

## HEY ABBOTT! Another Classic Comedy...

Chase & Hamill—MTC Mainstage

Classic comedy at its finest. Using classic sketches and adding in perfect comedic timing, this show had the audience laughing every time there was a punch line. The cast was extremely talented, and there didn't seem to be a line that could have been said better. Don't just consider seeing this show, go see it.

Arden Pruden

## Catching Shadows

Broken Still Productions—MTC Up the Alley

This memory play catches moments of a young woman's life. Written and performed by Megan Andres, it captures and holds your attention throughout. It might take a while to get into the world that Andres creates, but she makes it clear enough that I am sure most people will catch on quickly. (I don't want to spoil the pleasure of discovery by giving anything away here.)

Andres is a talented performer, as anyone who saw *Bedbound* last year knows; and in this production she shows that she can hold an audience by herself. She also shows some serious writing ability. My only quibble is that in the final speech she seemed to become too caught up in the moment, and some of her words were lost to rushed delivery. While I enjoyed this production immensely, I also very much look forward to future work from this up-and-coming artist.

Kevin Longfield

Powerful! Passionate! Cleverly scripted! These were the superlatives that came immediately to mind at the conclusion of *Catching Shadows*. Actor/playwright Megan Andres of Winnipeg is a recent university grad and has only a handful of credits on her resume, but this show is the cr me de la cr me. In her script, Megan begins subtly, gently leading the audience. What are these shadowy things she keeps catching with her hands or a butterfly net? Some of them she stores in a trunk, others she blows away as if they are unimportant. Who is she talking to in the sky? Why do these shadowy things prompt her to explore mostly unhappy, embarrassing, and often painful memories? Megan gradually quickens the pace, becoming more passionate. The audience finds itself drawing connections, identifying. The truth is dawning and at the end, it is daunting—full of tears and raw emotion, but ending on a note of sweetness. Megan's performance is full of power and strength. Her scriptwriting skills are obviously superb. Catch her before this Fringe ends.

Robin Chase



Photo Credit: Diverse.com

Hector Fernando perches on the edge of innocence in a violent Colombian barrio in *Lizardboy*.

## All Or Nothing

The Rock Still Rolls—RRC

This has to rank as one of the finest performances I have ever seen anywhere. Harry Nelken is mesmerising as Miguel de Unamuno, a writer and philosopher placed under house arrest during the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s. As the play progresses, Unamuno struggles with the choices he has made and has to make, often comparing himself to Don Quixote. His imprisonment is oppressive, and the price of freedom seems too high.

Great performances do not flow out of mediocre scripts, so credit must also go to playwright Bruce Sarbit for capturing the essence of a man's life and struggle so movingly on stage. Kudos also to the directing team of Harry Nelken and Brian Richardson. (Although the program lists Richardson as the performer, during rehearsal the team decided that Nelken and Richardson would exchange tasks; an extreme example of what we call a happy accident.) My only regret is that I attended the production at the end of a very hot day, and physical fatigue prevented me from enjoying this experience to its fullest.

Kevin Longfield

## Chipmunks Ate My Bike!

Duqamuq Productions—RRC

This is a wonderful father-daughter story told beautifully from Kevin Kennedy's view as the Dad. He relates with relish his struggle to make contact with his daughter. On a whim, he asks her to accompany him on a bicycle trip to Edmonton, then Vancouver, from their hometown of Yellowknife.

The amazing time they share is shown to us by Kennedy through the eyes of the Dad. You gain all kinds of insight into their characters through the stories told, as these two try to bond on the road. Of course, they are forging their new relationship as they try avoiding truckers and narrow roads, and enjoy breathtaking views and wildlife, and deal with squawking and chewing chipmunks. They are tested many times on this journey, with breakdowns, mountain roads, and lotsa gears. So if you're a Dad and want to bond with your daughter, do yourself a favour and bring her with you to this play.

Sorry, you have to leave your bicycle outside.

Kevin Campbell

## Zanna, Don't!

Stage16—MTYP

Are we in Kansas yet? No, but the sequined pink slippers may let us think we are. Click your heels and be taken to a musical extravaganza that is out of this world, where views on life are turned upside down by the flick of a fairy wand. If only life were so simple and the things we wished for didn't backfire when they came true! The cast hits every note and step in this stellar performance!

Frank Martin

## Autobahn

Theatre by the River—Planetarium

*Theatre by the River* is back again, and once again they hit it right outta the park.

Solid performances by all four performers backed by solid directing, *Autobahn* takes you from joyous laughter to pure 'uncomfort' (in a good way).

Check this out.

Joel Passante

