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*In Leave the Radio On, Ten Thousand Wolves leave some of the wolves at home, but still howl.*

## Huff

### Dependent Theatre Productions—MTYP Mainstage

Simply put, *Huff* is one of the best pieces of theatre I have seen in a long, long time. Cliff Cardinal has written a brilliant script about the joys, desolation, despair, and hope in an aboriginal family on a remote reserve. He then dives into performing three generations of characters (and some extras) with incredible emotional range, deft and subtle changes, holding back nothing either in his script or his acting.

The simple staging is augmented by some great projection work (that made me think of Guy Madden) and beautiful ethereal soundscapes. The intimate story told by Cliff is about a community, a people, who are an integral part of the Canadian fabric. It is a story for today, and it deserves having a lot of bums in those MTYP seats. This is Fringe at its very best.

*Allan Finkel*

**BEST PIECE OF THEATRE I'VE SEEN IN YEARS.** If every writer scratched at the heart of the darkness with the depth, innocence, and raw, naked, and sacred truth that Cliff Cardinal does... the world would follow him (or her)...anywhere.

*Huff* is not a story we want to see, but it is a sweet dark truth that we need to witness and embrace until the pain becomes a breath of hope. The humanity, calm resolve, intelligence, and spirit of this piece meets the pull-no-punches darkness of the story content itself, in a brilliant struggle that transcends race, circumstance and age, and speaks to us all.

As far as performers go, Cliff Cardinal is a master. He rips into the heart of the piece with such commitment that everything coming from him is seemingly effortless. Truly inspiring!!!

Do not miss this piece, Winnipeg! If you are a theatre producer reading this... Grab this piece and its performer. Cliff, you are BRILLIANT!!!

*Columpa C. Bobb  
artist and faithful Fringer*

I went into this one not knowing anything about the play (OK, OK, I was ushering, but I was still there!) and it blew me away!

I couldn't turn away and got swept up in the story sooner than I thought I could while "being on the volunteer job." It's a tough story to hear, but with Cliff Cardinal bravely telling it from multiple vantage points, it's one I'm glad I had the privilege to hear.

His talent includes affect changes that are so bang-on, there is no need for costumes or props, you can follow his gestures and keep pace with where the piece goes.

And it goes deep. It gets into the corners of life in Canada that people like to avoid. But while watching the darkness unfold, I recognized people I knew in his narrative. And it got me thinking. It got others thinking too, as there were only a few dry eyes in the house when it ended. It was trigger heavy, but not gratuitous, and it was worth holding my breath to make it through. Go see it, and come out a little bit changed.

*Sauna Fay*

## More Power to Your Knitting, Nell!

### Sisterscene—Crocus Building (Bannatyne)

It's World War II. In New York, Sadie is a young singer who seizes her chance to be on the radio. Alas, they need a lass to encourage knitting for the troops, and Sadie's all thumbs—and thumbs down on knitting anyway, she thinks.

It's more than a dropped stitch when your venue unravels. Bonus points then, to Melanie Gall for delivering a fun, entertaining show with very little time to iron out the technical kinks and get familiar with the new space. Gall breaks down the fourth wall by getting some gals to knit, (bring yours along), and is quick with an ad lib.

The songs are authentic (although from World War I) and if the transition from home front to more serious issues needs work, that's a small quibble to hear the little lady with the big voice. She even sells her own CDs with the show's songs. This means I can now spin a yarn, and needle our audience with a song from *Knitting All the Day* every Saturday!

*Ron Robinson  
Host/Saturday Morning Show  
CKUW FM 95.9*

This one looked interesting, knitting at the Fringe?! So I took in this stitch in time musical and was pleasantly surprised by what I walked into.

There is actual knitting (you are expected to bring some, if you have the talent or patience!)

Nonetheless, this little lady who promotes knitting on a radio show during wartime, has the most amazingly beautiful soprano that'll knock your socks off! (She'll be able to knit you a new pair, though, with that team of knitters on hand!)

Nell, played wonderfully by Melanie Gall, tells the story of her rise as the host of a radio show dedicated to knitting, though not really liking knitting herself...more just expressing herself in song.

Do yourself a favour, bring some knitting, and be prepared to be completely entertained by this beautiful songbird! She is also working with another great singer on this Fringe circuit, Bremner Duthrie, in *Ne Me Quitte Pas Pif* and *Brel: The Impossible Concert* at the same transplanted Venue, the Crocus Building (Bannatyne).

*Kevin Campbell*