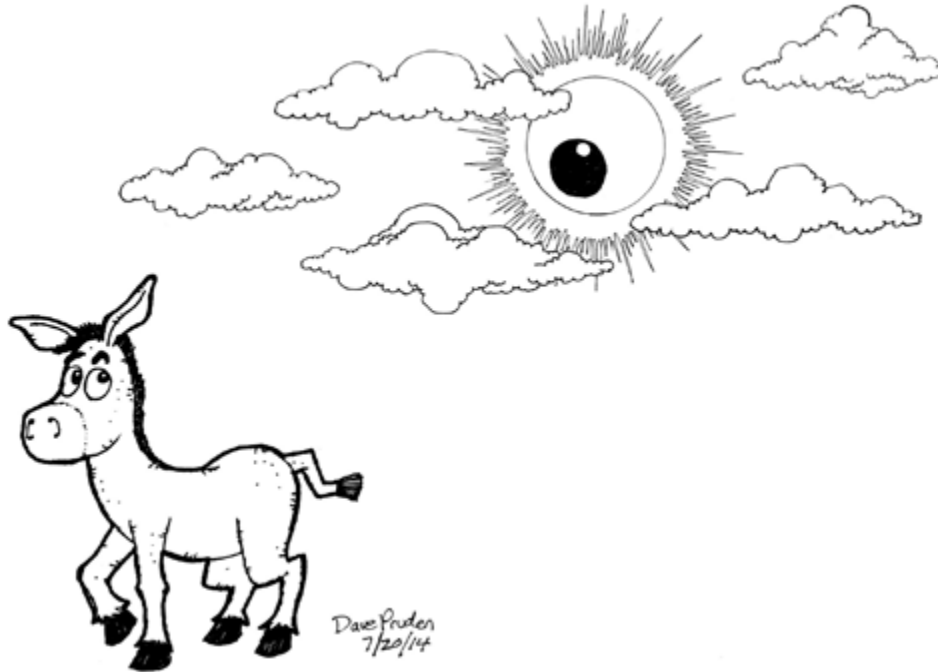


Eyes Wide Open



We hit the King's Head last night, in need of their cold beer and yummy hot food, and magically hit one of those lulls where seats and service were instantly available.

The main stage was down, the vendors were packing up, the beer tent denizens were finishing last call purchases, the late night rush had yet to begin, and the weather was perfect. What could be wrong?

Plenty.

As reported by today's Free Press, Theresa Thomson, lead actress, in Audra Lesowski's *Lies of a Promiscuous Woman*, has been harassed and threatened by anonymous bullies masquerading as defenders of Christianity—a religion they clearly don't understand, given that its principal tenet is love, and its Golden Rule is, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

Apparently these terrorists have defaced the show's posters, verbally harassed Thomson on the street, and committed vandalism when they wrote "slut" on her car.

The Free Press article reports that Fringe Festival director, Jason Neufeld, had been

approached by two men "demanding that the show be shut down," (proving that they don't understand Fringe any better than they understand Scripture).

He said "No," of course. In hindsight, I'm sure he wishes he'd reported the incident to the police, as Theresa plans to do today. Let's hope Jason has a memory for faces and a talent for description, as these guys need to be stopped.

A Fringe Festival should be a place where artists can explore any and every aspect of the human condition, be it historical, fictional, fantastical or controversial, and do so without fear.

If people want to protest any given work's message they have a right to do so legally, through nonviolent means. If a few more people holding signs appeared in Old Market Square, they'd make their point without threat. At least you could see their faces and monitor their movements.

But the low-lives who lie in darkness, spewing their poison anonymously, those folks are sick and dangerous.

I hope security is upped around the venue and someone more than the "sole male cast

member" is there at curtain to make sure Theresa gets safely to her car. U of W could help out by guaranteeing her a parking space in a well-lit, monitored area, or maybe someone should just drive her to and from the theatre entrance for her final three performances.

On the lighter side, frequent Jenny scribe—and Artistic Director of Theatre Anywhere—has added "actor" to his resumé.

He has a bit in *Bits*, most of which he says he spends listening for his cue. Welcome to the actor's life.

It's press time. Keep sending your Fringe reviews and stories to jennyrevue@shaw.ca.

Remember to keep your eyes open and be safe.

Coral McKendrick

DON'T FORGET TO VISIT

www.jennyrevue.com

AND CLICK THE LINK TO THE JENNY REVUE
Online Fringe Program & Schedule

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Congratulations to **The Jenny Revue** for over 20 years of reporting on the Winnipeg Fringe Festival!



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Julie Penner and Grant Davidson of *Slow Leaves* perform at *The Cube* on the first day of the Fringe.

Surrounded

**The Unexpected Laboratory—
Eckhardt-Grammett Hall (UofW)**

FANTASTIC! See this show!

See it because it's a great story that we all can relate to. See it for the great acting. See it for the amazing choreography. See it because it's a multimedia extravaganza beyond anything I've seen at a Fringe prior.

See it because they are the nicest group of people and I expect big things from them in the future. See it because they came all the way from Colorado and it's their first Fringe and I want them to come back!

See it because they made me cry. And then I cried again. Seriously, I needed to rehydrate.

John David Gordon

All You Can Eat/The Top?

Gearshifting Performance Works—MTC Mainstage

Based on the description, you know little about what's to come. Basically, this spectacle delivers an emphatic socio-political message, augmented by dance.

The conviction of the statement is evident but the delivery is a little challenging to decipher at times. By contrast, the dynamic music and power dance routines drive the show confidently.

Although this is an enjoyable learning experience, I would like to see less statement and

more dance. I get it—there's a lot of bad in the world, now show us more of what makes you great performers.

Ray Yuen

One Man Back to the Future

Shelby Bond—Eckhardt Grammett (UofW)

I think the always charming Shelby Bond may have found his calling! We had a blast and I think the near full house did as well.

For anyone that loved the film (i.e., anyone that saw the film).

John David Gordon

The power of *Back To The Future* is a curious thing. Well, not to me, 'cause I'm a big fan, and not to Shelby Bond, either, who—as a kid—would go to the theatre and watch the film all day, over and over again (as he told us), and perform it for his family and anyone who would listen.

Now he's performing it as a Fringe play. Every piece of dialogue by every character. A daunting task, but Bond has some fun with it: Principal Strickland has only one line, repeated over and over, so Bond gives that part to an audience member. He tells us the part of Jennifer, Marty McFly's girlfriend, will today be played by (as he voiced it) an Australian exchange student, perhaps as a takeoff on the fact a different actress played her in the sequels.

He makes fun of the dated '80s soft drinks Marty tries to order in the 1955 diner. Some of this can be distracting to those who just want to hear the movie lines repeated the way we all know them, but we'll rise above it in the interests of allowing Bond some fun with this whacked-out idea and his stretching it to fringe-like proportions. Sadly, no real effects here, just blinking of the house lights to symbolize the lightning that hits the clock tower, and Bond sings the songs (*Mr. Sandman*, *Earth Angel*) himself.

Better stage effects and the original songs would have made this play more special. But Bond's passion and spitfire enthusiasm make up for any minor complaints. And he really does know all that dialogue; he hit all his marks and didn't miss a beat. He did ignore the scene about *The Honeymooners* rerun on TV in 1985 that was brand new on a 1955 set, though. Great Scott!

(Speaking of the sequels, fun info: a girl in line brought a skateboard; she pleadingly noted to her friends, "It's the closest thing to a hover board—they only have one more year to make one!")

Beau Hajavitch

**DIE ROTEN PUNKTE
EUROSMASH!**

★★★★★ "Pants-wettingly funny!" Uptown Magazine

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photo by Kevin Campbell

Listen to the pot, talk to the cup. James Brown & Jamesy Evans pour a little High Tea at the Jenny Revue.

Tales She Tells

Spoons in Spotlights—Rachel Browne Th. (Crocus)

This seems to be the Fringe for stepping into the breach. Our billet, Lydia Riding, had to fulfill the stage manager's ultimate obligation and step in when the actor and playwright Tess McManus suffered a broken jaw in a bicycle accident. Fortunately she really hits the mark in this production.

A personal story weaves through this collection of Celtic Folk tales, and the magic of Irish folklore is matched by the charm and presence that Riding brings to the stage. Each moment has an immediacy and honesty that seems to come from her own experience and the depth of emotion she felt at the time. It's the only show of the dozen I have seen so far that has brought tears to my eyes.

I really hope that this experience inspires Lydia Riding to pursue a career in acting.

Kevin Longfield

Snake Oil

Black Sheep Theatre—Rachel Browne Th. (Crocus)

One of the great things about the Fringe is that you get to meet a sampling of theatre artists from across the country. This year I am fortunate to be billeting Zach Council, who performed in what I would call the definitive production of Daniel McIvor's *Wild Abandon* a few years ago.

This year he and Hannah Gibson-Turner are offering us Jayson McDonald's *Snake Oil*. It will cure what ails you, and it will take you into eternity with a smile on your face.

Council does a verbal tour-de-force as the smooth-talking pitchman, and Gibson-Turner is charming as his not-so-able-and-willing assistant.

It starts out as farce and at just the right moment takes a quick but sure step into darkness.

I'd like to have seen this play in a thrust stage environment, but that's a small thing. *Snake Oil* delivers everything it promises.

Kevin Longfield

The casting in this show is excellent. Both actors do an amazing job of portraying their characters. They even look like you would imagine them to look. The back and forth between them is excellent, not only moving the script forward but leaving you wondering what exactly is between them. As the show goes on more and more is revealed and it's captivating to watch. It's hard to look away from these two. The show sends you back out into the world re-thinking the characters, and with questions that you aren't sure you want the answers to.

Arden Pruden

Who Killed Gertrude Crump?

Ryan Gladstone—Alloway Hall (Man. Museum)

This cute puppet show soars through the skill of the puppeteer—her quirky and witty delivery makes up half the fun. She keeps you engaged the entire time, even drawing giggles through the scene breaks.

Like a typical Agatha Christie mystery, the plot keeps you guessing to the end. I bet you won't figure out who did it! And you won't be able to ask as the audience is sworn to secrecy forever! The voices are sometimes hard to follow so I advise a seat closer to the front.

Ray Yuen

SLAVES OF STARBUCKS
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"It's time for the people of Winnipeg to know the truth: we were separated at birth. He was raised by our parents, I was raised by sea otters. He's the mayor, I'm a struggling artist. I want my share of our joint inheritance. Come to my show, Mr. Mayor, and correct an old injustice."

— Peter Aterman,
Writer and Performer
Slaves of Starbucks



Sam Katz
Mayor of Winnipeg



Peter Aterman
Performer

www.peteraterman.com



Gary Has a Date

Grumble Productions—MTYP Mainstage

Emily Windler of Portland, Oregon, is in this one-woman show in which she portrays a man. As opposed to WONDERHEADS productions, in which she is also involved (including *The Middle of Everywhere* at this Fringe), here she does not wear a mask and is not silent. Her character Gary is an awkward, bumbling snail expert who wears a too-large jacket, has disheveled hair, and fumbles about in his place while preparing for a date.

The main focus of this show is the physical comedy related to Gary making a mess of things. He gets tangled up in his phone cord, knocks over his table and chairs, accidentally steps on an unseen cat behind a counter, spills wine on a table cloth, fights with scotch tape, bangs against a radio and sends its antenna flying, keeps clapping a lamp off and on, among other such similar actions. This all happens while he re-reads sections from *Dating for Dummies*, rehearses lines to say to his date, sets his table, and answers phone calls.

In some ways, the performance is reminiscent of Charlie Chaplin or Mr. Bean. Unfortunately, some of the gags are repeated too often and with little development, and this show becomes less about dating anxiety than about pure fumbling about. We never see his date Norma appear, although we hear her knocking at the door.

Also, this show ran for only 40 minutes, not the advertised 60 minutes.

Konrad Antony

The focus of this show is clearly on the physical comedy, and it's performed beautifully.

The show is a lovely and innocent portrayal of nerves before a date and really turns Gary into



photo by Dave Nishikawa

Chloé Ziner & Jessica Gabriel (Caws & Effect) drop in at the Square. That afternoon heat was murder!

an exceptionally loveable man who can't catch a break. All you can do is watch and laugh as everything falls apart for him, and he honestly is trying so hard. Maybe a little too hard sometimes, however. At certain points the joke drags on a little long, but the new events are always every bit as funny. A nice little innocent laugh.

Arden Pruden

Speechless

Three Tones Theatre—MTYP Mainstage

The write-up gives only an obscure clue as to what to expect; the best description for this show is improv-mime.

The two main performers hail from Columbia. It shocked them when they asked for input from

the audience and they found that more than 10% of the viewers talked about their trips to Bogota and Cartagena!

They ended up stripping the themes "things that smell good" and "the ocean" from the discussion. From the themes, they mimed a number of enjoyable stories that engulfed you in their adventures.

The mime was most approachable. However, since both performers acted at the same time, often, I found it hard to follow. Because there is no speech, if you miss a movement, you might miss the entire motif, especially when they're on opposite ends of the stage. I wasn't sure who to watch.

Ray Yuen

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Moonlight after Midnight

Concrete Drops—Asper Centre (UofW)

For the first forty minutes, this play spun through a perpetual loop, often reverting back to the beginning. Although repetitive, it was never boring and there was enough intrigue to keep the audience pasted to the plot. Even though the denouement left some loose ends, this touching story was well worth the anticipation.

Although the show featured a decent plot with a surprise outcome, it was the actors who made this experience a huge success. Both actors dove into their characters and lived them like they were one. Thank you for the stunning performance.

Ray Yuen

La Belle Laide

Lady of the Lake—Warehouse

This deeply moving play has no words. Thanks to Jackie Loewen for creating this gem.

The play explores the anguish we can go through when making difficult choices, and how disastrous the outcome of those choices can be, even if our intentions are good.

Rod Bielfuss is perfectly cast as the handsome young man beguiled by two beautiful women. Janelle Houcault and Tanja Woloshen present two attractive romantic options, each with charming personalities and contrasting aspects of physical beauty. Brett Owen, the manservant, accomplishes the difficult task of getting the job done on stage without drawing too much attention to himself.

I am starting to wonder why I spend so much time trying to find the right words when I am writing a play.

Kevin Longfield

Wang Dang

Snakeskin Jacket—Studio 320

Snakeskin Jacket always takes risks with their Fringe productions, and you can always count on a high level of professionalism. Last night's near-sellout (I saw one empty seat) shows that taking risks can pay off if you do your homework.

Tom Noonan's plays have a unique style, just as do those of Harold Pinter. And although Noonan does not use the long pauses or some other elements of Pinter, both playwrights feature a skewed reality and psychological undercurrents that bubble to the surface constantly, if you will forgive the cliché.

Like *The Homecoming*, *Wang Dang* is a



photo by Kevin Campbell

Andrew Lizotte and Quinn Greene in Woody Allen's *GOD: A Comedy In One Act* at the Jenny Revue.

battle of wits between the characters, as each takes a turn trying to be top dog. Each character is a match for the others, and as an audience member I had to constantly reassess what was going on. Was a character acting honestly, or playing a game with the others? Not every audience member wants to play that game, but it pays rewards if you are willing.

The cast did a fine job with this difficult work, almost always keeping the game afoot. The venue also worked well, although a slightly larger space would allow more people to enjoy this work and give the audience slightly more physical distance from the action, improving sight lines.

Kevin Longfield

Wanderlust

Antiscian Productions—Son of Warehouse

This satire pokes fun at many of the pre-conceived notions about travel, foreigners, and distant lands. It takes you through the pain, acclimatization, adjustment, and finally the assimilation of displacement. You grow with the characters from ignorance to naivety until you develop savvy.

This interesting show has a lot that I couldn't get; I can't help but wonder if I missed something along the way. Despite my ignorance, Kaitlin and Rachel took me on an enjoyable adventure.

Ray Yuen

Making Believe

Edge of Make Believe—Kids Venue

Kids shows are tricky things. You need to be able to entertain the kids and entertain the adults, but particularly the kids. Playful banter with the Fringe technician can accomplish that, puppet shows can accomplish that, and the show itself was cute and charming; but I could hear the audience getting more and more restless as time went on. Unfortunately, the show dragged in sections, and in others it took a long time to get to the point. A cute little puppet show, but somewhat lacking in execution.

Arden Pruden

Caws & Effect

Mind of a Snail Puppet Co.—MTC Up the Alley

I remember this company from last year, giving us a surreal look at the world through a retro projector and an effects pedal. While this particular production was not nearly as fantastical as the last, it is every bit as entertaining and beautiful. Following the story of two crows re-creating the world has never been more entertaining. The choreography with the projectors was amazing, the music was original and interesting, and the interaction with the shadows was clever and very well done. Not only that but it confirmed my suspicion that all animals speak only in puns.

Arden Pruden



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 Caws & Effect
 Chase & Stacy's Joyride
 ChubRub Cabaret
 Communion
 Cruising in September
 Cursed
 Damn Your Eyes
 Davy the Punk
 Devil's Circus, The
 Die Roten Punkte
 Delores a Mime Opera
 Dr. Frightful Presents... (2)
 Eating Pasta off the Floor
 Fake News Fan Girl
 Flying Dreams (2)
 Gary Has A Date (2)
 Godspell
 Horrible Friends: Free Beer, The
 Hudson Bay Epic, The
 Infinity or Bust

In This House: Vice, Virtues...
 jem rolls One-Man Traffic Jam
 La Belle Laide
 Lies of a Promiscuous Woman
 Making Believe
 Middle of Everywhere, The
 MITTELSCHMERZ
 Moonlight after Midnight
 Nashville Hurricane: A Curious...
 One Man Back to the Future (2)
 only just...
 Play Piano Play
 Quo Vadis
 Slaves of Starbucks
 Snake Oil (2)
 Speechless
 Suddenly Last Summer
 Surrounded
 Tales She Tells
 Teaching Shakespeare
 This Is a Play
 This Is CANCER
 Vampire Lesbians of Sodom
 Wang Dang
 Wanderlust
 Who Killed Gertrude Crump?
 You Can Do Magic

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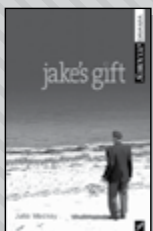
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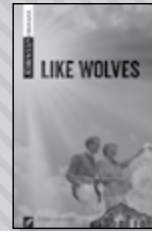
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