"Reporting on the Fringe"

ISSUE#2 Saturday, July 18, 2015





I'm free! My house and I worked out our codependency issues and I can now leave it and be relatively certain that it will be unchanged when I return. (Drat! I was hoping for an upgrade. Well, you can't have everything—where would you put it?)

(In a personal aside I'd want to give a shout out to Accurate Dorwin and also to the Domino's at 980 Portage, both of which offered customer service above and beyond my wildest expectations. Thanks to both companies.)

Due to my homebound isolation, I am short on Fringe news. I'm relatively sure that if a tornado touched down on site, I'd have heard of it—"Disappointingly, the performers lost focus in the 2nd half when the roof was ripped off and patrons in rows 1 through 3 were sucked into the vortex..." What can I say? The people who write for the Jenny are really into Fringe shows.

And what a whack of them there are—182! It's crazy, we have more shows shamelessly promoting themselves than ever before and it's still just a little more than a third of the possible choices.

This must mean its easier than ever to get into shows via walk-up (except in the literal sense, apparently, at venues like the Rocker and 245 McDermot, for which climbing gear and a canister of oxygen are recommended.

**Group contact**—Despite the variable weather, I will endeavor to make my way to the King's Head tonight, sometime between 9 and 10 (I hope). I can be found on the patio, weather permitting, by anyone with business to do or tales to tell.

**Tell Shawn**—Oh! Shawn Kowalke, Jenny FB manager and Jenny Award Show host extraordinaire, is soliciting tales of how Fringes past and present have affected you. So tell him, Tell him but good. Then he'll tell us all.

Coral McKendrick

# the BUZZ Reviews Reviews Reviews Reviews

#### The Death of Brian

#### theater simple-MTYP Mainstage

Whenever someone puts a "new spin" on old horror themes, I am often unimpressed with the results. But I'm a sucker for watching someone begin their slow descent into being totally psychotic, and happier than ever.

Traditionally, zombies have no mind, but our lead does, and what Ricky Coates does with zombies is fascinating.

Coates is a fantastic performer. You're completely drawn into the struggle of being an

amoral, immortal cannibal with a conscience. Take the warnings seriously though. Trust me. Arden Pruden

#### John Bennett: Fire In The Meth Lab

#### 2hoots Productions-Eckhardt-Gramatte

John Bennett is a stand-up comedian on a mission for little brothers everywhere to reclaim their dignity.

I knew I would like the show as soon as the actor sat on the stage and started conversing with the audience 10 minutes before the show

began. He welcomed people as they sat down, asked us how our day was, and explained that he doesn't like how lonely it is backstage or the fact that he never gets to see who we are. He welcomed us into his world and what a fun world it was.

The only complaint I have about this show is that it wasn't longer. The jokes were hilarious and extremely relatable. This is one of my favourite shows from the Fringe so far, and it is definitely one you should fit into your schedule. *Kaitlyn Kriss* 

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# Congratulations to the WINNIPEG FRINGE FESTIVAL on 28 years of DEFYING THE NORM!



# the BUZZ Reviews

## s Reviews



### Reviews

#### The Telephone

#### Naomi Forman Productions-Eckhardt-Gramatte

I am not a fan of opera. That being said, this short opera did make me belly laugh quite a few times.

I felt that the songs dragged, especially the solo from the baritone pining for his love. The encore that was supposed to be a sing-along, ended up being the two actors singing by themselves to a few of their favourite songs.

The singers were very talented and had a high amount of skill. The music was pleasant to listen too as well. If you are a fan of opera you will not be disappointed.

Kaitlyn Kriss

#### Salt of the Earth

#### Theatre Anywhere-RRC

This one-man narrative spun the audience a very depressing but heartwarming story of the immigrant experience.

I was a little confused at first (it took me a while to figure out that the scenes in blue were the character's nightmares); but once I settled into the narrative I did begin to really feel for the main character.

That being said, the show was an hour and it felt like it. The story is very dense and there is a lot to keep straight. I had a tough time following along for the first half. Thankfully the actor seemed to slow his pace down in the second half and I was able to catch up. This is not a happy tale but it is worth hearing once.

Kaitlyn Kriss

#### God is a Scottish Drag Queen III

#### Mike Delamont-Warehouse

S/He's back (although S/He's everywhere at the same time anyway).

Wearing a new power suit (polyester on a hot stage!), the deity hopped (barefoot, thus giving proof that the yeti is indeed a possibility) from topic to topic.

After touching on old favourites—the Americans, our Prime Minister, and the weird and wonderful things to be found only in Winnipeg eventually all things religious were given a brief opportunity for an examination and occasional drubbing.

New acolytes might have been puzzled by the skittering June bug approach. Old lags who had seen Parts I and II (myself included) might have wished for more focus and new material. Still the full house seemed delighted, and the announcement of a fall show of Parts I and II at Pantages, let alone a possible Broadway appearance, shows God is not dead...yet.

Ron Robinson

#### **Teddy Bears and Tidal Waves**

#### Bear in a Taxi Productions-Son of Warehouse

Every year, I dread coming to Son of Warehouse—the stifling heat and the densely packed hard chairs always meant an adventure before the show even began. This year, cushions soften the chairs and air conditioning (YES!) vastly improves the experience here. Unfortunately, that's not enough to overcome *Teddy Bears and Tidal Waves*'s weaknesses.

At first, I thought this would be a comingof-age tale but that never happened. Then I thought there would be a Bear-Waves epiphany, but that never connects either. Borchert's humour isn't enough to make this show funny, and her coquettish voice isn't enough to make this a musical. So what's the point? I can't say I know. *Ray Yuen* 

Ray

#### How Often Do I Dream...

Transitus-The Cinematheque

This show feels like coming home. Katie greets every audience member personally, introduces herself, learns our names, and invites us into what she calls her memory museum, where we are free to roam for a few minutes and place sticky notes around things that spark memories.

She makes a point of remembering the name of everyone in the audience, and continues to remind herself of them over the course of the entire show. She makes you feel like a friend, like you're all friends, and it's very comfortable and calming.

That, combined with her thoughts on losing memories and what the mind does as it grows old, make it a very wonderful and very gentle piece.

When she says she will remember and support you, you can tell she really means it.

Arden Pruden

#### Me, the Queen, and a Coconut Andrew Bailey–Cinematheque

This show is not what I expected or anticipated in any way, shape, or form. The stories were very endearing but I did not realize that a play advertised as stories from Windsor castle would instead be about nothing really, except religion.

The stories were humorous, and the asides were wickedly funny (especially in response to the audience's comments) but on the whole it felt like I had just watched someone teach a religion class.

Nonetheless, I did enjoy and connect with how quirky and funny the performer was. He was engaging to watch and gave me something to think about long after the show was done. *Kaitlyn Kriss* 

#### **Opera Mouse**

Reviews

#### Sisterscene For Kids-Kids Venue

I have had high praise for Melanie Gall's adult theatrical efforts in the past. Great stage presence, a professional opera singer with an amazing voice, what could go wrong?

I brought three children with me, two of whom are already Fringe veterans and musically trained. The youngest started off attentive, but ended up rolling on the floor, while the older two stayed tuned for the whole show, and both agreed, "good but not great."

The plot is sweet and her puppetry very able, but too much time spent getting every audience member's opinion led to the show dragging in spots. I feel tightening this up, and picking up the pace, would help hold everyone's attention. *Lisa Campbell and grandkids* 

## Jennys of the World, Unite!



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## BUZZ Reviews

#### Folk Lordz

#### Rapid Fire Theatre-Rudolf Rocker CC

A very different sort of long form improv makes a welcome Fringe return with *Folk Lordz*.

By pulling from the cultural heritage of both members and adding a third genre from the audience the duo engaged the audience with a 3-pronged onslaught of a Chekhov play, *Sailor Moon* inspired anime, and Cree origin story (I will let you guess which is which.)

The performers use their impressive command of the chosen cultural tales to take us on an energetic journey. On this particular evening we followed a young doctor on a bleak journey into responsibility in the face of a tuberculosis epidemic, saw our heroic moon daughters rescue a crystal from the C.H.U.D.s, and learned how Bison got his horns and why bees make honey.

Going into much more depth would be pointless as it's a new show every time but do yourself a favour and hit them up soon for a new take on the improv duo.

Tristan Hartry



#### Mulligan's Island

sb & me productions-MTC Mainstage

I had very high hopes for this musical and all begins well—until they start singing.

Every cast member has singing and key issues. If your star player is Kay Dee Pairy, I would hope that she would be the best vocalist. She isn't; in fact, she's one of the worst for falling out of key. Granted, she looks quite a bit like the real Perry but that's not enough to hold the role.

To make things worse, Mrs Howell's mic didn't work properly. Instead of hearing her voice, you often heard muffled static. And the problems didn't end here! The choreography was pathetically simple, like something that was rehearsed for a day in someone's basement.

Here's the worst part: in this iteration, Mr Howell is a billionaire industrialist. Howell's jacket fits him so poorly, it looks like he grabbed it off a Thrift Store rack. It's too big, too long, and the sleeves cover his knuckles. I don't think a billionaire would wear a jacket that looked and fit like a security guard uniform.

It's not all bad—some of the characters nailed the original actors' idiosyncrasies, and some of the songs are catchy—well, a large part are takeoffs on Katy Perry tunes, so that's expected.

This is a very disappointing effort.

Ray Yuen

#### Three Men in a Boat

#### Pea Green Theatre Group—Alloway Hall (MMMN)

I have watched a few British comedies in my life and admittedly, I don't get some of the humour. *Three Men in a Boat* looks like it could easily have been a program on the BBC, complete with the British humour that often eludes me. The audience laughed quite a bit, so I assume everyone got it but me.

Another reason it looks like it could have



Reviews

Throughout the numerous shows I've seen to date this year, singing has been a problem for many shows. Not so here—these three chaps deliver the best vocals and harmony I've heard so far. I just wish there were more songs in the show.

#### Ray Yuen

Fantastic. Three upper crust dandies go on a week long trip of hilarity, three part harmonies sprinkled throughout. What they can do with their faces is amazing. A must see.

Candassy Cross

#### The Seven Lives of Louis Riel

#### Monster Theatre-King's Head

A fact and fun-filled romp through the self conscious and self-effacing fabric of the Canadian imagination.

Historic characters are brought to life in true satiric tradition, and the genre-based storytelling emphasizes the biases of each perspective of the legend.

This is a piece that is definitely worth your time and money, and definitely a compliment to provincial pride. You will never forget what the Red River Settlement was sold for. Beware the puns. Danielle Marie

#### Mars One

#### Horse & Engine Prods.—Rudolf Rocker CC

This one-woman show is filled with a rich variety of characters skillfully brought to life and supplemented with interactive audio pieces.

Combining physical theatre and a break neck storytelling pace, the 45-minute show was nonstop entertainment and had the whole audience engaged start to finish.

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Glen Hagen





#### FOR BODY AND LIGHT PRESENTS...

#### Wired on Words Prods.—Rachel Brown Th. (Crocus)

BUZZ

This is a man playing a mellow electric guitar while reciting poetry about the tides and the sea. Three female dancers give physical form to the words and music, set in a performance hall, dark except for one ceiling lamp, which is moved and swung about on its cable by the dancers. The Montreal-based company were inspired by the coast of the Bay of Fundy to develop the elements of the show.

lan Ferrier provides the poetry and music. Although his words are sometimes hard to follow in a linear fashion, they add immensely to the impressionistic evocativeness of this production.

Stéphanie Morin-Robert, choreographer and one of the three dancers, is also the lighting designer. This makes sense, since all lighting effects, shadows, and silhouettes are provided by the dancers themselves.

This is a mood piece that deftly explores the fragility of humankind against the awesome power of nature.

Konrad Antony

#### The Bar Scene

Reactive Theatre-Asper Centre (UW)

I'm not really one for romantic dramadies, they normally get too out there for my tastes.

What's lovely about this show, however, is that all the characters are real. I don't mean that it's non-fiction, but it seems it could be.

It flows wonderfully. Each character is a person, not just a character; the performances were totally believable.

Among all the great things about this show, it reinforces that romance and the workplace should never go hand in hand.

Arden Pruden

#### **Squirrel Stole my Underpants**

Reviews

Reviews

#### They Gotta Be Secret Agents—Kids' Venue (Crocus Bldg. parking lot)

Although meant for kids, what a lovely adventure for adults! In fact, although the kids let out a few guffaws, I'm not sure if they get the thoughtfulness behind the preparation of this perilous journey.

There's some good humour here, some that kids get, some that they might not.

Not only does Sylvie take us through this journey expertly and competently, the musicians and the music combine to make this a professional, television-worthy show.

The running time of 30 minutes is shorter than promised, probably enough for the kids but I wanted more.

Ray Yuen

Reviews

#### Village Ax

#### Sydney Hayduk-The Purple Room

Admittedly, it took me a long time to put the segments together and understand what was going on. While some people think about shows as they unfold, I just let them flow and take the connections as they come. Consequently, I didn't get the big picture until almost the end. It would have been a much more enjoyable experience if I would have fit the puzzle pieces in earlier, but that's my fault for being a laissez faire spectator.

There's a powerful message here--and it would have been a lot more poignant if I would have followed it from the beginning.

If you take in this show, pay attention from the start and view it from the holistic perspective, rather than the fragmented lens.

Ray Yuen





Reviews

Folk Lordz towering over lesser improv giants.



The Mystery of Krummhorn Castle; or: The Rosalind House Orphans vs. The Army of Abominations by Joseph Aragon Kiss the Giraffe Productions Venue 1– Mainstage



# SSPS Shameless Self-Promotions Shameless Self-Promotions Shameless Self-Promotions

#### Bear in a Taxi Productions

#### Teddy Bears and Tidal Waves— Son of Warehouse

Teddy Bears and Tidal Waves is the story of a girl who wants to be a bear. Despite the innocent title, this is NOT A KIDS' SHOW. There are fun, quirky parts, and hot, sexy parts. And you might not always know which are which. There are puppets, both of the adorable and slightly disturbing varieties. There is live music. There is a girl, struggling with loneliness, insecurity, bullies, alcohol, sexuality, gender expression, and liking Miley Cyrus.

Also, free blueberries

#### Seismic Shift Produtions

#### Burning Hearts-Cinematheque

After taking a (lottery imposed) year off, Brent Hirose returns to the Winnipeg fringe for the tenth year with his latest play, Burning Hearts. A paranormal mystery, the show invites you to join a ghost who haunts over a city looking for his identity and finds so much more in the process. Featuring a cast of characters, movement, music and even a little improv, Burning Hearts will take you on an unexpected journey that will make you laugh and make you think.

#### Weeping Spoon Productions

#### Trampoline-Playhouse Studio

JENNY AWARD winning Australian Shane Adamczak (ZACK ADAMS) returns to the Fringe with a brand new work about a daydreamer who meets the girl of his dreams. Trampoline is a bizarre take on the traditional boy-meets-girl romcom story featuring Adamczak, Fringe newcomer Whitney Richards and Sound & Fury's Patrick Hercamp. Fringe audiences will laugh, cry and be perplexed by Adamczak's dancing to Kenny G. Oh, and at one point a character gets attacked by monkeys.

#### **SpeakEasy Theatre**

#### 3....2....1-Playhouse Studio

3...2...1 is a riveting play about Clint and Kyle, two young men from Wetaskiwin, Alberta, who skip their best friend Danny's funeral and lock themselves in a garage with several cases of beer, some Jack Daniels, a cornucopia of pharmaceuticals and broken dreams. And they're not coming out until everything's been drunk, popped, shot up and smoked - with an ending that will blow you away.

3...2...1 is a raw, violent and sometimes funny examination of life, religion, love, friend-ship and homophobia.

#### **Regina of Light Fires**

Do I Have To Do Everything My F\*\*king Self?—Son Of Warehouse

With the voice of a shady angel and a body made for breaking hearts, Regina delivers anthems from the alleyways and sets the nights ablaze.

She skewers the room with her sharp tongue and heels, then picks you up and teaches you, how to feel.

By her beauty and the beat, you are hers for the taking, she parades into your embrace while your nerves leave you shaking.

Regina is a celebration of love.

Regina is a celebration of the night.

Regina is what you've been missing in your life.

#### SNAFU

#### Snack Music- Rachel Browne Th. (Crocus Bldg.)

"Smart, charming and very funny."-Broadcast Text Reviews

"Snack Music is a fabulous puppetrystorytelling-improv-dance-music mash-up. They bring personal stories to life in a way that is both simple and simply brilliant

Ingrid, Elliott, and Andrew act out their own life stories and then invite the audience to share theirs. Their imaginative canvas seems to stretch ever larger as they make the world a better place, one connection at a time. P.S. Free Snacks!" —Montreal Rampage

"TONS OF FUN!...like something out of a Jean-Pierre Jeunet movie.-Now Magazine

#### The 28th Minute

#### Tape—Asper Centre (UofW)

*Tape* revolves around three characters having a mini-high school reunion of sorts in a seedy motel.

Vince convinces his old high school friend, Jon, to confess that when Jon slept with Vince's ex-girlfriend, Amy, at their graduation party 10 years ago, he actually raped her. Vince reveals that he has been taping the entire conversation and that Amy is on her way over. *Tape* showcases some of Winnipeg's up-and-coming creative talent.

#### **Martin Dockery**

#### The Exclusion Zone-Alloway Hall (MMNM)

"The best storyteller in the U.S." -Orlando Sentinel.

Martin Dockery returns for his 7th year in a row with a true tale of traveling to one of the

most evocative places on Earth: The Exclusion Zone surrounding the melted-down nuclear reactor of Chernobyl

Hidden in the woods lies an abandoned city which Dockery explores—his guides being a cult Russian sci-fi move and a strange, obsessive book about this movie. Passionately told, Dockery spins a circular story on the very nature of art, reality, and inspiration.

#### **Ribbit RePublic**

#### Inescapable—The Purple Room

Looking for a play—like an actual play—at this theatre festival? Award-winning playwright Martin Dockery's Inescapable is a tight whirlwind of a thriller about two men who find themselves trapped at that annual social tar pit known as The Holiday Party.

There is a puzzle at the heart of this story of two men fighting not only to escape a neverending moment, but to outrun a lifetime of the betrayals and deceits that can only come after a lifetime of friendship.

#### **Two Juliets**

#### XOXO: The Relationship Show-RRC

Do YOU kiss and tell?

Two Juliets tackles 10 monologues, 8 songs, 7 scenes, two poems, two dance breaks, two stories (about four first kisses), one epic superhero fight, one game of spin the bottle, falling in love, and breaking up, ALL IN UNDER 60 MINUTES!

This comedy cabaret explores the highs and lows of dating featuring personal experiences and anecdotes, Two Juliets combines the honesty of stand-up comedy, the theatricality of a Shakespearean tragedy and the bone-chilling horror of an R.L. Stine novel.

#### A Little Bit Off

#### Beau & Aero-The Playhouse Studio

Don't miss the "show of the century!"

A Little Bit Off presents Beau & Aero...a rip-roaring slobberknocker of laughs, the likes of which you have never seen!!!

"Like watching Charlie Chaplin and Harold Lloyd on acid (THEM, not you) or watching Lucy and Ricky on acid (YOU, not them)." Safe for kids, great for adults.

These Aviators are comic Aces!

- "You'll blow your wig!"
- Don't be a wet sock, go see Beau & Aeroit's the cat's pajamas. "And How!"





# SHOWS REVIEWED

#### 3...2...1

11 O'Clock Number, The Ain't True & Uncle False Armageddon F\*\*k Fest At Your Own Risk Bar Scene. The Beau & Arrow Birdcage, The Death of Brian, The **ESSENTIA** Folk Lordz FOR BODY AND LIGHT PRESENTS... From Broadway to Obscurity God Is A Scottish Drag Queen III Great Canadian Tire Money Caper, The Just Ed. Mr. Flannery's Ocean How Often Do I Dream... Jon Bennett: Fire In The Meth Lab Mars One

Me, the Queen, and a Coconut Mulligan's Island Mystery of Krummhorn Castle, The **Opera Mouse** Orchid and The Crow, The **Pulling Pints Rumble Pak Returns** Salt of the Earth Sama Kutra. The Seven Lives of Louis Riel, The Squirrel Stole My Underpants Steven Brinberg is Simply Barbra Tape Teddy Bears and Tidal Waves Telephone, The Three Men in a Boat (2) Trampoline Vaudevillian Village Ax VIOLET, the Musical

## SSPS Shameless Self-Promotions Shameless Self-Promotions

#### Winnipeg Shibari Theatre Company 340ft up close—Eckhardt-Gramatté Hall

Everything you wanted to know about shibari and tying people up but were afraid to ask. You've heard something about it, you may have seen it on the Internet. Here is a rare chance to get into the bedrooms and dungeons of the nation and see it live and from up close.

Last year *340ft* of rope was enough. This year we will need more than that, for more fun, athleticity, (dare I say BDSM), and sensuality.

#### Cagey Productions

#### Pulling Pints-Warehouse

The birth of the Madchester music scene, the politics of Margaret Thatcher and the hatred of the IRA form the backdrop for this story of a naïve 23-year old Prairie boy pulling pints in a London pub.

A play 25 years in the making, from the mind of Fringe fanatic, Ken Gordon, featuring Fringe veterans Jesse Boulet, Veronica Ternopolski, Luke Falconer, Shawn Kowalke and directed by Fringe Icon Leith Clark.

We also have FREE BEER coasters and FREE temporary TATTOOS.

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Jenny Box it:

The Beer Tent (inc. paper & pencils) Hospo at MTC (lobby) The King's Head Planetarium MTC Warehouse PTE (near Fringe ticket tables) CanWest Global Performing Arts Centre (MTYP)

Asper Centre for Theatre and Film (at U of W)

Visit The Jenny Revue website: **www.jennyrevue.com** 

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When it Rains Anthony Black



Colours in the Storm Jim Betts



Sally Stubbs







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