

Or

Nancan Boogie Productions—Alloway Hall*

Or tells the story of Aphra Behn, a female playwright who emerged during the Restoration Period, when the English people had finally had enough of the Puritans, and restored King Charles II to the monarchy. King Charles II was called the Merry Monarch for a reason. I don't want to give too much away, but Behn was about as far away from a Puritan as you could get, and was welcomed into Charles' court. Nan Fewchuk plays the lead role, assisted by Rob McLaughlin and Laura Olafson in multiple roles. They all work well together, and the script, by Liz Duffy Adams, serves the story well.

My only complaint here is that I found the Maria character a little grating, but no doubt that's a personal choice.

I wish that the production had taken place on a slightly smaller stage, because the size of the stage created some lengthy entrances and exits (and no doubt, some scrambly backstage crosses). Sometimes the play involves door-slamming farce, and this requires tight timing that wasn't always there. Regardless, this is an entertaining production that explores a chapter of theatre history that hasn't had enough attention.

Kevin Longfield

*Main Floor, Manitoba Museum of Man & Nature

Sigurd the Dragonslayer**The Struts and Frets Players—Playhouse Studio**

Sigurd the Dragon Slayer is a strange mix of ancient language and interpretation by the Struts and Frets. Think SNL meets Lord of the Rings. The lines are cheesy and references to pop culture tiresome but they can be forgiven because this is a talented cast.

It is a fast paced whirlwind and a turgid beginning with a dizzying dragon slaying scene. I was bombarded with too much stimuli, that I could not sort out. This included paper puppets behind a screen and umbrella-constructed British crows feeding on the corpse of the slain dragon. Less congested action would make this play go smoother.

The story began to unfold in the middle and became clever, engaging, and full of strong characters with clues towards pivotal moments and important symbolism such as the significance of chess.

The Ring of Fire scene is cleverly executed and represents a pivotal shift in the show, after which Sigurd meets Brynhild. There are some tender moments between Sigurd and Brynhild which are full of fiery tension like a romantic comedy. Ardern, who plays Brynhild, the female lead, is a strong atypical post-modern jade heroine who hardly needs saving from Sigurd. Ardern carries the



Photo Credit: Diverse.com

Jimmy Hogg works up a sweat in *Curriculum Vitae*.

story with her strong yet vulnerable performance. This was a hilarious scene with memorable funny one-liners and a double entendre or two.

The continuity of the ring is like Tolkien's Lord of the Rings, you get a wild ride, with everything centering around a ring with its evils and power. The cast tells this tale with an interpretation that is clever, witty, and satirical. *Sigurd the Dragon Slayer* is fun, and has loads of action. I liked the unpredictability of it. And if you like this genre, it is worth checking out.

Yvette Jones

Recess**Keep It Movin' Productions—Cinematheque**

What a treat! All Fringe shows should be of this calibre. This lone woman somehow manages to make the stage seem a busy place full of characters. Her rubber face and body contort magically to make each character unique and distinctive. Having worked in the school system for many years, I was blown away with her bang-on capturing of the mannerisms and body language of children. A total delight, my friends and I could only wonder why more people weren't there to enjoy with us. Buzz will soon get around, so get to this air conditioned venue before she starts selling out. Thank you Una, you are mesmerizing.

Lisa Campbell

Big Shot**Surreal SoReal Theatre—MTC Up the Alley**

The first standing ovation of the Fringe was well warranted. Jon is one of those great actors who somehow manage to become the character they are portraying. Only real talent can, for example,

turn the face and body of a young man into an ancient Japanese fellow before your eyes. I loved the way the script intertwines each individual tragic tale into a riveting whole. I can't think of any way that this stellar performance could improve.

The fact that we get to see theatre of this quality for a measly 10 bucks is what makes Fringeing rewarding. What are you waiting for? It doesn't get any better than this.

Lisa Campbell

Rambo: The Missing Years**Howard Petrick Presents—Planetarium**

Are you old enough to remember the Vietnam War? Do remember Lloyd Robertson reporting the news and seeing the pictures on the evening news? Are you old enough to remember Life magazine? If you can't, then go to this one-man show by the man who lived it! And if you can, then you are old enough to remember that it was different in Canada. When you went to the United States on your school trip or holidays, young men were few and far between and those who were left all had a story to tell about the draft. A history play by someone who lived it and changed our views about the war.

Frank Martin

Jennys of the World, Unite!

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