ISSUE#2 Saturday, July 20, 2013

Extra Mayo. Hold the Pickle.

I was just puttering around the house this morning, thinking that when everything is just Fringing fine, there is little for a Fringeside chronicler to gossip ab...what the F-word?

CBC, proud sponsor of the Winnipeg Fringe Festival, just reported there were live sex acts on a Fringe Stage! (And you thought there were no ads on CBC radio.)

The stage in question is Son of Warehouse. (I had heard it was a hot venue), and the play is—no surprise—lan Mozden's Hollywood Hen Pit, a comedy, which, according to the report, involves two naked men (Mozden and Doug Melnyk) presenting scenes from the life of an aging Hollywood starlet. (I admit I didn't suss that from the excerpt of Nathaniel West's The Day Of The Locust that forms their program description.)

Mozden, I'm told, specializes in theatrical offerings described by past viewers, as avantgarde, shocking, and disturbing.

CBC Fringe reviewer, Michelle Polanski stated, "What I saw were not one, not two, but *three* mayonnaise enemas. Well it's the Fringe. What do you expect? What I was surprised to see was a live sex act." (Personally, I do not



expect and *would* be very surprised by a mayonnaise enema. As it is, I may never eat chicken salad again.)

Ms. Polanski went on to say that there was what appeared to be actual fellatio, albeit it was "not for very long, only for a few seconds".

The report included a statement from the Fringe Festival saying that live sex acts on stage were verboten, and another from Mozden's company, Project PIT, saying that "the caricatured sex scene is simulated." Well, I guess that's why we haven't had a Shameless Self Promotion from this company. PIT's shamelessness could not be contained by mere ink and paper.

On a side note, a search of both the Fringe's media sponsors' sites—The Winnipeg Free Press and the CBC—found nary a written review of the show in question. What happened to these outlet's annual goal of covering all Fringe plays by the opening weekend? Are they just holding back, hoping to intensify the experience upon, um, release? Not for nothing, the CBC's Fringe review website does greet you with a banner inviting you to "Embrace the F-word".

Salad ingredients aside (please) *Hollywood Hen Pit* seems, at bottom (ahem), to be doing just that.

(By the way, Ian, this is a hell of a way to get yourself into the running for a Jenny Award. Don't know what category will fit, but I'm sure we can slip you in somewhere.)

Sunday—is the traditional day of rest for monotheistic deities and Jenny printers. So we will see you, and all you have to say, on Monday. *Coral McKendrick*

Reviews

Reviews

the BUZZ Reviews

The Titanic

Grumpy Productions—MTYP Mainstage

As I watched this show, a feeling of déjà vu came over me, but it wasn't for the famous 1997 film. I finally understood that this play was very much like the *Spiral Dive* trilogy that ran over three Winnipeg Fringes from 2008-2010, and which was one of the greatest things I had ever seen at Fringe. In fact, that trilogy was written by Kenneth Brown, the same person who adapted E.J. Pratt's 1935 poem *The Titanic* for this present work.

The Edmonton-based cast consists of two men and two women. In this production, they are dressed in what look like formal stewards' uniforms, and they play a wide range of characters, representing people of all classes who were affected by the tragedy.

Reviews

Reviews

Often the actors speak in parallel, or one will begin a sentence, only for it to be finished by a second and then possibly a third actor, as they transition into different characters and different scenes, without any set changes. Because of this, this show was very much like the plays in *Spiral Dive*.

The set is minimal: two red chairs and two blue chairs, which are endlessly shuffled about the stage, a small model of the Titanic, and a giant wooden A-frame draped in white, representing the iceberg. Later on, a ladder is brought on stage and it is moved in all sorts of physically demanding ways to represent the mayhem on the sinking ship. Much of the time, this production feels like the poem that was its source, with slightly archaic English spoken by the four actors, rather than a play proper. None of the actors plays any specific character for any length of time. It is a demanding task for each of them to play so many roles (gamblers, wrestlers, dancing passengers, ship officers, third-class passengers, and so on), with so many different mannerisms and even accents at times and, for the most part, they pull it off. With all the immense detail that this narrative provides, though, it might be hard to follow if one does not possess the background information that that famous 1997 film provides.

Konrad Antony

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Congratulations to The Jenny Revue

for over 20 Years of reporting on the Fringe Festival



INE BUZZ Reviews

Reviews

Comedy Plus Time Equals Tragedy

See Smay Run–Rachel Browne Th. (Crocus Bldg.)

With *Comedy Plus Time Equals Tragedy*, Dana Smith has announced to the world she can combine silly comedy and poignant reality with a touch of the delightfully vulgar. But what she's really saying is that Winnipeg sketch comics better watch their backs, because she's coming at them with a moose, a rap song, and love for an 80s duo.

Ms Smith is a delightful performer who breezes through characters and emotions with ease. She is joined on stage by comedian, and fringe veteran, Tim Gray, whose dynamic range matches the skill of Smith. Their chemistry takes the material from outstanding to Stand Out.

Director Rory Fallis must have had his hands full with these performers but his deft arrangement and pacing of sketches and through-line kept this show clipping along. I laughed, I felt genuinely moved by the characters plight, and I wanted more when it finished.

If you're looking for a laugh check out this show. Sebastien Ball

Red Bastard

Red Bastard–Alloway Hall (Manitoba Museum)

This is one of those rare shows that is truly FRINGE. But if you want to know what happens in it, I can't really tell you for two reasons:

- 1. I am still processing the experience.
- 2. I feel *Red Bastard* is a dish best served cold.

However, to provide some context to the show, I think it's best characterized as *bouffon*—not clowning where the joke is on the performer, but a true jester performance where the audience is parodied.

Eric Davis (and the character he has created in *Red Bastard*) is stunningly charismatic, strangely compelling and charmingly wicked. There are various varieties of shows where audience participation and interaction are key, but I have never seen a performer engage an audience so fully.

He's called a comedy monster but the audience is his creature to command – indeed we are to afraid not to comply. His highly refined physicality is hypnotic while being ridiculous—in the best sense—and sometimes, absolutely, unapologetically crude. At some points I wanted needed—to look away but dared not cover my eyes because I knew then, the Red Bastard would have come for me. Aspergers: a Tale of a Social Misfit

Autistic Productions-Playhouse Studio

I was charmed by Adams' self-effacing wit at the lively Jenny PREvue show. I had to see more, and was not disappointed. Aspergers or not—this guy is hilarious!

We all roared from start to finish and left smiling. He has performed at Rumours and I expect to see him on national television before you know it. He can play with the best of the stand-up comedians any day the week.

Lisa Campbell

I'm not really a fan of stand-up, but this show really won me over.

Adam Schwartz has written a clever, touching monologue about his experiences in dealing with Asperger's that is also very funny. The true measure of his ability as a performer, though, is that the jokes that are not focussed on Asperger's, are just as funny as the rest of the monologue.

It's my favourite of the first few days of the Fringe.

Kevin Longfield

Miss Mumford's...

Nevermore Theater—Antoine Gaborieau (FMCC)

Fun and entertaining—that's the best way to describe this highly interactive party! The gala starts with a nice cup of tea and biscuits, and ends with a chance to win a prize. I also received a charm to help cope with my...uh em... let's just call it a health issue!

Although the guide lists this as 60 minutes in duration, the party only lasted 35 minutes—pity, since I didn't get enough yet.

Ray Yuen

Quest for the Cup

The Horrible Friends–Studio 320

Once again Shawn Kowalke and Luke Falconer team up for (or against) the purpose of presenting their slightly abusive improvisation.

Fans of "Whose Line" style improv games will find much to enjoy, as the two frenemies beat each other with bats (and invite the audience to help), and jockey through a series of games.

New this year is a 'competition' via hockey jerseys: each show, the Friends will eliminate teams from the playoffs to see who competes for the ultimate title. (The way things are going, the Jets may actually have a shot.)

Heather Madill

Dandyman

Reviews

Dandyman—Rachel Browne Theatre (Crocus Bldg.)

Went into this one expecting what I received. A fun wild night from a very playful performer using simple physical, and prop comedy, with a soundtrack that makes you feel like you are watching a one-man circus.

It was a cool 45 minutes that breezed by.

This comedic clown keeps you well entertained in many ways, and keeps you cheering him on through the highlighted, brilliant juggling. It's a great way to spend or fill a slot in an evening.

One point to be made: it seems these Aussies have to come back to the Canadian Fringe circuit to show us how to do this type of comedy... first, *Birdman*, and now...*Dandyman*!

Kevin Campbell

Little Pussy

John Grady-Playhouse Studio

Did your Dad teach you how to fight? Or were you just a little pussy who was picked on? When are you going to be the man? How long is it going to take?

Just when are you going to wake up and not be the butt of practical jokes or get the bad end of an alley brawl? When do you stop being a little pussy and be the "right" man picked on? *Frank Martin*

Jennys of the World, Unite!



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Audra Lesosky

BUZZ

Reviews

Water Wings

Funky Belt–WAG

Light-hearted and as buoyant as, well, water wings, Toronto comedy duo Erin Rodgers and Brie Watson serve up sketch comedy with gusto. Loosely strung together with brief moments to reflect on life's ups and downs, the sketches ranged from wish-granting horse-genies to dull-as-dishwater boyfriends and the truth about what's really under your sink.

Turns out this team has trained at Second City – and their comic style shows it. Definitely worth the trip to the WAG.

Heather Madill

Reviews

Confessions of a Redheaded Coffeeshop Girl

Black Sheep Theatre-Warehouse

Although it's been many years since my own short-lived coffee shop stint, there was much to identify with in this tight, polished piece.

Rebecca Perry carries this one-woman show (although Alan Wong supports the music admirably with his voice and guitar). Addressing the audience throughout, Perry takes us along on her journey, explaining that she's really just living the life of a barista to pay the rent (a familiar thought for many, I'm sure). But as she reveals more about herself and this stop-gap portion of her life, I began to identify in unexpected ways.

There's no big show-stopping action happening here, but it's a very engaging hour, full of coffee-mug puppets and lyrical singing. Highly recommended.

Heather Madill

LOVED IT. This girl can sing better than Judy Garland and her stories are dazzling, adorable and funny. She is my Fringe crush!

Adam Proul



6 Guitars

Chase Padgett Productions-PTE-Mainstage

Can you really make up a name from an affliction, fruit, and president and make a living playing guitar? Only at the Fringe, folks. From blues to rock, from rock to jazz, from jazz to folk. What a talented artist! He moves from one character to another and he just keeps on strumming that guitar. Boy, can he play that guitar—from real smooth jazz to blues. A really entertaining show that rocks!

Frank Martin

Ask Aggie-The Advice Diva

Small Matters Productions-Cinematheque

Christine Lesiak knows the secret of the old burlesque queens—a little can be sooo much sexier than a lot.

I was pleasantly surprised, as I expected another of those one-woman shows that try to entertain by being as crude as possible (which does sell somewhat).

Her songs were hilarious. and superbly done, Her thoughtfulness in assuring that no volunteer (on stage) was uncomfortable was so classy and kind. Her show was a delight from beginning to end.

Each show will be different as she works off the question cards each audience member drops in "her box". She also actually gives really good, sensible advice.

Lisa Campbell

Offices

Naughty Sailboat-MTC Mainstage

This interested me due to the Ethan Cohen driven script, and this troupe, Naughty Sailboat.

This 7-part skit/film show was dark, hilarious and a bit twisted. They attack office ethics, culture, stereotypes, and social clichés. William Jordan and Ryan Ash were the standouts in



this (6-member) group with their despicable, yet likeable, characters.

They continued to make me squirm with laughter as they tackled the sometimes silly situations arising in an average office.

I particularly liked the films in between each part, and the interactive screen used to divide scenes. Brilliant!

Well done, troupe!

Reviews

Kevin Campbell

Grim and Fischer

WONDERHEADS-MTC Mainstage

The troupe that brought us *Loon* last year, has returned with a wonderful show about death.

How do you convey emotion, pathos, and humor with one mask, no facial expression, a whoopee cushion, and no words? Quite exquisitely, if you are this troupe. A wonderfully funny and poignantly gifted show!

Frank Martin

One (Two) Woman Show

Rising Star Academy of Arts—Playhouse Studio

This thoroughly enjoyable Vaudeville show is simply fun. It is obvious Chelsea Rankin and Kami Desilets have worked very hard on this production, yet the performance has a spontaneous and delightful feel to it.

The concept is clever and funny, and I particularly enjoyed the interjections by the stage manager, Scott Plett, who also directed the show. These two talented triple-threat actors bring solid performances, filled with solos, monologues, skits and duets that will have you leaving the theatre smiling and humming a familiar tune.

I highly recommend seeing this show when you are looking for an hour of pure joyous entertainment!

Richard Ball

To celebrate the F...(Fringe) Marketplace Players present

> Strange Day at the Fringe

by Denis Thornton Could an outing to The Fringe get any weirder or funnier? Venue 3

cameo by Vinny Firenzio

NEBUZZ Reviews

Reviews

Reviews

Better than Bong Water

Slanty Shanty Prods.—Alloway Hall (Man. Museum)

This play reminds me a little of George F. Walker's work, in that it explores people on the seedy side of urban life struggling to cope with a world that doesn't seem to care about them.

It suffers from being in a space too large for the demands of the production, resulting in time lost covering real estate, and the script has a few bumps and lurches, but it's a strong effort with a good cast and intelligent direction.

The main character, Mary, thinks she has her shit together, but as the play goes on the shortcuts she has been taking lead her into dangerous territory. Playwright Erin Essery shows a strong stage presence as the lead character, and the other actors support her well.

Kudos also to director Curtis Moore for adapting the action to a space ill-suited to the production.

Kevin Longfield

Macabre Tales of Horror and Macabreness 3D Puppy in Pants Productions–Warehouse

This production borrows from the Mel Brooks philosophy of throwing everything at the wall in the hope that something sticks.

In this case, how much sticks depends very much on who you are, and I have to admit that I am probably not their target audience. All the same, I enjoyed a lot of what I saw, and I always admired the overall professionalism of the production.

But enough about me. For the one-third or so of the audience that were tuned in to this type of humour, the laughs came easily and rapidly. One person in the audience had a 100 decibel laugh that came so frequently that I started to wonder if he was part of the cast. Some jokes are what people of my generation used to call groaners, and some jokes frankly set my teeth on edge, but the execution and pace stopped me from dwelling on what didn't work.

Kevin Longfield

One Dollar & THE KEY

Reviews

VagueWave Productions—WAG

I'm on double duty here so I'll keep it short.

The first show, *THE KEY*, uses quotes from William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, to create the script that the four women navigate expertly. It's a tale of love, and past experiences with love brought on by a key, a key to the heart. It took a few minutes for me to clue in to what they were talking about, but ultimately it was quite charming.

One Dollar took a slightly more contemporary approach, though it was set in the appropriate timeline for the previous script. This one had much more prominent stereotypes, some exaggerated to the point of being slightly disturbing in some places.

This one dragged, and overall wasn't entirely interesting. Both plays did drag in parts, but this one much more so than the first. Which surprised me, because it clocked in at 50 minutes rather than the promised 75.

Arden Pruden

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

Katherine Glover

Dead Wrong-RRC

SEE DEAD WRONG: If you like plays that make you think; If you like plays that make you feel; If you like complex stories that don't provide easy answers. If you like powerful, intense stories, such as a wrongful conviction story told from the perspective of the crime victim. If you like plays that win encore productions in Minnesota and 'Best Actress' nominations from the Capital Critics Circle in Ottawa. If you like good writing.

-And if you like plays in air-conditioned venues!

Merlyn Productions

Ming Lee and The Magic Tree-Kids Venue (Crocus Bldg)

DID YOU KNOW *Ming Lee* was last staged by Fantasy Theatre for Children at the 1993 Fringe, with Merlyn Productions director, John Chase, amongst the cast?

Its classic format of Chinese theatre—featuring Chorus, Property Man, and Orchestra—was first adapted into English in 1912/13, spawning a century of works.

Don't miss this 20th anniversary Fringe revival, presented in a fun and unique style bound to entertain the entire family! Advance tickets for some performances are sold out!

Sourdough Productions

Geek Life-Son of Warehouse

The world's roughest breakup, laugh-out-loud funny struggles of a kooky career, and a charming leading man, equals everything a John Cusack circus movie would've been and more.

Geek Life is High Fidelity plus insane street juggling, mashed up with Ted Talks. True stories about losing at love and running away with the circus combined with vaudeville and juggling stunts performed by no one else on the planet! Boom boxes and top five lists not included.

2012 Audience Choice Award Winner, Theatre Passe Muraille (Toronto) *Crapshoot!* **birdy Genetics loads the gun,** *environment pulls the trigger.* Fringe Venue #11 - Red River College July 18th to 28th

Various times





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

New GrAttitude Productions

I Love You, You're Perfect... –Planetarium Audit.

Dating. We all do it. We all pretty much suck at it. If you don't, this show isn't for you.

But if you've ever sat through a freakish first date or bashfully tried to make boom-boom with the baby in the next room, join us to commiserate.

We set mating to music and call out blind dates for the BS they really are. Did we mention this show ran off-Broadway for 12 years?

Charles

Charles Presents: Moby Alpha–Son of Warehouse

Have you ever wanted to read Moby Dick but were intimidated by the esoteric language and the fact that it was about whales and not amorphous energy clouds?

Then come out to see *Charles Presents: Moby Alpha*, possibly the most important adaptation of Moby Dick set in space that you will see all Fringe.

Written and performed by Charles, the Seattle comedy duo Centerstage Chicago called "absolutely brilliant".

The Poor Fools Comedy

Phoney Baloney Pantalone—Kids Venue (Crocus Bldg)

HEY PARENTS! Looking to keep the kids entertained for 45 minutes? Bring the family out to Phoney Baloney Pantalone by The Poor Fools Comedy at the Kids Venue.

A Commedia Dell'arte show just for kids! A fun tale about Isabella, daughter of Pantalone, who just wants to get married but nothing seems to go right!

We feature audience interaction, slapstick comedy, live music and sound effects, a colouring book program, a moral message, and a whole lotta laughs!

MTYP SUMMER STUDIO

Lost & FoundlinOg–MTYP Richardson Hall

Do you own T-shirts? Ever put them in a drawer? You probably fold them but did you know you're probably doing it wrong?!

Come see *Lost & Foundling*! These talented actors will tell you a story that will make you laugh and maybe even make you cry. But most importantly you'll learn how to fold a t-shirt and to a jazzy beat too!

botwot productions

Serving Bait to Rich People-RRC

Fitzpatrick's stand-up comedy show about dating and waiting, that the New York Times recently called, "bound to get noticed."

Helpful hints on tending bar include, "I'm not married but I wear a ring, because if you want to pick up a low maintenance guy... it works." Years of working in a world famous sushi restaurant and waiting on everyone from ski bums to celebrities have given Alexa plenty of comedy to dish in *Serving Bait to Rich People*.

BullPen Productions

Field & Flight–Cinematheque

Called "Distinctly Canadian" by Amy Blackmore (Director of MainLine Theatre and of the Festival St. Ambroise Fringe de Montreal), this one-woman-show is about Doreen, a woman who disputes the perception that she is irrelevant, old, and crazy.

An original creation by Katherine Turnbull, *Field & Flight* is a personal decline "detailed through botany and ornithology" that is funny, intelligent, and moving.

"[Field & Flight] made me want to sit down by her, and hear her life story from beginning to end."







SSPS Shameless Self-Promotions Shameless Self-Promo

Yorkshire Pudding Productions

Promise and Promiscuity...—MTC Mainstage

BREECHES, BONNETS and BIG BALLS!

If you love BBC adaptations, Pale Skin, smelling salts, corsets, turns about the room, tight jodhpurs and dubious jokes about fingering the pianoforte, you simply must make an appointment in your dance card to see the bounteous Miss Ashton's newest theatrical.

She won a wondrous accolade in the colonies ("Best Performance in a Comedy—Auckland Fringe 2013") and had newspaper intelligentsia saying: "...Jane Austen would be turning in her grave...with delight!"—Rip It Up Adelaide

www.hotpink.co.nz

The Machievillans

Trust Me!-MTC Mainstage

Fringe Quiz:

- 1. What makes Bev Oda look like an angel, Alfonso Gagliano a saint, and Senator Duffy a choir girl?
- 2. Where can you find a promise for every occasion and a knife in every back?
- 3. Where can you find democratic betrayal? (screw everyone equally.)
- Where are the economics of loyalty portrayed convincingly? (If the price is right, I'm your man/woman)

Answer: Trust Me!

SHOWS <u>REVIEWED</u>

6 Guitars 7 Stories Adult Entertainment Ask Aggie-The Advice Diva Aspberger's; a Tale of a Social Misfit (2) Battle of the Bastards Better Than Bong Water birdv Charles Presents: Moby Alpha (2) Comedy Plus Time Equals Tragedy Confessions of a Fairy's Daughter Confessions of a Redheaded... (2) Dandyman Dead Wrong Dirty and True (2) Forget Me Not (3) God Is a Scottish Drag Queen Grim and Fischer Hamlet as Told on the Streets Hear Lies Henry Hockey Night at the Puck & Pickle Pub

I Hate Bill Pats Too: Almost Homeless I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change Keeper Kissing Sweet (2) Little Pussy Lovely Souls Macabre Tales... Miss Mumford's... Offices One (Two) Woman Show One Dollar & THE KEY Promise and Promiscuity... Quest for the Cup Red Bastard Self-Destructivism Soaring Height of Marshall Malone, The SOLID GOLD MOORE Strange Day at the Fringe Titanic, The Water Wings Wonderfully Amusing

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