Sound & Fury's 'Testacles & ye Sack of Rome'

Sound & Fury—MTC Backstage

I always look forward to seeing a company courageous enough to mess with Shakespeare. The material is so strong that considerable liberty can be taken with it with enjoyable results. Unfortunately, this show only almost succeeds.

These are three charming and personable guys. Easy on the eyes? Yes. Fun? Yes. So what is the problem?

It is that, anatomically correct nomenclature aside, a one-joke show is still a one-joke show, and it wears thin after forty-five minutes. I was pleasantly surprised that they didn't resort to common slang terms (bravo), but the four or five drawn out warnings about content and ten-year-olds (with nary a ten-year-old in the house) were unnecessary at the 10:30 PM show.

Some variety came from dirty limericks, but some of the authentic Elizabethan stuff is much more suggestive. The attempt to include modern references throughout did not entirely succeed. They were almost cut-and-paste kinds of moments.

Most of all, I missed the wit of Shakespeare, and with more thought, the script could have been wittier. Overall, the performances were very loose, which made it difficult to differentiate between kibitzing and acting. It could be that this was deliberate, but it didn't work for me.

To wrap up, not a bad show, but not one I would put high on my list of go-sees. Fun in a late-night, goofy sort of way, but much more could have been made of the material.

Michelle Cook

Punch and Polly

Dancing Bear Prod.—Son of Warehouse

Having never actually seen a Punch and Judy show, the puppet show at the beginning was worth the price of admission.

The madness of the puppeteer who found her life mirroring the performance was both amusing and disturbing. A highly enjoyable show.

Colin Stobbe

Pinocchio

Screwed & Clued—Sch. Contemporary Dancers

The boys from Shrewsbury are back with another tale for our enjoyment. But only two of the troupe made the trek across the pond, with the others having found real work as teachers (look out kids!). The result was an outside actor working with Screwed & Clued for the first time at the Winnipeg Fringe, and in the lead role! Their combined talents take them to new heights, with a most enjoyable new look at an old story. Warning: not for the kids.

Tim Hogue



Crew of BSide Productions sail off in Prairie Salt, an adventure for music lubbers everywhere

SHAMELESS Self-Promotion Self-Promotion

Big Smoke Productions

The Reefer Man—MTC Up the Alley

The Reefer Man, a criminal comedy, is the story of a new superhero.

Charlie Kovacs is a lawyer with no respect for the law (all similarities to people alive or deceased is purely coincidental!). He secretly grows marijuana in his basement. The problem is that everyone has been told to Just Say No. How can Charlie Just Say Yes?

Love Apple Inc.

Fairy—MTC Backstage

Fairy is the first play written by Laura Simms, and features a young cast of crazies that may burst into tears, burst into song, or make YOU burst into laughter!

Astra and Orion have been best friends forever. They hold hands when they go grocery shopping, tell each other everything, and eat nearly illegal amounts of peanut butter.

When Astra tells Orion she loves him, and he tells her he's gay! well, life gets a lot stickier.

all the best to the fringe & the jenny



GEORGE HICKES, MLA FOR POINT DOUGLAS
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As-Q Theatre

Acting, Actually—Red River College

So you're in this black box and this guy's on stage and he's talking about being on that "English Teachers: Taiwan" television series on Life Network. And then he starts talking in the third person about himself, and then he's not really himself anymore cause he's on the television, and the lights keep changing and then he's getting you to say the alphabet and then he pretends to forget a line, but he really knows what the line is…well, you have to see it to understand.

Sarasvati Productions

Jill's War—Warehouse

This is the dramatic and powerful story of Gillian Clark, a Canadian international aid worker killed in Baghdad as she was interviewing Iraqis to assess their post-war needs.

Do you think the media is telling the whole story? Have you seen Farenheit 9/11? Do you think that is the whole story?

Come and hear about current life in Iraq through the words of the Iraqi people themselves. This multi-media experience includes breath-taking, middle-eastern dance and amazing video projection.

Happy Phantom Productions

Pavlov's Score—WCD Studio

A dark, funny, fast-paced and twisted heist thriller. The actors will keep you on the edge of your seat and have you wanting more. Maybe you hear this a lot but this is not a fringe experience to be missed. You pickin' up what I'm layin' down?

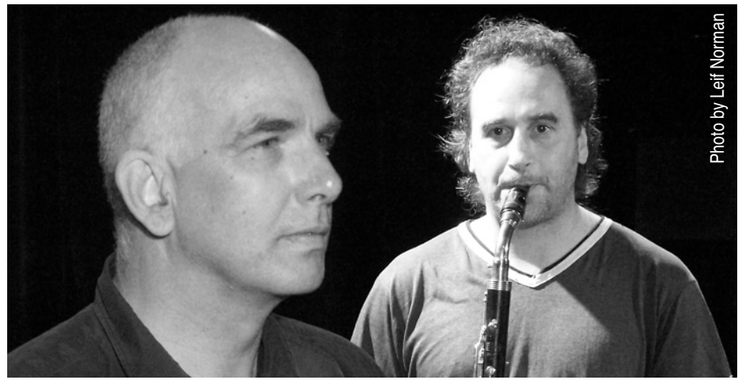


Photo by Leif Norman

David Stubel and Greg Hanec playing The Song of Solomon

The Year of the Panda

Meow Mix Tango Productions—The Conservatory

A straightforward and very successful two-hander about two out-there young women telling stories of men, sex and wacky past adventures in the wake of the death of one character's mother.

The stories and the delivery were really funny. We laughed a lot. I was most impressed with the dialogue; it sounded so real and true. Well done!

Michael Case

As my son Neil said, anytime Chris Sigurdson is involved in something, you should see it. It seems the rest of the Fringe agrees, because the only two empty seats for an afternoon show were between my wife Diane and Steve Sym (I guess there's some places people just won't go).

Perhaps that's because the show features two of Winnipeg's funniest performers, Trish Cooper and Vanessa McRae. As for the show itself, the term "black comedy" was probably coined with this show in mind.

The script is clever, ironic, nasty and heartwarming in turn, and the delivery is flawless. It went on just a touch too long for my taste, and I think the show could benefit from a few minor cuts here and there, but the rest of the script was so good it was easy to forgive.

Kevin Longfield

This was a completely enjoyable show. The script is hilarious. Some of the material is fairly low-brow, but all done in an extremely clever way.

The performances are wonderful. These two actresses are fantastically talented, and are obviously so comfortable with each other you truly could mistake them for two girls just hanging out and shooting the shit with each other.

Shawn Kowalke

Therese's Creed

Molly Caw Prods.—The Conservatory

Every Fringe contains a jewel that most people miss. I hope that this is not the fate for this production. The people involved are not professional theatre artists, and the playwright is not a household name, but once the lights came up magic took place.

Director, Mary Kelly Campbell, is as good at dissecting a script as any professional, and Suann DeCoursey gave one of the best performances I have seen, in a physically and emotionally demanding role. No wonder she won the best actress award at the Irish Fest in Milwaukee.

Therese gives a human face to the grinding cycle of poverty experienced by too many people in the world, and particularly the people of Newfoundland. Her husband and two of her 10 children die, others move away, and still she completes the daily chores of life, pausing every once in a while to wonder why such simple things as heating her house are almost out of reach, and owning a rickety wringer-washer is a cause for celebration. This production hit every note of a very rich script.

Kevin Longfield

CACTUS

Epicworlds.com/Jonno Katz—WFG Studio

Fans of the Sabotage series will enjoy this. Jonno Katz is directed by Mark "Sabotage" Chavez and there's a lot of Sabotage's sensibility in it. I don't know Jonno's previous work, but what a fabulous clown face he has!

Dammit, I have nothing insightful to say. It's quirky, well-crafted, funny, inspired zaniness.

Michael Case

beyond the fringes



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