experimentation needs honing: synthesised sound effects – including didgeridoo – and riffs on cartoon themes feel gimmicky and undeveloped, and sadly cripple the show's integrity.

theSpaces, 5 – 27 Aug, 20.10pm (20.55pm), £9.00 - £10.00, fpp170. tw rating 3/5 [tfw]

Migrations Cirque

Poi*Kimchi*Vodka

"Unusual in a way that is unsettling or hard to understand" is the dictionary definition of 'strange'. It also sums up Poi*Kimchi*Vodka's 'Migrations Cirque'. The show is a series of often acrobatic performances linked by a theme of migration, but these scenes fail to connect, with one unnecessary blackout lasting an eternity. Even discounting this, the piece just doesn't hang together because quality varies enormously; One scene entitled 'My Trained Monkey' manages to be tremendously funny and well-executed, but for the most part, unitards, panpipes, and voices off-stage saying "migration" in various languages, make the show feel like a throwback to terrible 1980s performance art. Evidently, sometimes striving to be unusual leads to unsettling mediocrity.

Gryphon Venues at the Point Hotel, 5 - 6 Aug, 6.50pm (7.50pm), £6.00 - £7.00, fpp173. tw rating 2/5 [ls]

Sans Mots

Matteo Cionini

Without words – and that isn't all that's missing. The mime is lifeless, story-lines wildly perplexing and interaction with the audience is terribly awkward: an irritating narration leaves spectators bewildered throughout as the sole performer

attempts a portrayal of insanity. A peculiar set provides the basis for a perplexing series of stories, whilst the soloist's effort to transform his audience into aeroplanes is met with dismay; the only saving grace is the jolly soundtrack which mercifully accompanies the show. The fact that the performer felt the need to prompt his applause through miming gesture says it all, when really not even words could save this show from its crash-landing.

C aquila, 4-29 Aug, 1.25pm, £4.50- £9.50, fpp175. tw rating 1/5 [mj]

5/5 SHOW: Agnes And Walter (A Little Love Story)

Smith Dance Theatre / Escalator East To Edinburgh

Loosely based on 'The Secret Life Of Walter Mitty', this delightful piece shows how an everyday couple stay in love throughout their married lives. Portrayed by both young and elderly (68 and 78) dancers, we see how Agnes and Walter grow old together, but remain as deeply in love as ever. Aided by some inspired choices of music and occasional interludes from the fifth cast member, a female vocalist, the young and old couples, who each have tremendous chemistry together, present the story through a combination of modern dance and physical theatre. It is at times funny, at other times heartbreaking, and by the end a number of audience members were reduced to tears. It is what modern dance should be: beautiful.



Zoo Southside, 5 - 13 Aug (not 10), 2.00pm (3.15pm), £8.00 - £10.00, fpp168. tw rating 5/5 [im]



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SAMEENA ZEHRA

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THE LARGEST PROGRAMME ON THE FRINGE



Fork are an a capella ensemble from Finland that look set to take Edinburgh (and the world...?) by storm. We tipped them in our preview edition, you may recall. A ThreeWeeks reviewer subsequently checked out their show 'Pink Noise' and called it "hilarious and breathtaking", while praising their flawless vocals. So we decided to throw some questions in their direction. Jonte Ramsten answered.

TW: How and when did your group come together? What performance background do you all come from?
JR: Fork was originally formed in 1996 when three of us were in acting school, the Theatre Academy of Helsinki. The fourth one was studying at the police academy. It

Q&A: PINK NOISE BY FORK

started off as a joke, just a way to have fun and do music together. We all worked at our original professions for a couple of years and had Fork as a side project until 2004, when we thought we'd try being full time musicians for a while. And we haven't steered off that road yet.

TW: What kind of songs do you perform in your act? How do you choose each song? How long does it take to get each song ready for performing?
JR: We mostly do covers. Anything from Led Zeppelin to Rihanna. Pop and rock music. The songs are chosen through democratic elections. And that's the hard part. If someone vetoes we forget it. Since we use A LOT of technical equipment to achieve our sound, it takes quite a while to get a song ready for the public. From a few days up to a week. Sometimes we work on a song for a week only to find out that it doesn't work. And we never use sheet music, which makes the process even slower, but all the better.

TW: What made you decide to come to the Edinburgh Festival? Do

you think you'll come back here?
JR: The money, the fame, the glory and the single malt whisky. I'm not sure we'll ever leave.

TW: Are you planning to take the show elsewhere in the world?
JR: The world is not enough. Our goal is to conquer it.

TW: We really like the costumes you are wearing in your publicity shot. Do you wear them in the show? Who makes them?
JR: We do actually. And some other cool stuff too. We work with the famous Finnish stylist Minttu Vesala who designs all our clothes.

TW: Are you seeing other shows whilst you are in Edinburgh?
JR: Of course. So far we've been too exhausted after each show that we really haven't had energy to go and see anything. But we will. Some dance performances, stand-up and other a cappella acts are on our wish list.

Pink Noise by Fork, Assembly George Square, 9 – 28 Aug, 6.05pm (7.15pm), £11.00 – £15.00, fpp216.

MUSIC REVIEWS

5/5 SHOW: The Magnets
The Magnets and Assembly
This live sensation brings you what must surely be of the most electrifying performances of the Festival: you cannot help but become mesmerised by the stunning depth of talent this six-piece 'jukebox' has to offer. Flawless a cappella arrangements revise both timeless classics and modern-day chart hits in order to produce a sound like no other. Stadium anthems play to a cabaret venue, striking a note of exquisite intimacy. Contemporary meets old school as beat-boxing perfection fuses with harmonious voices, whilst smooth moves and comic interaction really defines this show as the perfect package. A truly unmissable act; you cannot take your eyes off these gifted maestros.

Assembly George Square, 5-29 Aug, 6.10pm (7.10pm), £10.00- £15.00, ffp211. tw rating 5/5 [mj]

Classical Guitar – Jonathan Prag
The Edinburgh Festival attracts a diverse host of cultures to perform in the city, and in under an hour, Jonathan Prag guides his audience on an equally diverse musical journey. The sonorous emotions of his music linger in the clear acoustics of St. Columba's by the Castle. The polyphony of the movements performed from a Handel keyboard suite is handled (no pun intended) with sensitivity and gentleness, creating a strong contrast with the zealous passion of the Spanish flamenco and Armenian dances. Although appearing softly spoken, a little of Prag's developing

relationship with the audience is hindered by the physical barrier of a music stand. But overall, this is an exquisitely and beautifully varied lunchtime treat.

C too, 4 – 29 Aug, 1.30pm (2.20pm), £4.50 – £9.50, ffp201. tw rating 4/5 [ck]

Malones Live Music
Live Music Seven Nights A Week
Last week I was in a pub having a quiet drink when a band suddenly announced itself and started blaring out what I would describe as 'Dad-Rock'. Said quiet pint was ruined and most of the customers left. So, despite my reservations about bands playing in pubs, I found myself in Malones this week, and was pleasantly surprised. On this particular night, live music was delivered by Scottish fiddle band Muckle Fugga, who played a two-hour set of traditional Celtic music and created a jovial atmosphere of toe-tapping fun. Rather than being the main event, the bands seem to provide background music to the busy pub. If you are looking for a drink and a wee jig, this is your place.

Malones Irish Bar, 5 – 29 Aug, times vary, free, ffp211. tw rating 3/5 [mp]

Shades of Blue
Kerry Hodgkin and Ladyblue Music
Fingers tap in rhythm, not to music but to ticking watches. Booze-filled glasses are downed and refilled as Kerry Hodgkin's soul-seeking voice puffs around the room. In spite of her rosy personality, her performance takes time to diffuse

the frosty atmosphere. From a barstool, she croons about lost love; her voice sometimes flakes but always holds itself strong. Her duet partner of just one day, Malcolm MacFarlane, is a technically gifted guitarist, yet his staccato playing is emotionally defunct. Not once in their Sting cover did I feel the guitar weep. In time, I am sure this show will reach great heights, but for now, the performance is too blue and weary for this to pass the acid test.

The Jazz Bar, 5 – 14 Aug (not 7, 9, 10), times vary, £5.00 - £7.00, ffp219. tw rating 2/5 [pc]

Cathedral Lunchtime Concerts
St Mary's Cathedral
One of the great things about the Festival is that anything can change at any moment. You never really know what to expect. Filling in last minute after two previously scheduled performers were forced to pull out, an organist and pianist of Christ and Holy Trinity Church in Connecticut treats the audience to a selection of classical pieces from Rachmaninoff to Bach. Religious or not, no one can deny the power and majesty of a church organ, especially when hearing 'Toccata And Fugue In G Major' echoing through the pews of a colossal cathedral. With only a few hours to prepare, the performers played with more concentration than passion but fortunately this didn't negatively affect their otherwise pitch-perfect recitals.


St Mary's Cathedral, 1-31 Aug (not 7, 14, 17, 21, 28), 1.10pm (1.55pm), free, ffp199. tw rating 4/5 [ng]

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fringe flu is incoming, how to survive

It's coming and you know it. First performers and ticket-buyers bring with them to Edinburgh viruses from all over the world. Then no one sleeps or eats properly for ten days, and the Edinburgh climate soaks them to their skin three times daily. Add the excessive alcohol consumption and too much time spent in dark rooms, and Fringe Flu hits, taking down with it anyone fully immersed in all things Fringe. But how to avoid the lurgy? Fringe performers offer tips.



Gateau Chocolat

I'm taking everything that's going. Echinacea, manuka honey, multi vitamins, vegetables, lemon and ginger, steaming; everything to keep healthy and ensure you preserve the quality and integrity of your show so as to present your work in the best light possible. Its hard slog doing a full Edinburgh season but its the underlying discipline required for this career.

Le Gateau Chocolat, Assembly George Square, fpp12



The Suitcase Royale

The Suitcase Royale have a strict regime of whiskey and Ace Ventura

movies while on tour and very rarely are struck by the fringe flu. Being from Australia, we are used to much harsher conditions such as wrestling crocodiles, punching sharks and avoiding hostile gangs of koalas. When struck down, however, we have an emergency VHS copy of ZUMBA [the South American

dance-slash-workout video] After a six hour workout we defy anyone to still be affected by a stupid flu...! Feel the rhythm! Feel the beat!!

The Suitcase Royale in Zombatland, Pleasance Courtyard, fpp156



Jessica Fostekew

You know when you're on your way home, after all your gigs, and your friend says "shall we just pop

in Brooks for one?" Say "No."

Jessica Fostekew: Luxury Tramp, Gilded Balloon Teviot, fpp97



David Reed

Any doctor worth his or her weight will tell you that the solution to this annual problem is speed. Not

the drug. That only cures being too interesting. But speed of activity throughout Edinburgh. Your body is entirely capable of keeping you alive as long as you NEVER... SLOW...

DOWN. Travel around at break neck speed, seeing shows, chatting and drinking until you pass out around 4am. Repeat daily until September.

David Reed: Shamblehouse, Pleasance Courtyard, fpp65



Asher Treleaven

The best cure for Fringe Flu is a traditional Scottish breakfast known as Porrocca, which

is a combination of rolled oats and Berrocca. The porridge provides a long lasting slow release energy and the Berocca provides valuable B and C vitamins to help deal with hang overs and colds/flus.

Ingredients for Porrocca

150gm Rolled Oats
2 Berocca, preferably the orange ones.

Directons.

Prepare in small sauce pan with 1 cup of water or milk add Berrocca and when fluid starts to simmer introduce the oats.

Stir till thickened then eat rapidly from saucepan while running to midday gig at some place in a cave.

Asher Treleaven: Matador, Pleasance Courtyard, fpp40



Peacock and Gamble

The best advice we can give about not getting fringe flu is to simply not acknowledge

its existence. If we have learned one thing from Nightmare on Elm St it is

that if you do not believe in something it cannot harm you. Oh and never go to sleep - that's another thing we learned. So if you don't want fringe flu then don't go to sleep. We may have talked ourselves into a corner here".

Peacock and Gamble Emergency Broadcast, Pleasance Dome, fpp132



Danny Pensive

"Fizzy vitamin C tablets can stop you getting it, but if it is too late, go straight

home after your show and wrap yourself in as many blankets as you can find and force yourself to sleep until the next day like a hibernating hedgehog or tortoise. Do this twice".

Danny Pensive's Map Of Britain, Just The Tonic at The Caves, fpp63



Tiernan Douieb

"I have two cures for fringe flu, depending on what sort of person you are. Firstly, do your show then go

to bed, drink berrocca until every drop of your perspiration is fluorescent orange and glows, chow down on all the fruit you can find, ignoring the pleas of your bowels and rest up a tad till it disperses. Of course, this

option is mostly fictional. Far better to remember that alcohol has and is still often used as a disinfectant and by drowning your body in the thing you should clear the system of all ills".

Tiernan Douieb vs The World, Assembly Hall, fpp158



Kerry Godliman

"Prevention is better than cure: Avoid over exposure to jugglers, Lady Boys from Bangkok and

bitter comedians. If it does strike, stay indoors watching the most vapid daytime TV you can find. You'll slowly regain your appetite for live 'performance art' and trench foot".

Kerry Godliman - Wonder Woman, Pleasance Courtyard, fpp104



Emily Watson Howes

"Prevention is better than cure - hole yourself up like a hermit and for the love of God don't kiss anyone.

Even your spouse. Especially your spouse".

Seminar, Pleasance Courtyard, fpp148

The Baby Diary, Assembly George Square, fpp42



Tom Deacon

"The best way to keep the Fringe Flu at bay is to eat healthy and not have fun. But if you can't manage that

then have a pint of the dark stuff and a plate of Oysters. Settles your stomach and nerves, plus there's loads of minerals in the Oysters. Sure you'll get odd looks but it'll be worth it!"

Tom Deacon: Can I Be Honest?, Pleasance Dome, fpp160



James Acaster

"The best way to overcome fringe flu is to eat properly, sleep properly and exercise but if

you're doing all of those things then you're probably not at the Fringe".

James Acaster: Amongst Other Things, Pleasance Courtyard, fpp94

Good luck avoiding the lurgy, and look out for another ThreeWeeks survey next week.

Nick Pynn

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"Consistently the best thing I ever see in the Fringe" Stewart Lee

EVENTS

QUICK BOOK FESTIVAL TIPS

The Edinburgh International Book Festival kicks off in Charlotte Square Gardens this weekend. With that in mind, we asked our 2011 book correspondents to tip a must-see event.

ELEANOR PENDER recommends **Audrey Niffenegger, Monday 15 Aug at 8.00pm**

I am most definitely looking forward to hearing from Audrey Niffenegger. This event offers the rare opportunity to see into the fantastical mind of the acclaimed author of 'The Time Traveller's Wife'. Her novels combine the real, the strange and the magical in such a grounded way. Beautifully written, her characters embody a plot that would be lost in anyone else's hands.

TRACEY S ROSENBERG recommends **AS Byatt, Sunday 28 Aug at 3.00pm**

AS Byatt, the Booker-winning grande dame of interpreting the Victorians and Edwardians, takes an unexpected and autobiographical turn with her forthcoming work: a retelling of the Norse tale of Ragnarok, part of the acclaimed Canongate Myths series. Byatt will be in conversation with literary editor Stuart Kelly about the ways in which gods and mythology shaped her wartime childhood.

CAMILLE BURNS recommends **Different Worlds With Patrick Ness & Moira Young, Sunday 21 Aug at 3.30pm**

Despite the title, the similarities between their worlds make this a top event. Written without shying away from 'adult' subjects, themes of injustice, loss, love and loyalty, are skillfully manipulated in 'Chaos Walking' and 'Blood Red Road' until the line between good and evil is blurry at best. This event will be a fascinating discussion with two authors whose novels would affect even the most disdainful adult.

SAMUEL JOHNSTON recommends **Candia McWilliam on Thursday 18 Aug at 8.30pm**

One of England's most gifted novelists, a Guardian award winner and Man Booker judge, Candia McWilliam has now published a memoir detailing her recovery from blindness. Having covered the topic with a sensitivity and optimism that is a refreshing change from the now ubiquitous misery memoir, this event is certain to be both delicately poignant and eye opening.

Not enough for you? Well, we have one more book correspondent, Ellie Blow. Go to www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/books to find out her recommendation, and to read out books team reviews.

1



2



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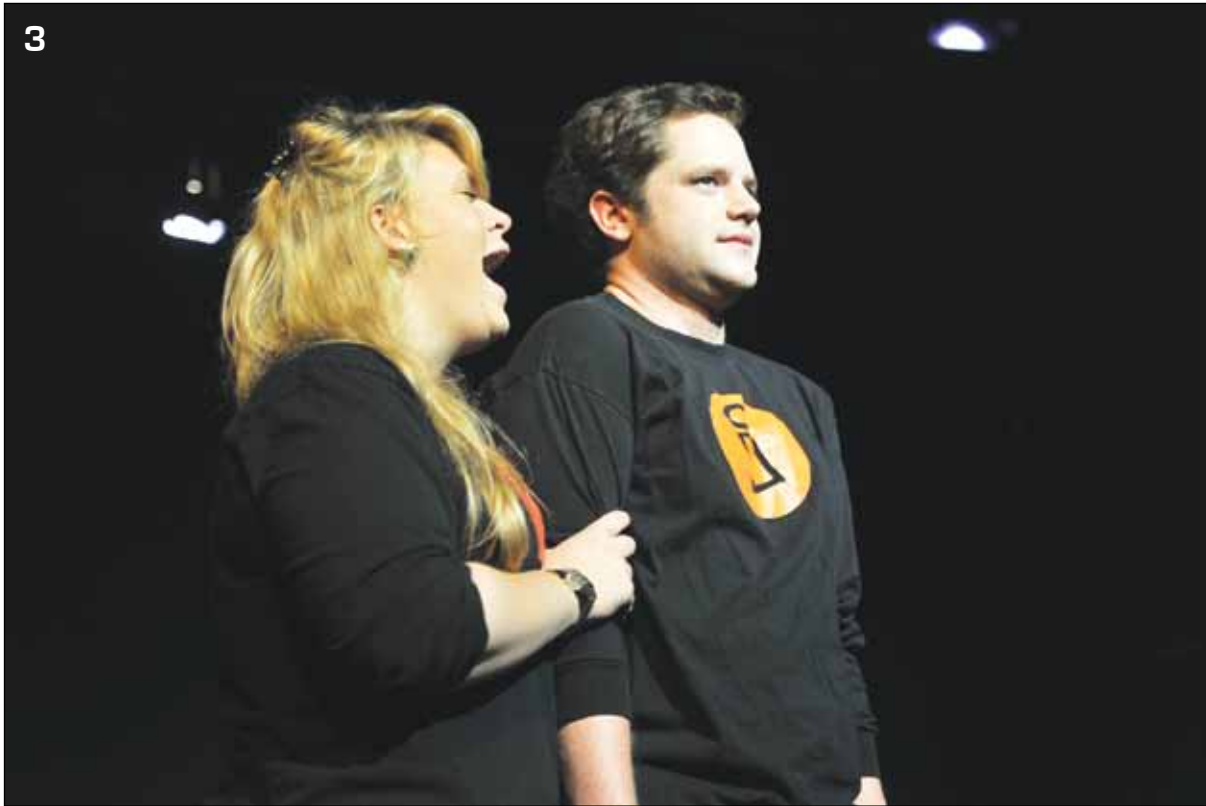
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THE PHOTO PAGE

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1. Bob Downe at Gilded Balloon Teviot [Richard Dyson]
2. 'Alma Mater' at St George's West [Anna Hafsteinsson]
3. The Improverts at the Bedlam Theatre [Kat Gollock]
4. 'Debbie Does My Dad' at the Bedlam Theatre [Kat Gollock]
5. 'The Yellow Wallpaper' at theSpaces@ Surgeons Hall [Mark Conway]
6. 'Babbling Comedy 2 'at C [Richard Dyson]
7. 'Orlando' at St George's West [Vanessa Wilson]
8. 'Around The World On 80 Quid' at Pleasance Courtyard [Richard Dyson]
9. 'The Games' at Zoo Roxy [Mark Conway]

This week's cover shot by Mark Conway
Guest Editor photographed by Paul Collins

CHILDREN'S SHOWS

Q&A: PAUL NATHAN



Last year, our reviewer was totally impressed by 'The I Hate Children Children's Show', and one of ThreeWeeks' editors was a bit gutted not to be able to see it. Magician Paul Nathan stars in it, alongside guitarist John Anaya, and the pair also perform a grown-up show, 'Devil in the Deck', every night. We put some questions to Paul, and hope to see at least one of his shows ere long.

TW: How did you get into doing magic?

PN: Both John and I learned our craft from books starting around age six. I learned magic, John learned guitar. My mother was a librarian, she brought home an armload of books on magic and I was hooked. John grew up in Hawaii and a friend of the family gave him a guitar, taught him a

few cords and bought him a book of guitar lessons. Then he gave him some candy and tried to lure him into a van. That was John's first music tour.

TW: What made you decide to do a children's show?

PN: Last year I lost a bet, and the pay off was to do a children's show for the run of the Fringe. It turns out that the show was a hit, and surprisingly, you can actually make money harassing children here in Edinburgh. This year I conned John into playing music for the show with a promise that he could ride that kiddy cash cow all the way to the bank with me. Merchandise sales alone are covering almost all of John's copious beer budget so far this year.

TW: How does your theatre show for adults differ from your show for children?

PN: The children's show is irreverent and fun. It's John playing guitar as I flirt with hot

moms and encourage parents to drink. 'Devil In The Deck' is a collection of the best card tricks in the world wrapped in an elegant and romantic story. In the children's show everything is spontaneous and chaotic. In 'Devil In The Deck', every aspect of the show is elegant and finished. The music is great, the story fantastic, and the magic is... well... magical. We are proud to be the only children's show which invites parents to sneak in booze and drink in the dark. For 'Devil In The Deck', everyone is invited to bring a deck of cards and may challenge me at any time to use their deck. If I can't do any trick in the show with their deck then I'll give them a thousand dollars.

TW: Which is better, an adult audience, or a child audience?

PN: A family audience is the best. Even though I am best known as an adult entertainer (in the most adult sense of the word) I love seeing families laughing and having fun together as I did with my parents. I love shows where the parents sit with children in their laps and everyone is laughing and sharing together. Parents teaching their children how to enjoy a show, how to laugh, how to have fun. Adult crowds are wonderful but there is something special about families sharing the experience together. That is real magic.

TW: What do you think is the secret to a really good children's show?

PN: A bit of whiskey in the punch makes every party better; don't you think? Long answer - I think

the key to a great children's show is the same as the key to any other show. Great writing and editing for a story that moves with purpose, elegance, and style. Great presentation skills that engage the audience and keep them present. Great jokes, great skills, great acting, great directing, great music, and great production. These are the ingredients for any great show. Anyone who thinks that they can get away with anything less than that just because the audience is young does a great disservice to the audience, themselves, and society as a whole and they should burn for eternity in kiddy show hell.

TW: Why did you decide to come to Edinburgh, and how long have you been coming? Will you keep coming back, and why?

PN: I've been coming to Edinburgh for about five years. I keep coming back because it is the most beautiful city in the UK and the people here are the most

delightful, charming, and playful as well as smart. Plus there are more yummy mummies here than anywhere else. I brought John last year. He is in love with this place and this festival. This year John brought his 12 year old daughter. This city is magic.

TW: What shows will you be seeing this year?

Paul is excited to see 'Doris Day Can Fuck Off'. Terrible title but it's supposed to be a great show. Also, 'Muscle' is supposed to be fantastic and no one knows about it yet. Also Paul Daniels, Barry and Stuart, and Amanda Palmer. John is seeing 'Perfection', 'Ophelia', and loitering around other children's shows, where he sleeps off the effects of his nightly debauch and late night jams at the Royal Oaks.

The I Hate Children Children's Show, Zoo Southside, 6 - 29 Aug, 12.30 (1.15pm), £7.50, fpp22

Devil in the Deck, Zoo Roxy, 5 - 29 Aug, 9.05pm (10.15pm), £10.00, fpp255



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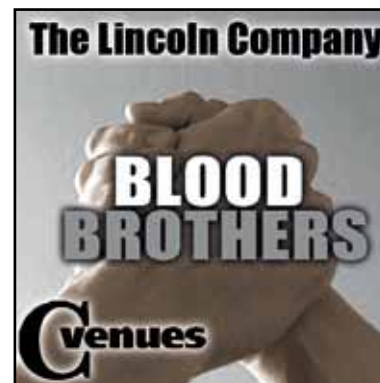
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