

Spitting in the Face of the Devil**John Montgomery Theatre Co.—Alloway Hall***

Telling the true story of his ex-marine father who was a pedophile, Bob Brader delivers a tough yet vulnerable performance. It is a strong performance by a passionate actor. His father is the devil in this scenario.

Brader receives a phone call from his mother telling him that his father has died but he can feel no emotion about the news. This draws us in. Brader is a survivor of child abuse, a victor in spite of it, who "stands up to the devil". This is what makes the story worth being told on a Fringe stage. Brader is triumphant and transforms a life full of strife and abuse—haunted by his father's crimes—into an opportunity to recover.

It is a riveting and gut wrenching story about a father who is extremely abusive toward his son. But he takes an interest in his son's male friends and has sex with them in secret. Meanwhile he goes on abusing his son. He is a two-faced sort of person. He is popular at the Bingo and liked by many, respected in his circle of family and friends. No one has any idea how evil he is. Brader tells of more than one occasion of abuse he suffered at the hands of his father. But he has no idea that his father has sex with his young friends.

When he finds out about the pedophilia, Brader reacts and stands up to the devil. Brader is courageous and doesn't let his father get away with his crimes. It is a strong performance and raises awareness about child abuse and pedophilia. There is power in telling this story and exposing characters like the Devil in his life. Good for Bob Brader for being courageous enough to tell his story. Go see this show.

*Yvette Jones***Manitoba Museum of Man & Nature***Rambo: The Missing Years****Howard Petrick Presents—Planetarium**

Petrick has been everywhere hard at work promoting his excellent show around the Fringe. His self-effacing manner develops an instant rapport with the audience. He does a masterful job of delivering this autobiographical tale. We follow him from a naïve 19-year-old "screwing handles on screwdrivers" to a young draftee butting heads and ideals with a military that doesn't tolerate independent thinking from its 'employees'. He portrays the characters he encounters along his anti-Vietnam War odyssey within the military with both clarity and comedy. He actually became quite famous, though you won't hear that from this humble guy.

He even had a song written about him.

His "aw shucks" attitude had me right there with him every step of the way, rooting for my new hero. Please don't miss this true tale.

*Lisa Campbell***Jem Rolls IS PISSED OFF****Ashek Theatre—King's Head**

Actually, Jem really is pissed off and it took a lot of hard work to get him that way, being trapped on the Canadian Prairies where everyone is just too darn nice. Not even the likes of Steven Harper can get a rise out of most of us, much to Jem's lament. Intertwined with his poetic pieces, Jem gives the audience delightful insight into the work leading up to this year's performance. From his many good, but not pissed off starts, to rehearsing on the BC coast. A full year in the search of the prefect rant, which finally comes via the muse of television, which, according to Jem, would piss anyone off. A real 'gem' is the piece entitled *Islington Diamonds*, to which anyone who lives or works in the Exchange District can relate. And Jem, you really are funnier when you are on a full-blown rant.

*Brad Biehn***The Last Gig of Lenny Breau****Colin Godbout—MTC up the Alley**

This imaginary last gig pays homage to one of the guitar world's greats. It is part imagined concert, part Lenny Breau appreciation lecture, and part music theory class. It succeeds at all levels, but mainly as a guitar concert in its own right.

While Godbout might owe a lot to Breau, he is also an outstanding musician. People who came into the audience without a clue about Breau would not feel in the least let down. I found myself alternately closing my eyes to appreciate the music, and then opening them to see how in the world Godbout was creating the sounds that I was hearing.

*Kevin Longfield***SSPS Shameless Self-Promotions Shameless Self-Promotions****A Vagrant Theatre****Dying Hard—RRC**

The critics say:

Her performance is a wonder.

— Joff Schmidt, *CBC Winnipeg*

A vividly dark portrait.

— Kevin Prokosh, *Free Press*

There is something larger than life about this performance.

— Alvina Ruprecht, *CBC Ottawa*

A riveting actor.

— Patrick Langston, *Ottawa Citizen*

If you miss this one, you will regret it.

— Wayne Current, *Canadian Culture Magazine*

You have no idea what you're in for.

— Kate Watson, *The Coast*

Don't just read about it. Come see for yourself.

R-G Productions**Choosing Home—MTC Up the Alley**

Rosalind decides to change her life. But at 13 is she ready to do so?

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