

Bash On Regardless**Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers—SCD**

This is a remarkable interpretation of the saga of Canadian writer Elizabeth Smart and her tumultuous love affair with married British poet George Barker, by whom she had four children. Six dancers portray the resolute lovers and the offspring they conceived, and through both words and dance, the dancers superbly convey the wide range of extreme emotions that can only be found in such a complicated affair, especially this one.

With this type of ensemble piece, I hesitate to single anyone out, but I must give a nod to Sarah Roche whose outstanding dance and monologue very near the end was practically a showstopper. This young woman is an extraordinary actor as well as a gifted dancer. Overall, this show—which will form the basis for an expanded version next year—is filled with power and strength.

Robin Chase

The Scents Of Tang**Alexandra Elliott &...—Rachel Browne Theatre**

Don't let the title (Tang short for 'tango') and the spoken introduction regarding this play being inspired by Argentinian tango fool you. That is only the vehicle for this modern-dance piece.

This is a sharp-edged, anguished exploration of youthful rivalry and popularity among peers that leads to violence, as these scenarios all-too-often do in real life.

Performed by five local dancers including choreographers Alexandra Elliott and Renée Vandale, this is a multi-layered production open to personal interpretation. You may very well come away with something quite different from my impression. In the opening sequences, there is one popular girl leading three followers, but soon an interloper appears. Through intense dance and physical theatre, including brutal confrontation, this rival succeeds in wooing the first girl's followers away and they soon turn on her, leaving her lying on the ground—beaten and bloody. But that's not the ending.

I must single out dancer Keren Parker who portrayed one of the followers, but did so in such an expert way that I began to suspect her character was filled with reluctance. At the end, Parker performs a beautiful solo dance oozing with guilt for betrayal and desire for what she lost, leading to a dance duet featuring Parker and Nicole Coppens that is filled with love and reconciliation. The show may have some violent elements, but overall, this production exudes sensuality.

Robin Chase

Scarlet Woman**SunsetGun Productions—Rachel Browne Theatre**

Candy Simmons and Brittany Parker play 12 characters, most of whom end up dead, in this film noir send-up. The script was well written, with enough double-crosses, twists-and-turns, and humour to keep a good hold on the audience's interest. I liked the way it used some of the character names from Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* as a bit of an homage to the genre. The performers were able to move easily between characters and draw out the laughs that made the show so much fun. These dames are well worth a gander, so make sure to see them before they're gone.

Murray Hunter

HEY ABBOTT! Another Classic...**Chase & Hamill—MTC Mainstage**

One of the funniest shows I've seen this fringe; a feel-good family-friendly comedy that I hope everyone will go and see. Chase & Hamill perform some of Bub and Lou's most famous routines, which keeps the audience laughing every moment. Filled with very talented characters, this show is a must-see for anyone who wants to have a good laugh at the good old days.

Matthew Lagacé

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