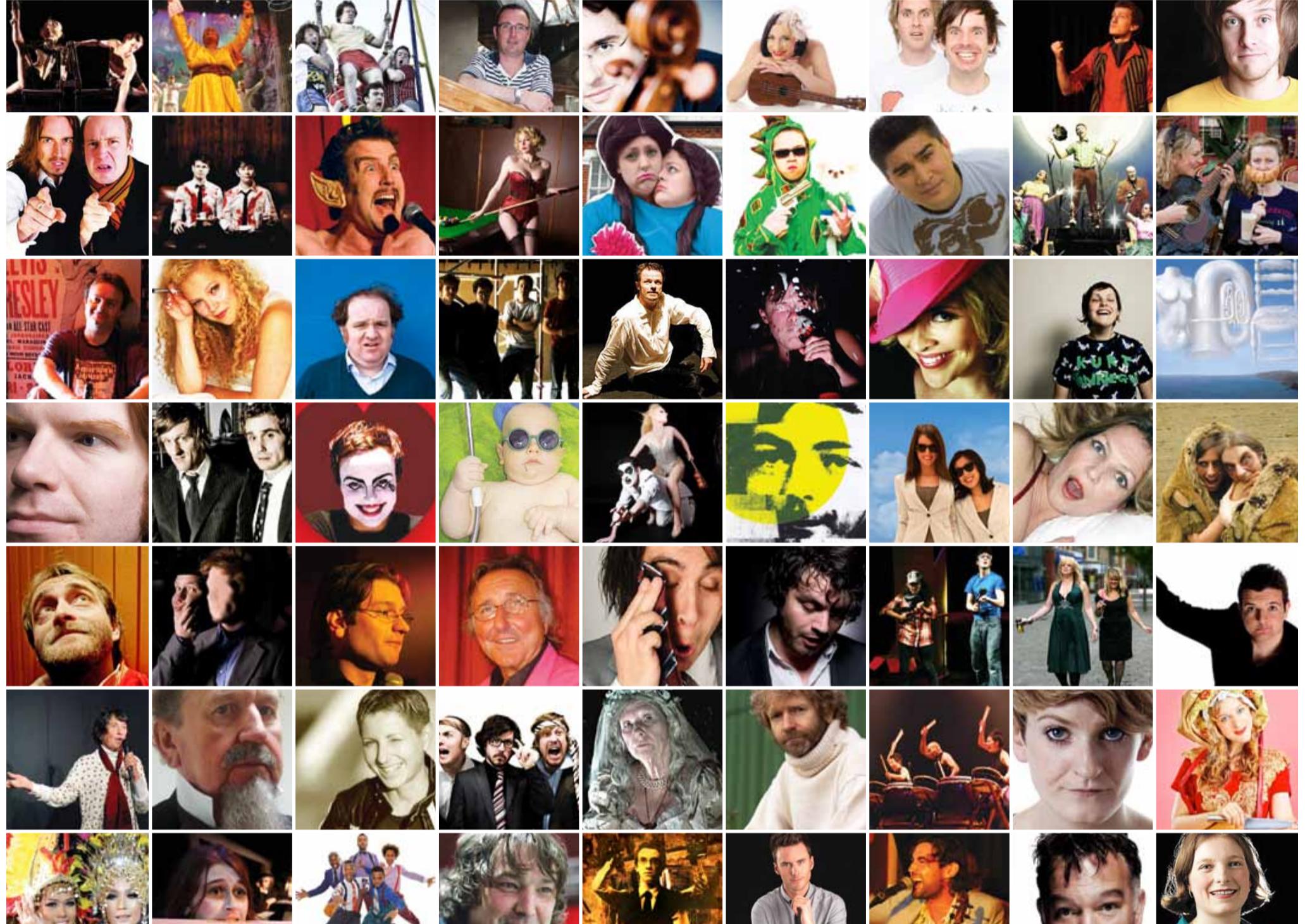


# ThreeWeeks IN EDINBURGH



**WELCOME TO EDINBURGH 2010**  
and to the free preview guide  
from the biggest reviewer at the festival



MEET FORMER WINNERS OF THREEWEEKS EDITORS' AWARDS BACK AT FESTIVAL 2010, INCLUDING ERIC, MOISHE'S BAGEL, LYNN RUTH MILLER, AINDRIAS DE STAIC AND THE PEOPLE BEHIND NOFIT STATE, BELT UP, NEWBURY YOUTH THEATRE AND THE POLITICS FESTIVAL PLUS THE THREEWEEKS EDITORS RECOMMEND THE BEST SHOWS ON OFFER THIS MONTH INCLUDING COMEDY, CABARET, THEATRE, MUSIC, ART, DANCE & MORE

BRETT VINCENT FOR GETCOMEDY.COM PRESENTS

# JIM JEFFERIES

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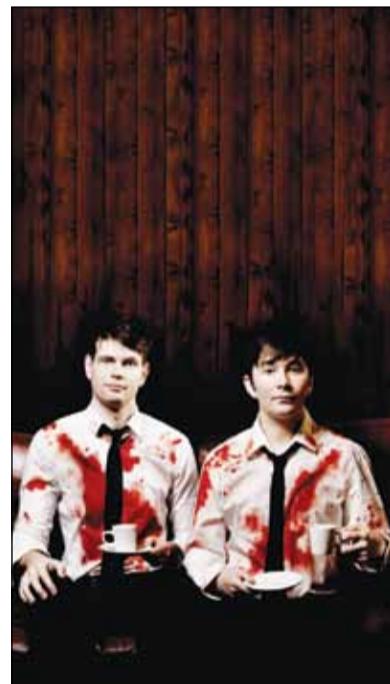
## FRINGE DAYS

# fringe weekend one planned

**With so much to do, it can be hard working out how to spend your fringe days. But fear not. To give you a head start this weekend ThreeWeeks asked three Fringe acts to plan a weekend of festival shenanigans for you, each taking a day. So, here's your itinerary, starting with Friday.**

### FRIDAY 6 AUGUST by Barry & Stuart

This evening you may well be talking to the dead, if you decide you are brave enough to take part in our séance, so you are best off



starting your day with some light hearted weirdness at Edinburgh's excellent Camera Obscura on the Royal Mile. The superb visual illusions will have you seeing faces in your broth at lunch, and set you up nicely for a trip later in the day to the Real Mary King's Close, an amazing hidden network of underground 17th century



streets. After a nice drink at Sandy Bells - which some of you can consider Dutch courage - it will be time to stroll down to the dank and spooky Underbelly for laughs and screams at our show "98% Séance".

Barry & Stuart 98% Séance, Underbelly, 5 - 29 Aug, 10.20pm (11.20pm), £9.00 - 12.00, fpp 31.

### SATURDAY 7 AUGUST

#### by Gary Delaney

Breakfast: Tea, biscuits, ibuprofen. 1230: Tony Law, Stand 2. Brilliant original stand-up, makes everyone else feel like a hack. 1400: Mum's for sausage and mash [It's a café, don't just go to Birmingham] 1500: James Dowdeswell, Stand 2. 'My Grandad was a clown and those are big shows to fill', best show title this year. 1600: Nap. The best part of any day. I am old. 1700: Update spreadsheets to record current fun levels. 2030: My show 'Purist' at the Courtyard. 200ish jokes, some in rather bad taste. 2300: Get away from it all and

walk up Arthur's Seat to gaze at the heavens. Orion's belt may only have three stars, but it reads like a four.

Gary Delaney: Purist, Pleasance Courtyard, 4 - 29 Aug (not 16), 8.30pm (9.25pm), £7.50 - £9.50, fpp 66.

### SUNDAY 8 AUGUST

#### by Piff The Magic Dragon

So your princess has left you? Run off with prince charming and left you looking like a frog? Join the club. Why not buy a Chihuahua?! Or... Save yourself a grand and come and covet mine; 3.15pm at Just the Tonic. He even levitates! Boom! An hour later you'll be back on the street, pining for a pooch and eager to experiment with your own amateur pyrotechnics. Fear not! For further fireworks check out the always explosive Des O'Connor, Frisky & Mannish or Dusty Limits. Then later we'll meet up at the Bongo Club and drink ourselves to despair before heading to the castle to dwell on what could have been.

Piff The Magic Dragon in Piff-Tacular 2: Get Rich Or Die Trying, Just the Tonic at The Caves, 5 - 29 Aug (not 17), 3.15pm (4.15pm), £5.00 - £7.00, fpp 109.



## COMEDY



**P06-09** We chat with Eric about laws and life under the sea and catch up with Aindrias De Staic plus comedy news and show tips

## THEATRE



**P12-14** Meet the team behind the ever prolific Belt Up Theatre plus theatre news and plenty of theatrical show tips

## PHYSICAL



**P16-17** Meet the man behind the latest show from the wonderful NoFit State, plus show tips

## ART & EVENTS



**P20-21** Politics festival man Chris Berry plus plenty of arty and, erm, eventy 3 To See recommends

## CABARET



**P10-11** We spend some quality time with the Fringe legend that is Lynn Ruth Miller plus cabaret news and previews and some Piff

## MUSICALS



**P15** ThreeWeeks processes all the musicals and opera on offer this festival and provides its 3 To See recommendations

## MUSIC



**P18-19** All about the world of Moishe's Bagel plus all your music recommends

## CHILDREN'S SHOWS



**P22** All about the hugely impressive Newbury Youth Theatre plus kids' show tips

## THREEWEEKS FESTIVAL COVERAGE THIS AUGUST

**news, reviews, previews, interviews  
in print | online | by email | by mobile**

full information at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/edinburgh](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/edinburgh) and on page 23

# the BIGGEST picks the BEST

## ThreeWeeks Editors' Awards 2010 | Sunday 29 August



**MORE ONLINE:** Look out for Addy Van De Borgh's  
Fringe Word Of The Day, every day in the eDaily  
Subscribe for free: [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/subscribe](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/subscribe)

## IT'S CARO...



**WOW, LOOK AT THAT.** We made it to the Edinburgh Festival 2010. The reason I find that so surprising is because, well, 2010 is the world of tomorrow. By which I mean that, if you'd told me back in say, 1998, that I'd still be co-publishing, editing and writing content for ThreeWeeks in 2010, I don't think I'd have believed it. I imagine that back in 1997 I expected that by 2010 I'd have taken (very) early retirement and be living in luxurious (if perhaps a little chilly) conditions on some remote Scottish island.

That wouldn't ever really happen though. I know something now that I didn't know then, and that is that the Edinburgh Festival is an addiction. When I first experienced it, I liked it, possibly even liked it an awful lot; by the second or third year I was certainly in love. I was cynical about being in love back then, though: my previous experiences in that area had led me to believe that when the first rush of excitement fades away, one of two things came out of love: a) there's a break-up or b) the passion ends and there's a slow descent into wearing each other like a comfortable pair of shoes. But I now know that, although both those scenarios are possible, there are one or two others as well. One of those is that the passion is renewed and the old flame is lit again, and endures. As with me and the Fringe.

Now, I realise this is mainly achievable in the case of the Edinburgh Festival because we only really come into contact for a few weeks of the year. But the great thing is that, unlike so many other long distance relationships, this one hasn't failed. By each September I have to admit to feeling tired, vexed, and unable to take any more. But by the following summer I am more than ready for another go. Even before the programmes land in my lap, I get a familiar thrill of excitement at the thought of yet another season of brilliant shows, medium shows and terrible shows. Yes, I really do get excited at the thought of even the terrible ones.

And so I keep coming back, and don't ever want it to end. I suspect I will always feel that way, even though my annual commitment to covering the Edinburgh Festival usually means that I miss taking advantage of all the nice warm weather (down South, obviously, there's practically none to be had in Scotland) because I am inside, working on the computer almost constantly throughout July and August. And don't tell me I can

take my laptop outside and enjoy it, that just doesn't work. But the festival is a delight. The excitement generated by this melting pot of disparate, brilliant, cultural events is what keeps me, and plenty of other Festival addicts (you're in your thousands, and you know who you are), coming back year after year. And this Festival deserves a publication devoted entirely to it, and that's why ThreeWeeks keeps coming back too.

If you have never read ThreeWeeks before, be advised that it is the most comprehensive guide to the Edinburgh Festival ever, bar none. I'm not blowing our trumpet particularly; this is simply fact. We train and field a large team of eager young journalists just starting out on their writing careers, and between them they get along to almost everything; last year, for example, we published 1825 reviews, which is way more than anyone else. That's why I can say that we are comprehensive in our coverage. We try and review everyone, whether it's top name comedians, Traverse must-sees, or sparkly gems (or duds) hidden in the back room of a pub.

You won't find any reviews in this issue, however, because this is our preview issue, in which we – the ThreeWeeks editors – offer a selection of critical picks from Edinburgh's many different festivals, and interview a number of past ThreeWeeks Editors' Award winners who are returning to perform this year. Our gongs are awarded to ten recipients per year, and recognise any number of different types of Festival achievement. We don't do Best Actress and Best Show. We just choose people, events, schemes, or shows that we deem worthy of recognition. Comedians have won them, ensemble casts have won them, musicians have won them, choirs have won them... but so have innovative programmes at events, venues and even entire festivals.

Either way, Editors' Award Winners are winners for a reason, so take some time to read about them, and make a point of seeing what they are doing this year. And, of course, check subsequent issues of the ThreeWeeks weekly paper, our daily review sheet, our website, the iFringe app, and our daily e-bulletin for all the latest news and reviews throughout August. Oh, and our podcasts. Don't forget the podcasts. This is your starting point: [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk)

[caro@unlimitedmedia.co.uk](mailto:caro@unlimitedmedia.co.uk)

## FESTIVAL PEOPLE

# picking the fringe

**If you know the Festival, you'll surely know of Editors' Award winner Mervyn Stutter as one of the stalwarts, pillars, doyens of the Edinburgh Fringe. His 'Pick Of The Fringe' show has been running for close to two decades, and is still as useful and entertaining as it ever was. For the benefit of both newcomers and old hands, we asked Stutter about his show, the highs of returning to Edinburgh each year, and why he never gets tired of coming back.**

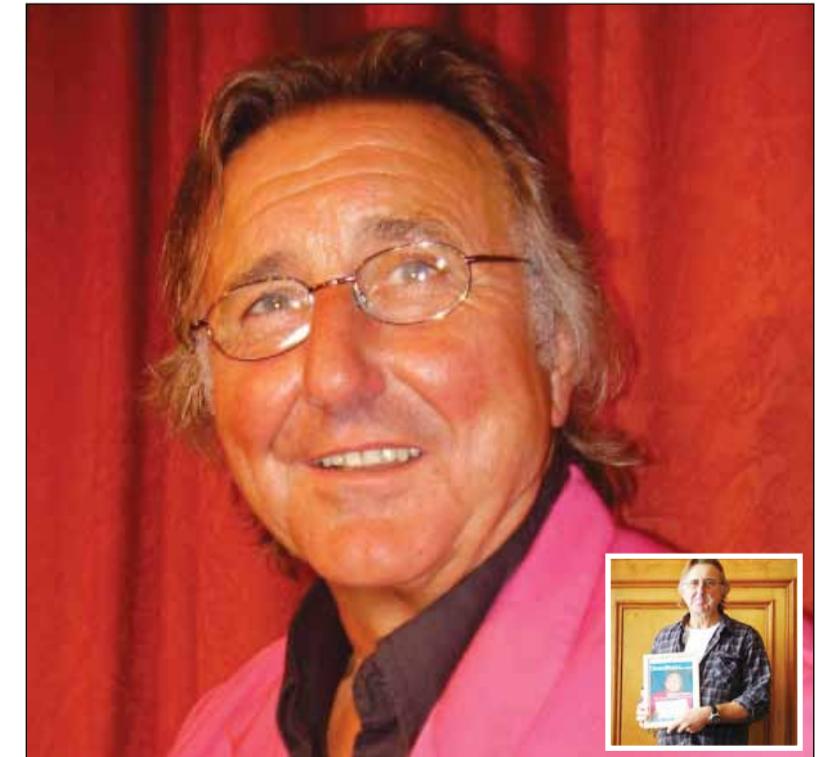
**For total Fringe newcomers, tell us what Pick Of The Fringe is about and how it works.**  
It is the only daily showcase of Fringe talent that covers theatre, comedy, music, dance – the lot. It exists for audiences to find some of the best unsung talent at the festival, and audiences as well as artists love the show because of this. Spectators return year after year because they know it will be quality every day. Every year, for the past 19 years, I have had a team of researchers who go out and see shows from all over the Fringe. We then invite the good ones to come and do a five minute or so extract for my 90 minute lunchtime show. We have seven or eight shows every day for people to see and there is a different selection of shows every single day so audiences always know they will see something new. It's this that makes it the perfect show when you first arrive at the Fringe; people want to take a risk and try something new, but then again, they don't want to waste money on bad shows. At best the show will include Fringe favourites as well as the talented newcomers who need to find an audience, and can tap into that pool of Fringe-goers that want to find something rare and wonderful. My show allows them to meet!

**This is your 19th year, what persuades you to bring the show back each year?**  
I think the answer is two fold. One is the festival itself. It is unique. If you want to put up the money then anyone can turn up and do a show. This does mean that there will be a lot of truly dreadful shows every year but that is why my carefully researched showcase is so useful to audiences – especially these days when money is getting tight. Secondly, I just love the energy and the talents on display every year. People may say to me "Oh are you doing Edinburgh again?" as though it is some dreary chore. But how can it be? As soon as you hit town, you know exactly why you are here and exactly why you will keep coming back for many years to come.

**What does Mervyn Stutter do the rest of the year?**  
I mostly do my live comedy and song

shows around the UK. I have tapped into a lovely circuit of rural touring and to play village halls is a total joy to me. I started out in Folk Clubs in the late 1960s and it's like I've come full circle. Small halls are great fun – intimate and spontaneous. I love them! But I still have other work outside touring. I've had a long career in theatre – I started out in the seventies – as well as TV and, of late, a lot of work on BBC radio in comedy series, plays and features – in fact, I am currently putting the last comedy series 'Getting Nowhere Fast' at the TV now. Unfortunately there is an obsession with young programming, which is a shame as it is the over 50s who predominantly finance the BBC; perhaps all the menopausal flower children should strike and then watch the BBC pension pots shrivel? Just to remind them, you know? Oh – and I'm currently writing a book and a new CD of songs. Life is very full!

**How do you prepare for Pick Of The Fringe, what do you have to do before you arrive in Edinburgh?**  
I'm like all the other shows really – there's loads of admin and form filling to be done. There's the sorting of venues, accommodation, doing posters and printing and coping with the ever increasing reliance on internet technology that allegedly makes all our lives easier. Well – it does when it works. In the late summer each year, performers and promoters will start sending me their show details and these need distributing amongst my team. And so the pressure slowly builds to our arrival on the 3rd, when we start work finding shows to celebrate at my first Pick Of The Fringe on Saturday 7 August.



**What are your best memories of the 18 years you've done of Pick Of The Fringe?**  
Rolf Harris fresh in from his first ever Glastonbury singing Stairway To Heaven in the old Pleasance Cabaret Bar with the hot Aussie trio the Doug Anthony Allstars. It was Rolf's first ever Fringe as well and

he launched his run on my show! Excellent! Then at the other end of the showbiz scale was the company of twenty or so Downs Syndrome kids getting one of my first ever Spirit Of The Fringe Awards. They had no real budget and were sleeping on the floor of a church hall. They had one tap between them, and were playing to virtually no audiences in another church hall. After appearing on my show there was an immediate response and they got 100 people in that night and then continued with big houses thereafter as the word spread. At that point I knew 'Pick Of The Fringe' worked and was extremely worthwhile. Everybody was crying. We were doing exactly what the show should be doing.

**What are your worst memories?**  
I'm pleased to say there have not been any real disasters. Sorry!

**What advice would you have for performers, producers or entrepreneurs tempted to set up a future Fringe institution?**  
No one really sets out to set up an 'institution'. You just do things that excite you and if they work then you probably will continue on. Only after years of hard work do you find that other people are using the word 'institution' to describe your work. But a Fringe institution is just like any other show at the festival: it has to maintain quality, balance the budget and keep audiences coming in. Even after 24 years on the Fringe those pressures do not change. Because we invite performers on to the show to demonstrate their work, it is critical that there is a large audience every day. If I was doing my solo show I could just dismiss one bad day and move

onto the next but with the 'Pick Of The Fringe' I can't. I must have audiences there every day! So come on down people – my show is there to entertain and help you. Enjoy!  
Mervyn Stutter's Pick Of The Fringe, Pleasance Courtyard, 7 - 29 Aug (not 10, 18, 19, 24), £7.50 - £10.00, fpp96.

# CtheFestival

The Edinburgh Festival  
**fringe**



Cambridge University ADC  
**The Cure**

4-30 Aug at 3.30pm



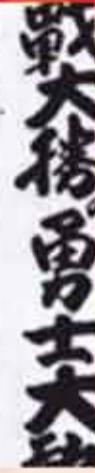
Ali Kennedy-Scott  
**The Day the Sky Turned Black**

4-30 Aug at 5.30pm



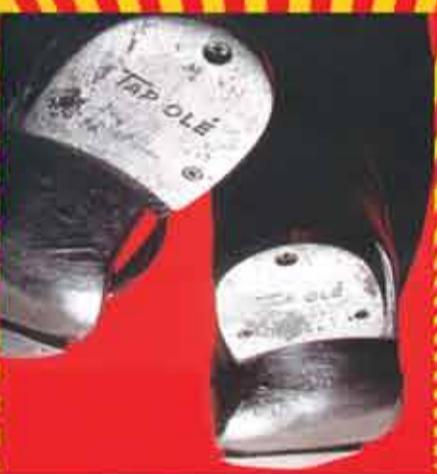
ETS Theatre Company  
**Face**

4-30 Aug at 7.50pm



CAVA  
**Continent**

4-30 Aug at 7.20pm



Tap Olé  
**Tap Olé**

5-30 Aug at 7.15pm



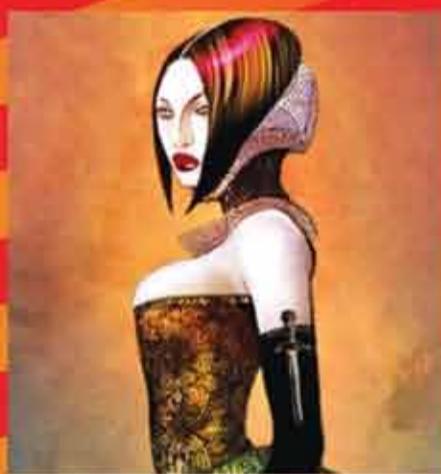
Backhand Theatre and C theatre  
**The Love of a Clown**

4-30 Aug at 6.45pm



N10 Productions  
**Virtuous Flock**

4-21 Aug at 1.20pm



Straylight Australia  
**Shakespeare's Mothers: Mad, Bad and Dangerous to Know**

5-21 Aug at 1.15pm



C theatre  
**The Stag King**

4-30 Aug at 3.40pm



C theatre  
**Twelfth Night**

4-30 Aug at 2.15pm



Bordello Theatre Company and Bluestreak Arts  
**Tales from the Blackjack**

5-30 Aug at 8.30pm



Rachael Sage & The Sequins  
**Stop me if I'm Kvetching...**

15-30 Aug at 10.45pm

With more than 210 shows for 2010 across our venues in the heart of Edinburgh, we celebrate our 19th year with the largest programme of theatre, musicals, and international work at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. See it all with C venues.

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Kicking things off, Matt Green gets embarrassed.

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## ■ WAVERLEY CARE GALA



The annual comedy gala show in aid of Scottish AIDS charity Waverley Care is something of a Fringe institution, and every year the line up seems to get even longer.

This year Kevin Bridges will lead an all-star cast that includes Sean Lock, Jon Richardson, Simon Evans, Adam Hills, David O'Doherty, Jack Whitehall, Holly Walsh, Andrew Lawrence, John Bishop, Jason Byrne, Danny Bhoy, Mark Watson, Seann Walsh, Carey Marx, Phil Nichol, Stephen K Amos and Jimmo. With more tbc, apparently.

The whole thing will be recorded by

BBC Three for airing later in the year, though you'd be better off seeing it live. Partly because that way you'll be supporting a very good charity, and partly to avoid having to tune your TV into BBC Three, where there's always a chance you'll accidentally watch an episode of 'Coming Of Age'.

Confirming his MC role at this year's Waverley benefit, Bridges told ThreeWeeks: "I performed at the gala last year and it went down really well, so I was very pleased when I was asked to host this year. It's a cracking venue, really big and yet with a special kind of intimacy, making it ideal for comedy. And the line up is pretty much everyone you'd want to see live in comedy right now and all for a good cause - it's a feel good gig in every aspect".

The Gala takes place at the Festival Theatre on 24 Aug at 7.30pm.

## ■ PETE FIRMAN



ThreeWeeks has asked lots of Fringe performers what their "big ambition" for Edinburgh 2010 is, though few have been quite so specific as comedy magic man Pete Firman. He tells us: "My big ambition is to have the MD of the Bellagio Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas come and see the show and think it's the best thing since Sammy Davis Jnr soft-shoe-shuffled on stage at the Sands. He tells me to drop everything, he's going to kick out those

wankers Cirque du Soleil and give me the main showroom for ten years in an unprecedented one billion dollar contract".

But if (when?) Mr Murren, CEO of Bellagio owners MGM Mirage, does make it to the Pleasance Dome (we can't believe he'd send an underling), what can he expect from Firman's show? "This year it's very complicated", Pete continues. "It's me onstage for 55 minutes to an hour doing jokes and tricks. I'm basically trying to be as funny and as amazing as I can be in my expensively allotted time. It's all I can do really. I was considering a xelophone recital but I think Edinburgh shows generally have too many gimmicks".

Pete Firman's 'Jokes & Tricks' opens on 4 Aug at the Pleasance Dome.

## ■ KATE ROXBURGH



If, like me, you've always said "there's just not enough astrophysics in the comedy section of the Edinburgh Fringe", well, worry not. LA-based British comedian Kate Roxburgh, a Hollywood Comedy Store regular, has used her astrophysical background as an inspiration for her new Edinburgh show.

Well, it's called 'Moon Dog', which is an astrophysical effect where the refraction of moonlight by ice crystals in cirrus clouds creates a ring around the moon, and two especially bright circular spots.

You might wonder where the comedy

comes into this, but Roxburgh sort of explains: "The starting point for my show was the fake ring and spots that appear around the moon in certain weather situations. When writing the show I kept moving into the imaginary, but my material is still based on fact. So imaginary and real, just like a Moon Dog. Or a thought experiment, like Shrodinger's Cat".

"Then I started to think about Pavlov's cat", she continues, having gained something of a flow, "or maybe his fish. Early on in his process, maybe he tapped on the glass and the fish drooled. But how would he know? It's almost like evolution, but not as profound". If you're confused (I am), I guess you'll just have to see Kate's show.

'Moon Dog' runs from 7-28 Aug at the Cabaret Voltaire each day at 2.45pm.

Jools is fluid, energetic and engaging." Voice magazine

18:45 (1hr)  
7-28 August (not 17, 23)

Venue 339  
sin club and lounge  
207 Cowgate, EH1 1JQ

## 3 TO SEE: COMEDY SHOWS

### 3 SKETCH SHOWS

#### Pappy's: All Business

Do you know what? I have never actually seen a Pappy's show. But I have been assured by friends, friends of friends, colleagues, cousins, great aunts, but most importantly, a vast number of ThreeWeeks reviewers, that this sketch



trio are absolutely bloody brilliant. Given the number of recommendations, I'd say it's a safe bet that this will be pretty good.

Pleasance Courtyard, 7 - 30 Aug (not 16), 7.20pm (8.20pm), £10.50 - £14.00, fpp 107.

#### The Penny Dreadfuls

On the other hand, I've been aware of the work of this other sketch trio since their inception, and have seen them perform



on more than one occasion. They are completely marvellous, completely funny, and you'd be mad not to try and make their show.

Pleasance Courtyard, 4 - 30 Aug (not 17), 6.00pm (6.55pm), £10.50 - £14.00, fpp 108.

#### The Aspidistras - Secret Breakfast Gig

Our ThreeWeeks reviewer loved last year's show from this female duo, and described them as "dark, dry and delightful". ThreeWeeks reviewers are never, ever wrong, and anyone that wants to challenge that assertion can



meet me outside later. Anyway, they will be good, because I've seen one of these girls do stuff before and she is a great performer and very funny, and I expect her co-performer is exactly as good. Plus, free coffee and croissants, apparently.

Just The Tonic at the Caves, 7 - 29 Aug (not 17 Aug), 11.35am (12.35pm), £4.00 - £5.00, fpp 29.

### 3 WITH GREAT NAMES

#### Edward Aczel: Ever Tried. Ever Failed. No Matter. Try Again. Fail Again. Fail Better.

"Try Again. Fail Again. Fail Better" is practically my life's motto. I was interested to see this Samuel Beckett quotation pop up as the name of Edward Aczel's 2010 Fringe show. I'm not always



amused by clunky titles (I could name names, though I won't), but I like this.

Underbelly, Cowgate, 7 - 29 Aug, 7.35pm (8.35pm), £6.50 - £11.00, fpp 57.

#### Kooky Babooshka

I'm sure this bunch of comedic Mancunians will be good and all, but I have to admit that the reason I chose



their show is because I love the word babooshka. Go on, say it. Bab-oooooo-shka. And again. And again. Babooshka, babooshka, babooshka. Also, it reminds me of that Kate Bush song. And that can only be a good thing.

Laughing Horse @ City Café, 5 - 14 Aug, 12.00pm (1.00pm), free, fpp 86.

#### Grainne Maguire - We Need To Talk About Bonnets

You know what, I really do think we need to open a dialogue about bonnets. They're great things, aren't they? But they aren't really in fashion any more, are they? I have to say that I like the idea of a hat that ties on under my chin, sits heavily



on my head, and doesn't fly off at the slightest suggestion of a breeze. I'm not sure that's what Ms Maguire means, to be honest; in fact it appears to be a show about living life like the heroine of a Bronte novel... but that sounds interesting in itself.

Just The Tonic at the Caves, 7 - 29 Aug (not 17, 10.15pm (11.15pm), £5.00 - £7.00, fpp 68.

### 3 WITH BLURBS THAT MADE ME SMILE

#### Josie Long: Be Honourable

"Every show she's done has received 2, 3, 4 and 5\* reviews, so she must be doing something". I liked the understated humour in this sentence.



More importantly, I like Josie Long, and heap curses on anyone who thinks she is only worth two stars. I therefore hope none of those reviews were written by ThreeWeeks reviewers. Ahem.

Just The Tonic at the Caves, 7 - 29 Aug (not 17, 22, 23), 7.40pm (8.50pm), £8.00 - £9.00, fpp 82.

#### Stewart Lee: Vegetable Stew

Lee's Fringe Programme entry quotes Fergus Shanahan of The Sun as saying of the Fringe regular: "The award for the worst comedian at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe goes to Stewart Lee, about as funny as bubonic plague". That made me laugh because everyone knows Stewart



Lee is just brilliant. And because it doesn't surprise me that a tabloid journalist

would write off someone's entire career because they don't like one tiny section of his show.

The Stand, 6 - 30 Aug (not 16, 18), 5.15pm (6.25pm), £10.00, fpp 126.

#### Minority Retort

Should I feel guilty that the opening sentence of Jason Chong's blurb provoked a wry smile? "As a left-handed, asthmatic, guitar-playing Oriental, Jason



knows what it's like to be the minority". It doesn't especially read as though he thinks he needs sympathy, though, so perhaps I won't dwell on it.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 8 - 30 Aug, 11.30pm (12.20am), £6.00 - £10.00, fpp 99.

### 3 ON MY PERSONAL TO-SEE LIST

#### Tim FitzHigham: Gentleman Adventurer

Delightfully delightful festival veteran Tim FitzHigham returns to Edinburgh, and



nobody could be more pleased than I. Tim's adventures are now more than legend, and I can confirm, not least from personal experience, that he is indeed a gentleman.

Pleasance Courtyard, 8 - 30 Aug (not 11, 25), 7.30pm (8.30pm), £9.00 - £10.00, fpp 132.

#### Toulson and Harvey

According to their blurb, these 2005 Perrier Newcomer nominees – the lovely Luke Toulson and the also lovely Stephen



Harvey – fell out after their nomination and, despite their success, weren't speaking to one another by 2007, which is a shame. I hope it wasn't something I said. Anyway, no worries, they're back, and I am very pleased to hear it.

Pleasance Courtyard, 7 - 30 Aug (not 16), 5.10pm (6.10pm), £7.00 - £9.50, fpp 135.

#### Ross Sutherland - The Three Stigmata of Pacman

ThreeWeeks reviewers have historically been uber fans of Fringe performance poetry institution Aisle16. And Ross Sutherland was one of the Aisle16ers



who wowed said critics. And now you get to experience an hour of Ross all on his lonesome. A definite recommend.

Underbelly, Cowgate, 7 - 29 Aug (not 16), 4.40pm (5.40pm), £6.50 - £10.50, fpp 117.



## ruling the seas, and now the land

**As baptisms of fire go, it's about as fiery as you can get. Former submariner and 2009 Editors' Award winner Eric never set out to be a stand-up, but one night he happened to be sitting in the front row at Greenwich's Up The Creek comedy club, compered by the late great Malcolm Hardee.**

"I was in the front row because I'd arrived late and it was the only empty seat", Eric explains. "Malcolm picked on me, so I, of course, responded. Then, after the interval, he returned to the stage and announced that the next act hadn't turned up. Then he pointed at me and said, 'So you've got to get up and do it'. My natural reaction was, of course, to remain firmly seated. But then I thought to myself 'I've been coming to comedy for years and no one has ever offered me the opportunity to do it myself – and if I don't do it now, I'll spend the rest of my life regretting it?' So, being a few beers into the evening, I rose to Malcolm's challenge".

And that's how the former Navy man found himself on the stand-up circuit, though it was a while before he thought about tapping into his former life as a source of material for his comedy shows. "It was actually Andrew O'Neill who set 'Eric's Tales Of The Sea' into motion", Eric recalls. "Comedians often get together after a gig and have a chat and a few beers, and naturally we tell each other about our experiences, both in comedy and in life in general. The other comedians were always fascinated to hear my stories about life on a submarine, so much so, one time Andrew said to me 'Why aren't you telling these stories to your audience?'"

But Eric feared that most of his submarine-based stories required too much set up and background to work on

the stand-up circuit where, even if you get a 20 minute slot, your audience is demanding a laugh in the first minute. "But Andrew persisted, and gave me a slot at his regular London Club, The Troy". Because the club had a regular crowd, the audience learned the background to Eric's Navy life as the weeks went by, and began to appreciate that those stories with a longer set up would still deliver a laugh at the end. And so 'Eric's Tales Of The Sea' were born. And from the slot at O'Neill's club grew the full length show, where Eric definitely had the time he needed to give some proper background to his life under the sea. Though even then, he is ever conscious of the need to make his audience laugh.

I ask him whether he's worked out how long he can go without an actual gag, to which he jokes "No, why, have you timed it?" But then he adds: "The first ever review had just one negative remark, and said 'Eric should have more confidence in his own material – he doesn't need to worry about the fact that the audience are not laughing out loud at the 'non-comedy' section. It reminded me that an audience doesn't 'need' gags continuously; if the story is essentially funny, then they don't mind waiting for the pay off. And the more I did the show, the more obvious it becomes that audiences are genuinely interested in what life is like onboard a submarine – if only because it's another world they wouldn't usually have any sort of access to. So much so, the show was extended for the tour so there's time for a question and answer session at the end".

"But I think the essence of your question" he adds "is really not about jokes, it is about comedy which mixes jokes with real life, and real life isn't always a laugh a minute, we all have highs and lows in our lives, and – if you will excuse the pun – it's just that the highs and lows for a submariner are a bit more extreme than they are for most people. My material doesn't pull its punches, I am telling it how it is... So, to sum up, if something is funny it's funny, if it is not it's not, I don't throw

jokes in, every 30 seconds say, just to hit a laugh per minute ratio, if the jokes are there it's because they belong there".

This year, as well as performing his Tales Of The Sea once again, Eric also has a new land-based show, which was inspired by his regular slot on weekly London show 'Comedy Manifesto'. He explains: "My new show is called Eric's 'Laws Of The Land', and just like 'Tales' it was not my idea, but the brainwave of another comedian; I am a panellist on 'Comedy Manifesto', a topical weekly panel show in Islington. The show is really fun to do because it is different every week, there are questions about that week's news and also a round where the panellists have to introduce a new law, and I was lucky in that my laws seemed to go down well with the audience every week".

And so, as Andrew O'Neill had inspired Eric to put together his tales of the sea, so 'Comedy Manifesto' host Kate Smurthwaite encouraged him to put together his laws. Eric goes on: "She said to me after one show that the subject of my next show was obvious. 'Is it?' I asked, hoping she would tell me more. 'It's got to be your laws' Kate went on, 'they're great'. I hadn't even thought about it, but she was of course right; it seems my friends know what I should do better than I do".

Any similarities with the two shows would appear to end there: "Laws" is completely different and gets back to my stand-up roots. It's about laws that don't presently exist, but should, as they will make the world a better place for us all". Guests and audience members will also be able to contribute into this legal debate, and Eric plans to present the most successful proposed law to that Cameron bloke via the Number 10 website. "You never know", Eric concluded, "it could soon be law that... every game that the England football team plays from now on is played on a No Win No Fee Basis..."

Eric's Laws Of The Land, Just The Tonic at The Caves, 5 - 29 Aug (not 17), 6.00pm (7.00pm), £4.00 - £5.00, fpp 59.

Eric's Tales Of The Sea, Just The Tonic at The Caves, 5 - 29 Aug (not 17), 3.10pm (4.10pm), £4.00 - £9.50, fpp 59.

## Carole Jahme is Bio-diverse!



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# COMEDY

## it's the summer he did the returning

ThreeWeeks shares some quality time with Editors' Award winner Aindrias De Staic. We discuss what it's like going down a storm at the Fringe, and find out just where he's been since last year's awards bash.

Aindrias De Staic won himself a rave review from ThreeWeeks last year for his show 'The Summer I Did The Leaving', with its wonderful mix of storytelling, comedy and music. Such was the raving said reviewer did, as the Festival closed we handed him a ThreeWeeks Editors' Awards. With that award in hand he returns to the Fringe again this year, this time with 'Around The World on 80 Quid', the tale of an epic journey spanning the continents, in which its protagonist encounters "drink, drugs, debauchery and the darker side of the open road" along the way.

It's not a new piece – Aindrias first performed it at festival 2007 – but it's one that De Staic clearly feels didn't get a fair whack first time round, despite the sell out shows. "Last time I came to the Edinburgh Fringe with 'Around the World on 80 Quid' it wasn't even in the programme," he explains. "I was a late

the world", says Aindrias "and now, after three years on the world's 'Fringe circuit', this show is ready to explode back to Edinburgh". So the show has improved? "Ya, bigtime", De Staic answers with customary humour, "it's really developed now, almost professional! With lights and cues, and everything; so it's almost seamless...but still has a free-wheeling improv groove!"

It's that free-wheeling style, and the mix of genres that he adopts, that make De Staic relatively difficult to categorise, and one of the reasons (apart from obvious talent) that we gave him an award last year was that such 'hard to pigeon hole' performers can be under-represented when it comes to awards. What name would Aindrias himself give to what he does? Asked how he'd categorise his own work he jokes "I still don't... depends on who I'm selling it to!" but adds: "It's story telling, but also jazz theatre cos there's often not a set script, just an epic musical tale and some madcap theatrics".

Like many of us, he's clearly a Fringe addict: asked why he's back again this year he confesses "I'm a glutton for punishment. The Fringe is tough, but I love the buzz!". He has other plans up his sleeve, however, and they include some big and small screen projects.

Last year, he made a TV show out of his time at the Fringe, which was broadcast in Ireland at Christmas and

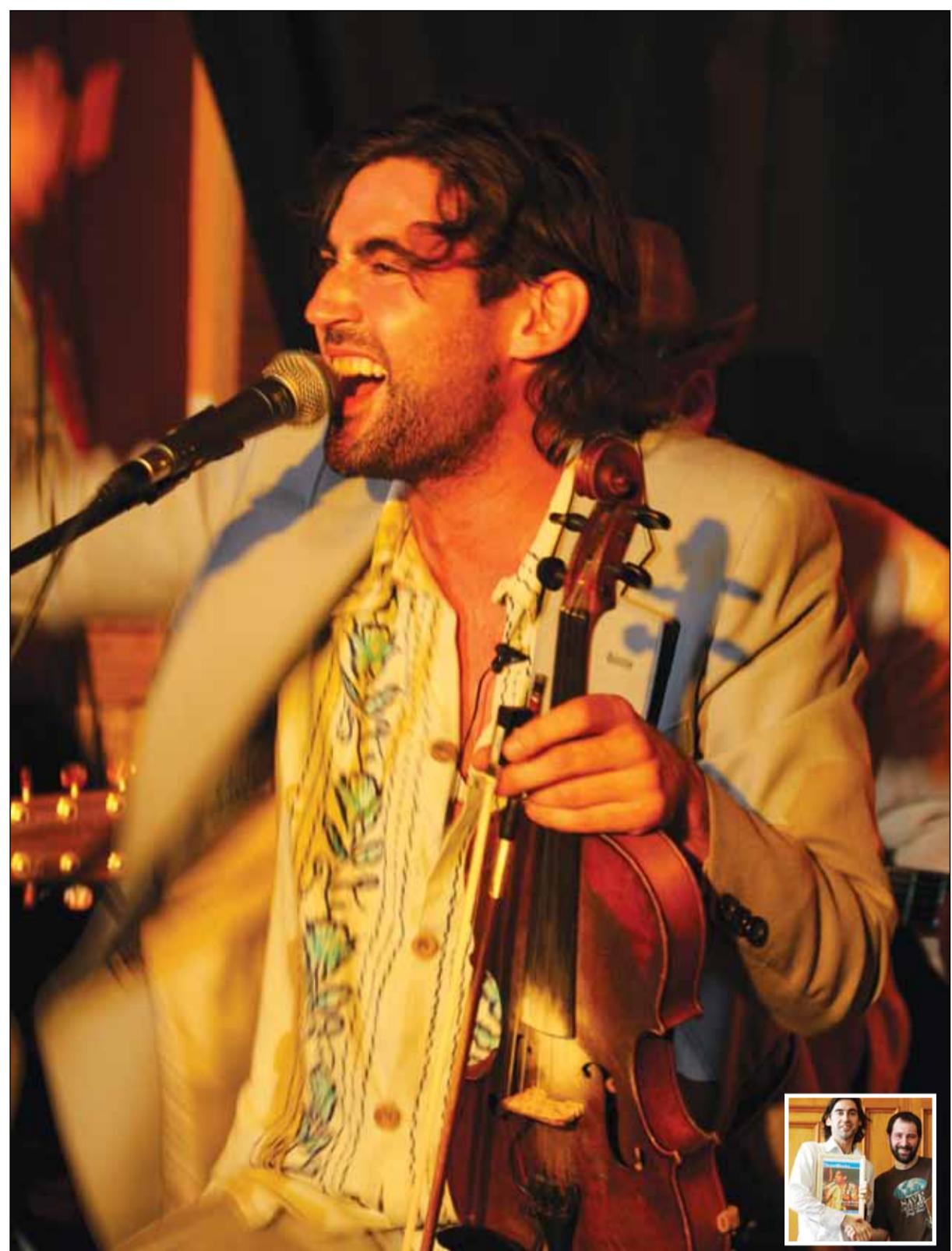
**"I'm a glutton for punishment.  
The Fringe is tough, but I love the buzz!"**

entry and didn't know what to expect. This year I'm ready to really enjoy the run with my old friends at Sweet, who always have a great party during the Fringe".

The show has, of course, changed in the two years that have passed since its original outing in Edinburgh. This particular mix of story and song has since had runs in Galway, at the Camden Fringe and in the southern hemisphere, so can be considered to have been truly road tested. "The show itself has been around

generated "a lot" of TV work for De Staic, and he's working on a few film scripts too. Ultimately, though, it seems that he's happy to be touring for the time being: despite the success of last year's TV project, he won't be repeating it in 2010. "It's tough slog doing a TV show and a Fringe show at the same time" he insists, "so this year I'll just be doing the show".

Around The World On 80 Quid!, Sweet Grassmarket, 16 - 29 Aug, times vary, £8.50 - £9.50, fpp 28.



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### 3 TO SEE: MORE COMEDY SHOWS

#### 3 WITH TWINS... KINDA

##### The Nelson Twins

Well, it looks like The Nelson Twins really are twins who both do stand-up, which is interesting. Their entry in the Fringe



Programme made me laugh. Not long and hard; just one of those short 'ha' things that you do from time to time (well, I do). The short sharp laugh wasn't because of their comical beards, but because of the last line of the blurb which reads "all they need now is a gimmick".

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 8 - 30 Aug, 12am (12.45am), £6.00 - £10.00, fpp 102.

##### Twins

These two aren't really twins, they are just pretending to be, so don't be fooled by their matching outfits, sunglasses and very similar hair. Joanne Lau and Hannah Warman promise something witty, surreal, insightful and unique. It's free,



so you've got nothing to lose. Well, apart from an hour of your life, I suppose.

Laughing Horse @ Espionage, 6 - 30 Aug (not 16), 12.15pm (1.15pm), free, fpp 136.

##### Checkley Bush

These two aren't even trying to be twins, I just wanted to have a twins section, so

I've shoehorned them in. They helped me out in this shoehorning by shoehorning themselves into one outfit for their publicity photo, making them look not unlike a pair of conjoined twins. So well done them, it has earned them a place in the ThreeWeeks comedy picks for 2010.



And encouraged me to excessively use the word 'shoehorn' as a verb.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 7 - 30 Aug, 2.30pm (3.30pm), £7.50 - £9.50, fpp 43.

MORE: Don't forget you can check out ThreeWeeks 3 to see recommendations and all our reviews via the iFringe iPhone app – details at [www.ifringe.co.uk](http://www.ifringe.co.uk)



## THE BIG FRINGE SURVEY

# so, how to navigate all those shows?

**The Edinburgh Fringe is bigger than ever this year. A fact which helped Co-Editor Chris Cooke win a bet, but which makes it harder to navigate the festival than ever. Where to start? We asked a very good looking sample group of Fringe types for their advice...**

**SIMON FEILDER & SY THOMAS:** "Take a chance. Engage with those idiots who give you flyers (especially if they are on the flyer). The best shows are not necessarily the ones with the hottest girls in. Don't see



any shows whose title is a play on words based on the sequel to a Bruce Willis movie. Oh hang on a second..."

Life of Si – Si Harder, Simon Feilder and Sy Thomas, The GRV, 6 – 30 August (not 18), 6.40pm (7.40pm) £5, fpp 89.

**THAT DOG LOOKS ILL:** "We would say go and watch shows all over the Fringe, don't just stick to the larger venues. By this we don't just mean the excellent PBH Free



Fringe, there are some lovely little non-free venues too. And if you like affable nonsense, check out James Accaster".

Penelope Cruz Doesn't Eat Sand, That Dog Looks Ill, Cabaret Voltaire, 7 – 28 August (not 19), 4.45pm (5.45pm), free, fpp 108.

**CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY ADC:** "Be tactical with your flyer acceptance – if you're shallow (like me) then a show will be vastly more pleasing if it's got a beautiful cast, so only keep flyers that you receive from people you find attractive or interesting-looking. On a completely



unrelated tangent, I'd like to reassure people that the cast of 'The Cure' were chosen because of their unrivalled theatrical talents, and it is by sheer coincidence that they're all gorgeous".

The Cure, Cambridge University ADC, C soho, 4 – 30 August (not 16), 3.30pm (4.25pm), £6.50 - £8.50, fpp 240.

**ANDY MOSELEY:** "Have a day where you have nothing planned in advance, take the first flyer you get and if the show starts in the next hour, go and see it. When you



come out from it, take the next flyer you get and do the same again all day. By the end of the day you will have seen moments of utter brilliance and complete rubbish, and I speak from experience having done this last year".

Are You Lonesome Tonight?, No Logo Productions, Laughing Horse @ The Counting House, 14 – 18 August, 2.30pm (3.30pm), free, fpp 227.

**DAVE THORNTON:** "A good friend of mine gave me this tip – the person who does the best job flyering you, go and see their show. Now I'm not saying the most annoying person or the person who accosted you concerning their rendition of Shakespeare's 'The Tempest' set to Abba music. The person who you believe did the



best job, check them out, it's only an hour. What could go wrong?

Dave Thornton: A Different Kind Of Normal, Gilded Balloon Tevoit, 4 – 29 August, 8:30pm (9.30pm), £8.50 – £10.50, fpp 53.

**FAT KITTEN IMPROV:** "The Fitzrovia Radio Hour, Abandoman, John-Luke Roberts and Tim Clare are all excellent, go see them. Otherwise you can do a lot worse than going through the PBH Free Fringe guide with a biro. Camp out in one of their venues for a day and see what you get: you'll be



pleasantly surprised for very little money".

Fat Kitten Improv, Cabaret Voltaire, 15 – 28 August, 5.15pm (6.15pm), free, fpp 61.

**THE FITZROVIA RADIO HOUR:** "Is there a saturation point for Edinburgh? Or will it just keep getting bigger every year, until Fringe Venue 20,501 is actually in Brighton? Accepting that you can't see everything that you want to see is a sensible starting point. I'm hoping to catch Daniel Kitson, Frisky and Mannish, Barbershopera, The Penny Dreadfuls,



'Showstopper The Improvised Musical' and a play called 'Our Share of Tomorrow'".

The Fitzrovia Radio Hour, Underbelly Cowgate, 5 – 29 August (not 18), 3.40pm (4.40pm), £9 - £11, fpp 62.

**GILL SMITH:** "Trying to pick shows is really tricky, so the best advice I can give is not to overstress it, and don't worry if not everything is amazing. There'll be a

show you can't get a ticket for - which will probably tour, so keep that in mind. There'll also probably be one that sounded great, but you'll wish you could subtly escape



from, so make sure you always take a beer in with you. If nothing else, it'll make the time pass quicker as you debate whether the show is half full, half empty, or half-assed".

OCD: The Next Generation, 2:45pm (3.45pm), Laughing Horse @ The Three Sisters, 5 – 21 August, free, fpp 106.

**ALISON GOLDIE:** "As a bit of an Edinburgh veteran, I'd say pick a few guaranteed winners, a few shows that friends are in,



and a few completely random bonkers shows that may or may not be any good. Then you'll feel that you've done it properly..."

Lady In Bed, Alison Goldie, Laughing Horse @ The Hive, 5 – 22 August (not 15), 4.55pm (6.05pm), free, fpp 265.

**SARAH CAMPBELL:** "I always see one "wacky Shakespeare". May be dreadful, may be the best thing you've ever seen".



27 Up, Sarah Campbell, Laughing Horse @ The Hive, 5 – 28 August, 5.40pm (6.10pm), free, fpp 119.

**SID WICK AND JAMES BENNISON:** "See our show again – you may have missed some of the red hot gags the first time around. We ourselves are yet to decipher all the gags, on account of the extremity of their red hotness. Aside from that, the Fringe Guide is a gem, and, once neatly



folded into a hat/aeroplane, should be kept secreted about your body at all times. Page 123 is particularly interesting, and makes a fine lining for your wallet/wheelbarrow/coffin combo".

Slap and Giggle: Reformed, Sid Wick and James Bennison, C Central, 9 – 27 August, 10.30pm (11.20pm), £7.50 - £10.50, fpp 123.

**ANT DEWSON:** "A spreadsheet! It's the only way to make sure you get to see all the shows you want to. At first everyone will laugh at you. After a few days they'll be asking to look at your spreadsheet. Oh, and always go and see one person / show you've never heard of. Sometimes they're

and performers. Which show has a buzz about it? You will soon find out..."



Robbie Wakes, Double Edge, Underbelly Cowgate, 5 – 15 August, 1.30pm (2.30pm), £6 - £10.00, fpp 284.

**THE IMPROVERTS' WILL GREEN:** "The other shows at Bedlam! It's a great theatre right in the middle of town with some sensational shows from all over, plus



there's a café with drinks. And, like, several sofas. Hell it's where I'll be. And I might buy you a drink. My name's not in this right?"

The Improverts, Edinburgh University Theatre Company, Bedlam Theatre, 6 – 28 August (not 8, 15, 22), 12.30am (1.30am), £5 - £6.50, fpp 71.

**So, you're all ready to go now, right? Well, if not, you could do worse than rely on ThreeWeeks reviews. Look out for our daily review sheet at venues around Central Edinburgh, sign up for our eDaily bulletin at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/) subscribe and download iFringe. to your iPhone [more at [www.iFringe.co.uk/](http://www.iFringe.co.uk/)].**

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# CABARET

## ■ THE LADY BOYS OF BANGKOK



Ladies and gentlemen, the Lady Boys Of Bangkok are back in Edinburgh once more for another all singing, all dancing Edinburgh Fringe season.

It's a brand new show this year, so ThreeWeeks asked director Phillip Gandey to tell us a bit more about it. He teased us thus: "This year's show is called 'Fantasy & Feathers', and only repeats one song from last year's production,

and that is the classic 'My Way'. The rest of the show is packed with spectacular all new performances, plus we have deliberately included more comedy this time".

Just in case there is anyone still to encounter the Lady Boys, Gandey explains: "The show is best described for newcomers like this - take the opulence of the Moulin Rouge in Paris, add the decadence of Sally Bowles in 'Cabaret', mix in the vibrancy of an MTV music video, and add the comedy of a 'Carry On' film, and you have our show. In short it's a unique cabaret experience".

The Lady Boys are performing until 28 Aug in their big top on the Meadows.

## ■ DESMOND O'CONNOR



Cabaret and musical comedy man Desmond O'Connor is back in Edinburgh with two shows this year - 'Vive Le Cabaret' at the Pleasance Courtyard and 'Me, Me, Me' at Pleasance at Ghillie Dhu.

ThreeWeeks caught up with Des at the Brighton Fringe back in May and asked him about the recent cabaret revival. He told us: "Mention the word cabaret and inevitably someone will mention Berlin and Weimar Culture. But one shouldn't neglect the rich tradition that Britain also has always had for variety, albeit with a distinctly English flavour; cheeky, quirky, self-mocking and above all...fun! Comedy, music and variety have always had a special place in the hearts of the British audience, and that is why cabaret is enjoying a spectacular renaissance!"

"In the middle of the last century",

he continues, "the arrival of television slowly killed off our celebrated music halls, and as tastes changed we became embarrassed by the gaudy glamour and predictable one-liners of 'end of the pier' entertainers. Comedy became sharper and audiences more critical. But just when variety seemed to be getting squeezed out of the picture altogether, the 'alternative cabaret' movement of the 1980s gave the genre an anarchic new lease of life. Then everything went normal again...but thankfully not for long".

Concluding, he observes: "The best thing about the soul-sapping tedium of reality TV and 'search for a star' formats is that an appetite for genuine skill and talent has been revived in anyone with half a brain-cell who desires to be entertained. Now Britain is enjoying a cabaret explosion where clubs feature gravity defying aerials, hilarious left-field magic, high-octane hula-hooping and spectacular musical comedy. Performers are of world-class quality and production values are high. This is a great era for British cabaret".

**Lynn Ruth Miller is one of ThreeWeeks' favouritist of favourites: we haven't had a reviewer yet that didn't delight in seeing one of her shows, and we are always more than pleased to see her back at the Fringe; She's attained the status of Fringe legend a great deal quicker than any other Fringe legend I'm aware of; read on to find out how...**

**Remind us how it was that Lynn Ruth Miller first decided to take to the stage as a stand up?**

When I was 70 years old, I was telling jokes to Holocaust survivors at events throughout the bay area and I ran out of jokes. I surfed the net and found a link to the San Francisco Comedy college and I thought: I am really good at college... so why not?" That was when I learned that you could make up your own jokes and that jokes had a structure. I had my 'final' that April and passed with much laughter, labelled as the only one in the class who could really die on stage. Well, I didn't, and instead that course launched my career. That summer I decided to take a group of San Francisco comedians to Edinburgh to perform at C Venues in a show called 'Weapons of Laugh Destruction' and that began my Fringe career as a stand up comedian. I have put on at least 2 shows each Fringe and appeared in many showcases over these past 5 years but only tried an hour of my own stand up two years ago at Holyrood Two for a week's run. Stand up comedy is like an addiction. Once the audience starts to laugh, you are hooked.

**This is your sixth consecutive year performing at the Fringe, what keeps bringing you back?**

The wonderful people I meet. In reality this will be my 25th August in Edinburgh and I have friends here that I have known longer than many of the people I see in my home in the San Francisco Bay Area. Performing at the Fringe is a heady experience. The rest of your life

stops and suddenly you are immersed in your performances, attracting audiences, bonding with new people and refreshing the friendships you made in the years before. It can be a humbling experience as well when you put on a show you KNOW is quality to four people, two drunks and a child playing with his teddy bear. I have done my shows for two people almost lost in a room that seats 100 and I have given them my best; I have performed on stage with a horrid cold, coughing between songs but determined to give my audience a good show. And I have sung my songs and done my comedy in rooms so packed people were sitting on the floor, filling the staircases and crowding window sills for a seat. My fringe experiences have led me to wonderful places and given me unexpected rewards. It is because of my many times at this Fringe Festival that I consider myself a citizen of the world. People believe that as you grow older your world diminishes, but thanks to these performances I do, wherever I can find a stage and a couple people to watch me, my life expands every year.

**What have you got planned for this August?**

I am delighted that you asked. Firstly, 'Granny's Gone Wild', every day at Espionage - comedy at its worst, with a touch of song guaranteed to destroy to your digestion. Secondly, 'Aging Is Amazing... A Cabaret', also on every day at Espionage, sees the return of aging stripper Queenie in this 50 minute travesty of song and dance that won Star Of The Fringe at the Brighton Fringe 2009 - musical comedy at its worst, proving that even though your body parts drop to your ankles, they still can move with enough zest to raise an eyebrow if nothing else.

**Some of your shows deal with the issues around aging - given the [relative] youth of many stand ups, do you think this is an issue comedy often fails to address?**

I think people are afraid of aging. They are afraid that their lives will diminish and they will face the same arid routines every day with no excitement and no pleasure. Comedians make cruel fun of the elderly, the halting gait, the drooling mouth, the aches and pains... but they

are seeing it from the outside. I am there and I can say that at 76 my life is exactly what I make it ...no more and no less...and it has been that way since the day I emerged screaming at the doctor for not being careful with those forceps. My new mission (and it changes every year, of course, as I get wiser and more experienced): To produce compelling shows that break down the preconceptions that age is inept and incapable of creating quality entertainment that appeals to everyone of every era. Creativity is not unique to one person. It is in us all and doesn't stop until we do. Its appeal is universal and enduring.

**What tips would you have for anyone starting out in stand up - if they're seventeen or seventy?**

Remember your journey is your own. Other people will seem to go farther, reap more rewards for what you think is less value, buy their way to better venues and get the press and adulation you think you deserve and you simply must tell yourself that is their journey, not yours. You must listen to your audience. The audience is never wrong and neither are the critics. Comedy is subjective and it strikes different people different ways. You will find your audience and your voice, but you have to stick with it. They tell me comedy is hard work. I disagree. Comedy is great, great fun but it takes time. It takes patience and a willingness to believe in yourself and adapt what you do to what the audience understands. It is indeed the best profession I have ever had, and I have had many. I love doing this kind of entertainment and I would say I should have started earlier, but I doubt I would have had as many jokes even ten years ago as I have today.

**MORE Q&A:** Find out why Lynn continues to perform as part of the Free Festival in the full interview on the website at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk)

Granny's Gone Wild - Free, Laughing Horse @ Espionage, 6 - 30 August, 6.30pm (7.30pm), free, fpp 68.

Ageing Is Amazing... A Cabaret, Laughing Horse @ Espionage, 6 - 30 August, 10.45pm (11.45pm), free.



## Q&A: LYNN RUTH MILLER



**Edinburgh Tonight with Joe Simmons:** Aug 8th (9pm) 11th - 13th (5pm) 14th (4.15pm)

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## 3 TO SEE: CABARET SHOWS

### 3 TRADITIONAL TYPE CABARETS

#### Bongo Club Cabaret

There's not much to say about the Bongo Club Cabaret except that it is a fine and venerable institution, and that it is always a good thing to be there. I will now try and think of something else to say on the



matter. Struggling. OK, here we are: If you want to see a cross-section of what the Fringe is really about, forget the big name comedians, get yourself along to this.

The Bongo Club, 7 - 30 Aug (not 14, 20), 10.15pm (11.30pm), £7.00 - £8.00, fpp 233.

#### Magic Faraway Cabaret

I suspect I may have chosen this because I was an Enid Blyton addict in my youth. It's no wonder I am mildly insane. Anyway, this has nothing to do with Enid Blyton, apart



from having a name similar to one of her better works, but it has all the makings of a great cabaret night, which is possibly why it's won no small amount of acclaim.

Cabaret Voltaire, 7 - 27 Aug (not 10, 17, 24), 6.00pm (7pm), free, fpp 91.

#### Vive Le Cabaret

Another day, another cabaret. If you're an enthusiast, better make space in your schedule for this one, which promises big names, a changing line up, vaudeville, and



comedy, with cabaret veteran Desmond O'Connor in the driving seat.

Pleasance at Ghillie Dhu, 4 - 30 Aug (not 9, 23), 9.30pm (10.45pm), £10.50 - £12.50, fpp 220.

### 3 VARIATIONS ON THE THEME

#### Cabaret Chordelia: Making A Song And Dance

This is listed in the dance and physical theatre section of the Fringe Programme and calls itself a "highly charged and witty reinterpretation of the live cabaret form". Corsets, dance, a baritone, and dark



profundity juxtaposed with light comedy; it certainly sounds pretty interesting.

Pleasance at Ghillie Dhu, 7 - 22 Aug (not 11, 16), 4.15pm (5.15pm), £8.00 - £12.00, fpp 144.

#### Cabaret Chekhov

This is a cabaret with some very specific subject matter, as you might expect from the title. The show, which runs for about a week, will feature vaudeville, readings, plays and special events designed to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Anton Chekhov. Devotees might want to



note that it will include world premieres of new adaptations of some of the writer's early work.

Zoo Roxy, 17 - 23 Aug, 12.20am (1.50am), £8.00 - £10.00, fpp 236.

#### Tricity Vogue's Ukelele Cabaret - free

Wooooo, ukelele. I am very fond of the ukelele these days. I think it was the Ukelele Orchestra of Great Britain that got me into it. Anyway, it looks like I'm just following the trend, because it seems that other people are very much into the whole



ukelele thing too. I wonder what brought that about? Well, if you are a ukelele devotee, here's the cabaret for you.

Laughing Horse @ The Three Sisters, 9 - 23 Aug (not 10 - 15, 17 - 22), 8.45pm (11.15pm), free, fpp 205.

### 3 INVOLVING PRINCESSES

#### Princess Cabaret

I use a lot of ThreeWeeks page-time to talk about things I like, so, just for a change, let me tell you about something I don't like: Disney-style-princesses. They're mostly drips and the marketing of them to impressionable young girl-minds is something I abhor. This show, however,



promises to be taking the piss out of said princesses. Of this, I approve.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 8 - 30 Aug (not 18), 5.30pm (6.25pm), £6.50 - £8.50, fpp 111.

#### Your Little Princess is My Little Whore

Hmmm. I think I find the concept behind this one a little bit scary, to be honest. But then I'm often a little intimidated by anything with burlesque overtones, and this has plenty of those, I think. Led by Wild Card Kitty – who has in the past produced the Bongo Club Cabaret – the cast will use comedy, dance and drama to lampoon



### FROM THE BRIGHTON FRINGE: PIFF CHAT

ThreeWeeks covers the Brighton Fringe too, and there we spoke to 3 To See recommended Piff The Magic Dragon about where the whole 'do magic in a dragon suit' thing came from.

**He told us:** "A friend of mine has epic fancy dress parties. One Christmas she invited me along, and as I had no dress, fancy or otherwise, I asked my sister to help me out. For some reason, unknown to this very day, she happened to have a dragon costume hidden under her bed. So I did the obvious thing...

Painted my nose red, accesorised with antlers, and arrived as Christoph the Red Nose Reindragon. As I walked through the door it quickly became apparent

that fancy dress was optional, and I was the only option. I spent the rest of the evening in a corner with a glass of red wine getting more and more fed up of explaining what a Reindragon was, and

that it was actually very Christmassy, and, as they worked in accounts, maybe they should shut up.

Anyway, a few glasses of wine later, a friend said I should wear this for my act, "you could be Puff the Magic Dragon ha ha ha". All of a sudden, a light went on, and without thinking

I said, "Wait! I could be Piff the Magic Dragon..."

you might have heard of my older brother..."

Though it took another two years before I actually got the guts to get on stage and try it".



youth, vanity, ageing and obsession with sex. The princess is in the title if not the show.

theSpaces @ Sugeons Hall, 16 - 28 Aug (not 22), 10.40pm (11.30pm), £7.00 - £8.00, fpp 307.

#### Piff The Magic Dragon

No, Piff isn't a princess. But there's a definite connection between dragons and princesses, isn't there? And this rather wonderful if slightly grumpy magic man does mention them in his blurb, as well he might, given that he's a dragon. "Lock Up Your Princesses" his Fringe programme blurb says. So, the princess is in the blurb if not the show.

Just The Tonic at the Caves, 9 - 29 Aug (not 17), 3.15pm (4.15pm), £5.00 - £7.00, fpp 109.

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# working on the theatre belt c

In the context of a sixty year plus festival, Belt Up are a very new theatre company. They were even newer (brand new in fact) when we gave them an Editors' Award for their brilliant 2008 programme. Two years on they've become frighteningly prolific, at the Fringe and year round, and this August bring a grand total of ten shows to the Festival. Directors Dominic J Allen, Jethro Compton, James Wilkes, Alexander Wright talk us up through the Belt Up Theatre story, and this year's shows.

**Tell us the Belt Up story, how did the company come into being?**

JW: The four of us all met at the University of York and were all very active members of the drama society. It was with a production of Steven Berkoff's 'Metamorphosis' in 2008 that brought us our first collaboration though. This production went on to great success at the National Student Drama Festival that year, and this prompted us to continue working together and try our hands at setting up a theatre company. We decided to dive straight in and take a programme of five daily shows (as well as a dozen or so secret events) to the Edinburgh Festival 2008 in a custom built venue we called The Red Room.

Our first Fringe venture got us noticed in a surprisingly big way – we won a ThreeWeeks Editors' Award as well as the Edinburgh International Festival Award and by this point we were just over six months old. We continued developing new work in our final year at university before a critically acclaimed and sell out run at the fringe in 2009, and were then appointed as a resident theatre company at the York Theatre Royal, where we have produced numerous shows: it provided us with an incredibly firm ground to launch ourselves for our first year as a full time professional company. Now we're here, preparing around ten individual shows to take up to the Fringe again.

**You are now one of the most prolific theatre producers at the festival, how do you find or create the shows you stage?**

JW: The first rule is that they're shows we are interested in and have a genuine desire to do. If it's not something all four of us are going to enjoy then we won't go near it. It's then a case of finding the right time to do the shows. This year we've got eight shows at the Fringe (we're hosting another, and producing one for the EIF) and they all fit in the setting of a house (yes, we're essentially building a house) and play on the theme of 'home'.



The Belt Up team, from left to right Alexander Wright, Dominic J Allen, Jethro Compton and James Wilkes; and the Belt Up crew accept their award.

However the ideas for each have been floating around for a while: we've always talked about reviving 'Metamorphosis' in a brand new version for example; Alexander's wanted to adapt 'Antigone' for a long time, whilst 'Lorca Is Dead' has been forming itself in Dominic's mind for ages; it's a case of finding the right opportunity to execute these ideas. Once the starting pistol has been fired though it's a very fast process; this year's programme has been rehearsed in three weeks, all of them scheduled in with military precision.

We work with the same ensemble a lot so all our actors know the deal, they know how we work so we don't have to dedicate any of the rehearsal process to training anyone up in our 'style' – we've got very good at working very fast and efficiently. All our shows rely heavily on the audience though so there's only a limited amount of rehearsal we can actually do without them.

**Is it hard being a theatre producer at the Fringe? Do you think producing multiple shows makes it easier or harder?**

JC: Producing a show at the Fringe offers an opportunity to test the water and employ trial and error, both in terms of the artistic output and also the business and practical elements that enable this. Whilst you are essentially thrown into the deep end in terms of the expectations of scale and ambition of your work, the Fringe also offers a safe playing ground, a place where mistakes can be made. If these mistakes are learned from, the experiences of the Fringe quickly develop into essential skills that apply to producing theatre in any venue or city and on any scale.

Producing multiple shows on the Fringe brings with it both positives and negatives; the more shows we produce the higher the chance of recouping; unfortunately the budget and expenses also increase as the project grows in size. Along with this growth is also the amount of work the project requires, but this enables us to work with a huge number of actors, stage managers and technicians, where a smaller project would limit us. Our ensemble and crew this summer has increased to twenty one members, and it is a result of their commitment to the project that we are able to produce all the shows and present The House Above at this year's festival.

**You run your own spaces within the C empire – would you consider setting up a Belt Up venue?**

JC: We have controlled different spaces within the C venues each year. Our seasons of work at the Fringe are not about individual



shows but about the excitement of each new space and the work that takes place within it. 2009's The Squat offered us a stunning space that had its own character, the 2008 Red Room was an environment that we worked tirelessly on to give it that character.

Collaborating with C has worked well for us, but if we were to find an unoccupied space in Edinburgh that excited us enough, I don't doubt that we'd consider running it independently.

For the time being, however, our enthusiasm lies in the creating of exciting spaces, rather than the logistics of managing them.

**The comedy section is now well and truly the biggest section of the Fringe, do you think Edinburgh is still a great place to stage new theatre?**

DJA: Entirely. The best thing about the Fringe is that it has an open access policy.

Anyone can do anything here – providing they can afford the time and money! For this reason it is still a great crucible for emerging talent. We're a professional company because of the launch pad that the fringe gave us back in 2008. You literally can do anything. It's a great place to take risks and be truly daring in new work. This opportunity is rare.

The comedy section may be the biggest

section but this isn't a case of replacing the theatre in the fringe, it's just overtaken it in terms of quantity. The theatre shows that deserve to sell out still do, the theatre audience is still there.

**What do Belt Up do outside of August?**

AW: In short, a lot! We've worked on over twelve projects since August 2009. When we first set up, our calendar definitely rotated around the Edinburgh Festival and, this year, it is still our biggest event of the year, premiering ten brand new shows. However, since last August we have been working constantly touring and creating work. Our 2009 Edinburgh

# of the fringe



promenade piece around the streets of York – throughout February; we created a secret, site-specific piece as visiting artists at this year's NSDF with Peter Higgins, PunchDrunk's Enrichment Manager; we ran a research and development period for 'Lorca Is Dead', one of our House Above shows, at York Theatre Royal Studio in May too. And, finally, to kick off the summer we did 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' outdoors in Rowntree Park, York.

Running parallel to making and producing work, we spend a lot of time working with schools. We spent a week in Warwick at the National Independent Schools Drama Association devising a new piece with an ensemble there. Similarly we spent a couple of days at Richmond High School working with a group of year eights. In May we directed the opening ceremony for the new Joseph Rowntree School too, not to mention the various half day workshops we've led up and down the country. So we keep pretty busy!

The Autumn of 2010 is already full up with a new site-specific show, 'Elsewhere' and, very excitingly, opening 'Macbeth' in the Main House at York Theatre Royal. We are hoping to tour all of The House Above shows too. So keep your eyes peeled, I'm certain we'll be cropping up here and there.

#### Tell us about your 2010 programme in thirty words!

AW: Our best work yet, unlike anything else you'll see at the festival, pure escapism, adventurous, playful, fearless, fun, heart-breaking, surreal, in a stunning venue, there's no place like our home...

**What are you long term plans for Belt Up?**  
DJA: To keep working. To make sure we are able to continue producing work and really be playful with the work we create. We have a lot of ideas for shows that haven't found the right time to come into fruition yet, we're hoping to get through all of them, by the time we've done them I'm sure we'll have a whole host more ideas.

We've got a number of quite epic ideas in the pipe line, the kind of scale that we'll only be able to put together once we're more established, we've been having a few talks recently about them which are getting to that serious stage where the projects are going to get the green light. I can't tell you any details of course, but let's just say we've got some incredibly exciting things coming up over the next year or so.

#### BELT UP'S EIGHT MAIN FRINGE SHOWS FOR 2010

Antigone, C soho, 4 - 30 Aug (not 25), 9.00pm (10.15pm), £8.50 - £11.50, fpp 230  
Atrium, C soho 5 - 29 Aug (odd dates only, not 25), 11.00pm (1.00am), £7.50 - £10.50, fpp 230  
The Boy James, C soho, 5 - 29 (odd dates only, not 25), 1.00pm (1.55pm), £7.50 - £10.50, fpp 231  
Lorca Is Dead, C soho, 4 - 30 Aug (not 25), 7.00pm (8.15pm), £8.50 - £10.50, fpp 230  
Metamorphosis, C soho, 4 - 30 Aug (not 25), 5.00pm (6.15pm), £8.50 - £11.50, fpp 230  
Octavia, C soho, 4 - 30 Aug (not 25), 12.00am (0.55am), £5.50 - £9.50, fpp 9  
Odyssey, C soho, 4 - 30 Aug (even dates only), 1.00pm (2.00pm), £7.50 - £10.50, fpp 230  
Quasimodo, C soho, 4 - 30 Aug (even dates only),

shows – 'The Tartuffe' and 'The Trial' – played at York Theatre Royal's TakeOver festival in September before transferring to Southwark Playhouse for a three week run in November. 'The Tartuffe' continued in various guises around the country before its final, fond farewell in May in the Main House at York Theatre Royal.

We've been making new work too. We ran 'A Ghost Walk' – an intimate,

"It's a great place to take risks and be truly daring in new work. This opportunity is rare"

## 3 TO SEE: THEATRE SHOWS

### 3 WITH A FAIRYTALE CONNECTION

#### The Glass Slipper

Well, it has a fairy tale connection; that doesn't mean to say that it's going to be all lovely and light. In fact, this devised theatre



piece sounds pretty dark, and involves a nasty-sounding Prince who isn't about to provide his princess with a traditional happy ever after... not for children, eh?

The Vault, 24 - 30 Aug, 4.20pm (5.10pm), £4.00 - £5.00, fpp 256.

#### Grim[m] Tales

I suppose, if you think about it, most fairy tales are a bit dark; let's face it, we often sanitise them for children, don't we? This



show, however, is not one for the kids, as it's focusing on the dark and gruesome side of the already pretty dark Grimm Tales. Storytellers Louna use folklore, theatre and storytelling (obviously) to relate some lesser known stories from the famous tale-collecting brothers.

Laughing Horse @ Espionage, 20 - 21 Aug, 9.30pm (10.30pm), free, fpp 257.



Rachel Rose Reid: I'm Hans Christian Anderson

Well, this one doesn't altogether fit with the fairy tale theme, but Hans Christian Anderson was a storyteller, and so is Rachel Rose Reid. And she is utterly fabulous; ThreeWeeks loved her last year, and so, seemingly, did all the other critics (though their views are not important as ours, of course), for her unique and modern style of storytelling.

Pleasance Courtyard, 4 - 30 Aug, 2.05pm (3.05pm), £6.50 - £10.00, fpp 282.

### The Man Who Was Thursday

This New York Theatre collective, that would appear to be bursting with talent, present a 21st century take on GK Chesterton's 1908 detective tale. It's described as a mix of psychological thriller, political nightmare and breakneck



farce, and sees its principal character attempting to out-terrorize terrorists in order to save the world.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 7 - 29 Aug (not 16), 5.45pm (6.45pm), £8.00 - £10.00, fpp 269.

### The Man Who Fell Out Of Bed

Here's another one from The Lincoln Company, which is probably a bit unfair, giving one company two preview slots. I



didn't realise I was doing it, and it's too late now. But this looks good, so it deserves to be here, plus, I couldn't possibly have completed this section without it. It's another thriller, which apparently presents a nightmarish vision of a world to come. Yikes.

C central, 5 - 27 Aug (not 16), 2.30pm (3.30pm), £6.50 - £9.50, fpp 269.

## CALARTS FESTIVAL THEATER

#### At Sundown

Aug 07 - 13 @13:20  
Aug 14 - 21 @18:30

#### The Bacchae

Aug 07 - 13 @15:30  
Aug 14 - 17 @20:30  
Aug 18 - 21 @22:30

#### Floozy

Aug 07 - 13 @12:00  
Aug 14 - 21 @17:00

#### Silken Veils

Aug 07 - 13 @14:20  
Aug 14 - 21 @19:30

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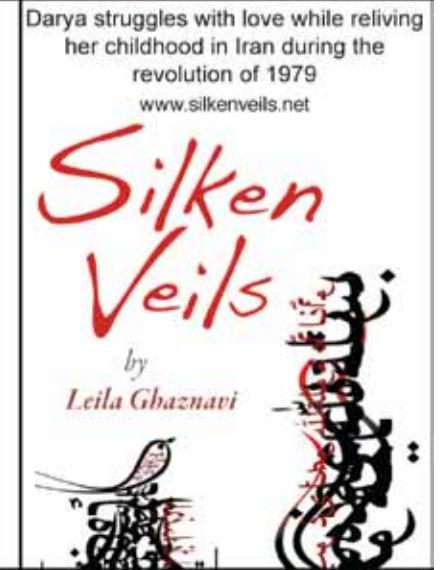

## at sundown

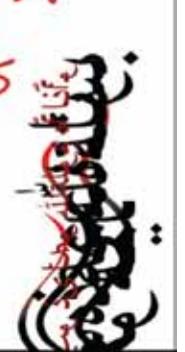
The story of the end of our lives told in our youth. A collectively imagined autobiography about the unravelling of memory. A joyous physical theater collage about clinging to the past and letting it go.



## BACCHAE

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[www.allmalebacchae.com](http://www.allmalebacchae.com)



**Silken Veils**  
by  
Leila Ghaznavi  


# THEATRE

## ■ TRAVERSE LIVE



The Traverse will beam a showcase of five new plays to cinemas around the UK this Fringe via a partnership with Hibrow Productions and Picturehouse Cinemas.

Each of the five new plays will get two staged readings at the Trav as part of their 'Impossible Things Before Breakfast' programme at this year's Fringe, which theatre-goers in Edinburgh can enjoy in person. But, when all five are presented on Monday 23 Aug as one big showcase, the proceedings will also be filmed and

screened live at cinemas around the country.

There's an impressive list of playwrights involved in this project, including Marina Carr, David Eldridge, Linda McLean, Simon Stephens and Enda Walsh. Each play will have a high speed rehearsal before its first reading, where film directors from Hibrow will sit alongside the Traverse's directorial team, so that the staging suits the cameras as well as the audience in Traverse 2.

Commenting on the Traverse Live! screenings, Trav boss Dominic Hill told ThreeWeeks: "This exciting project celebrates the fact that people are accessing theatre in new ways, and also de-mystifies the process of bringing a script to life".

## ■ STATIONARY EXCESS



**Tim Cowbury's 'Stationary Excess'** is this year's one-woman-on-an-exercise-bike show, which I'm sure you'll agree is something every Fringe must have these days. Producer Marianne Dicker explains: "Jessica, the show's performer [pictured], asked Tim to help her make a solo show about loneliness. Tim wasn't entirely sure but agreed to meet up and hear more. In a dark corner of a Camden pub, Jess regaled Tim with the story of her first few weeks in the UK: wintry days spent

alone in a dingy Devonshire cottage, on an exercise bike, drinking wine and watching old movies. Mainly cheesy ones. Mainly 'The Way We Were'. After some boozy rehearsals, haphazard emails of text back and forth, and the [unintentional] destruction of two exercise bikes, 'Stationary Excess' was created".

The show is physically demanding on actress Jessica Latowicki, so she's been in full-on training in preparation: "It involves shouldering a backpack full of champagne and embarking on 5km runs", Dicker claims, "Tim cycles alongside and forces her to recite passages from Beckett's Complete Works, whilst she runs. We felt this to be the best course of preparation for this particular show. If you see it, all will be clear".

## ■ ALCATRAZ



Two students who last year reviewed the Edinburgh Fringe for ThreeWeeks will this year be taking to the stage themselves.

Former Leeds students Amy Powell Yeates and Nick Coupe reviewed, podasted and photographed for ThreeWeeks last year. This August they will both be involved in 'Alcatraz', a piece of devised theatre involving other Leeds

graduates as well.

On moving from the role of reviewer to performer, Coupe told ThreeWeeks: "Seeing the 2009 festival from the position of a reviewer was a great experience, and provided some really useful insights that have helped the preparation of our 2010 show. Reviewing five shows a day - being a serial punter - means you really see the festival, and by the end you know what works and what doesn't. That sort of information really helps when you're devising a new show".

'Alcatraz' will be performed throughout the Fringe on alternate days from 6 Aug at the Underbelly.

## 3 TO SEE: THEATRE SHOWS

### 3 FRINGE FAVOURITES

#### Pip Utton Is Charles Dickens

Pip Utton is a Fringe legend, institution, star. And this year a ThreeWeeks guest editor, hurrah! His one man shows



are must sees, and this one will be no exception: Charles Dickens is on tour to give a reading, and rails about social injustice whilst enjoying his fame and adulation. You can also see Utton in 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame' at The Pleasance, which also looks amazing. Either way, I'd recommend checking him out, at one, or both.

New Town Theatre, 7 - 27 Aug (not 17), 6.45pm (7.55pm), £7.00 - £9.00, fpp 279.

#### Decky Does A Bronco

Theatre company Grid Iron's production of Douglas Maxwell's 'Decky Does A Bronco'



first hit the festival a decade ago, and won massive acclaim and a Fringe First before touring the UK and winning more awards. The site-specific piece [set and played out in a playground] makes a welcome return to the Fringe this year.

Traverse @ Scotland Yard, 6 - 21 (not 9, 16), 7.30pm (8.45pm), £12.00 - £17.00, fpp 243.

#### Under Milk Wood

Guy Masterson is another one-man-show



Fringe legend, and he's been around the festival even longer than Pip Utton. His solo version of Dylan Thomas' classic play is universally acclaimed, and these days only usually performed as a one off. You can also catch Masterson in another one night run, of his also acclaimed version of Orwell's 'Animal Farm'.

Assembly @ George Street, 24 Aug, 2.45pm (4.35pm), £12.00 - £15.00, fpp 300.

### 3 REWORKED THEATRICAL CLASSICS

#### Down The Rabbit Hole

This is a reworking [as you may have suspected] of Lewis Carroll's 'Alice In



Wonderland'. It's already a dark tale, but it looks like the Lincoln Company are taking it into even darker realms in a show where Carroll himself comes face to face with his own creations inhabiting a sinister netherworld, and ends up fighting for Alice's life. For grown ups.

C soco, 4 - 30 Aug (not 16), 12.05pm (12.55pm), £6.50 - £8.50, fpp 247.

#### The Gospel At Colonus

This take on Sophocles' 'Oedipus At Colonus' is a radical reworking indeed. It's set in modern day America, and features the rather brilliant gospel group The Blind



Boys Of Alabama in the role of Oedipus. You can't go wrong with gospel, in my opinion, and I'm more than fond of the works of Sophocles too. Definitely one for the diary, if you can get a ticket.

The Edinburgh Playhouse, 7.30pm (also 2.30pm performance on 22 Aug), 21 - 23 Aug, £8.00 - £30.00, eifpp 27.

#### The Caucasian Chalk Circle

Brecht's classic turns up at the Fringe on



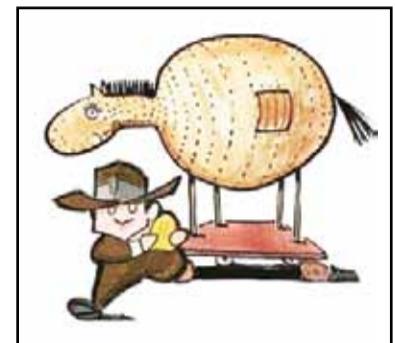
a very regular basis. Here it is reworked - using a fusion of physical movement and puppetry - by 3BUGS Fringe Theatre, who last year wowed ThreeWeeks reviewers with their show 'Ophelia Drowning'. Very pleased to see them back again this year.

The Zoo, 8 - 30 Aug (not 17), 6.30pm (7.45pm), £6.50 - £7.50, fpp 238.

### 3 WITH A FILM CONNECTION

#### Indiana Jones And The Pantomime Horse

I picked this one because I loved the blurb in the show's Fringe Programme listing. So, go on, go to the relevant page of the



Fringe Programme and read it. You have to find it amusing. If you don't, you are cold, humourless and I won't be friends with you.

Augustine's, 9 - 15 Aug, 4.45pm (5.45pm), £7.50 - £9.50, fpp 262.

#### Miss Havisham's Ghosts

Now, obviously I know that 'Great Expectations' was a book before it was a film, but the David Lean classic starring John Mills and Jean Simmons was a corking flick, so I'm going to overlook the whole Charles Dickens novel element. This looks good, anyway, a one-woman show written by its star, Trish Knight-Webb,



exploring the madness and motivation of this enduringly famous character.

theSpaces @ Surgeons Hall, 23 - 28 Aug, 12.20pm (1.10pm), £5.00 - £7.00, fpp 272.

#### Girl Constantly F\*\*\*ing Interrupted

Now, clearly, there is no film called 'Girl Constantly F\*\*\*ing Interrupted', but it's a play on the name of a film, and that, frankly, is justification enough for its being included in my film-connection-section. Also, I find



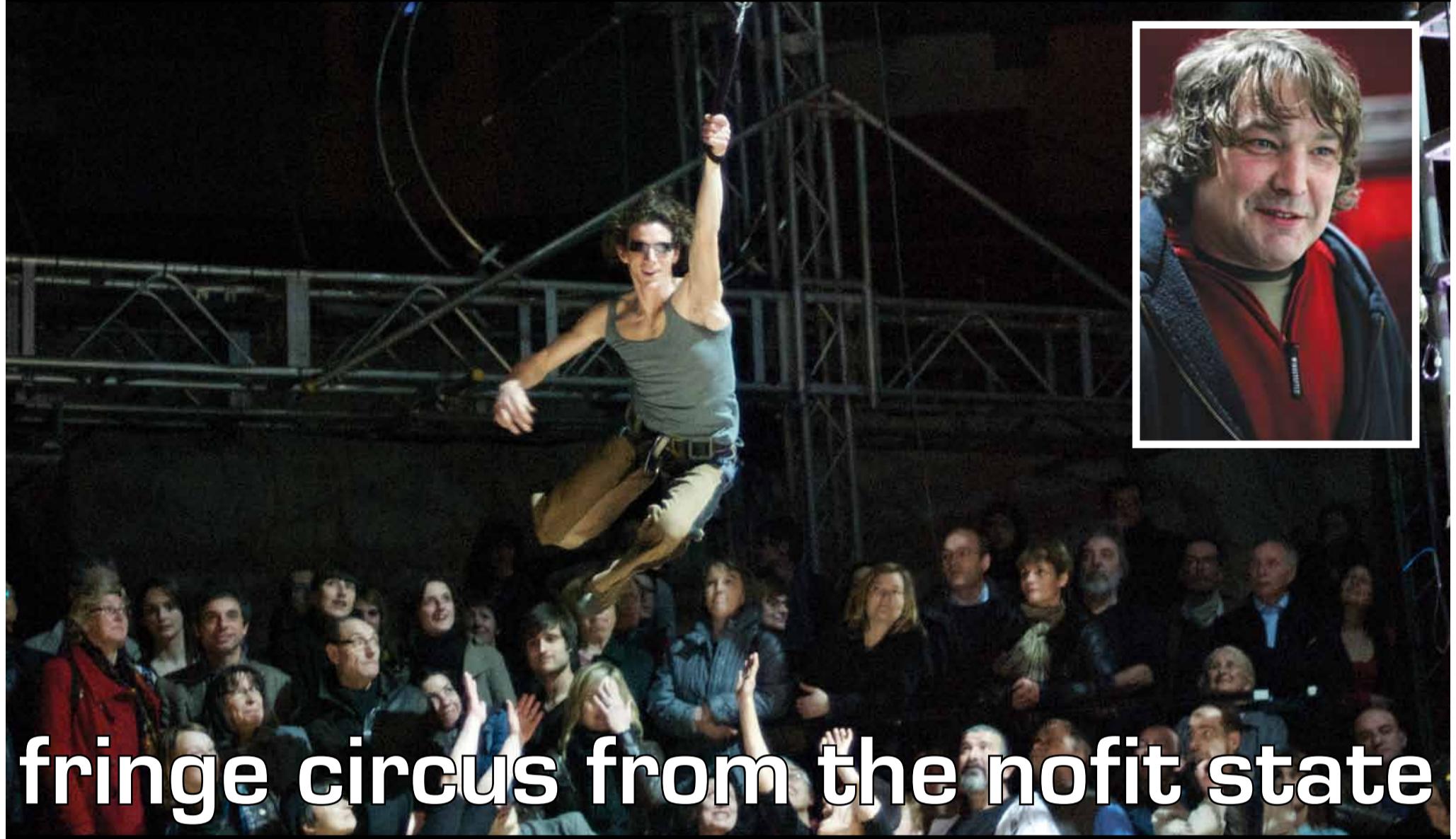
the title mildly amusing. I hope it's a good show.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 9 - 30 Aug, 12.00pm (1.00pm), £7.50 - £9.50, fpp 255.

**MORE ONLINE:** Don't forget you can check all our 3 To See show recommendations online too at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk) or via your iPhone by installing the iFringe app.



# PHYSICAL



## fringe circus from the nofit state

There's been a lot of innovation in the circus genre in recent years, but few innovate as much as NoFit State. And that's why we gave them an Editors' Award in 2005. After a four year break, they return to the Fringe this August with their show *Tabu*. We spoke to Creative Director Tom Rack about his company and this August's show.

### How did NoFit State first come about?

NoFit State was started in 1985 by five friends who had a passion for juggling and street performing. We were all very young and starting our own company was a way to avoid having to get proper jobs and to have some fun. Things have grown and snowballed and these days we work long hours, it's can be quite stressful at times and quite like a proper job. But we make sure we still have some fun.

### You do circus in promenade – why?

Having the audience move around gives them a totally different experience; as a viewer, you are no longer a passive observer, you have to engage with the show in a totally different way. The action might happen above, behind, in front or right next to you, you don't know what's coming or where to look next. The show is so rich with so many layers that you can choose what strands to follow, you may follow an individual performer or stand back and see a wider perspective. You can move and discover a different view point and by having to be so involved you become almost implicated in the show. It's a freedom which empowers the audience, giving them choices, and breaks the traditional distance between performer and observer, putting them both in the same arena, close up and personal.

### We love the way you combine music and video with the circus-style performances – who creates the music and video components?

The music is created by Peter Reynolds along with the band. The music is very specific; although the arrangements are very tight the musicians have room to be able to improvise and play to the show - the performers do not perform to the music, it's the other way around. This means the music really supports the show as well as driving it forward with fantastic energy. The

video is created by Lissy More. Much of it is shot during rehearsals. It not wallpaper or rock stadium style, rather another layer of detail in the montage, a texture, a back story or an abstraction that contributes to the overall picture.

### You tour around the world – how does audience response vary as you go from country to country?

Different cultures respond in different ways but always warmly. It can sometimes take us a few shows to understand how a place works. For example a German audience can appear quite reserved; it was hard to tell how it was going down as they were so quiet, but at the end of the show they erupted in a foot stamping ovation and demanded 4 encores. The French, Belgian and Spanish audiences are the most liberated and totally get what we do. The UK and Irish crowds are our favourite, though, because they are quite sceptical at first and then quickly and totally won over.

### It feels like circus has gone through something of a renaissance in the last decade, would you agree, and if so, why do you think that is?

I think circus has been going through a renaissance in the last 20 years but it has taken longer for the audiences perception of what circus can be to change. The Millennium Dome show and the frequent visits of Cirque du Soleil have done a lot to challenge this. It's great that the Arts Councils now recognise the Circus Arts as arts and offer some (although not enough) support. The emergence of circus schools and the popularity of circus classes has

created a new generation of circus artists who through creativity and determination are expanding the sector in new directions.

### You've been away from the Edinburgh Fringe for four years, what persuaded you back?

We have been missing the festival, we love to come to Edinburgh despite how much hard work it is. In the past 4 years we have been playing all over Europe and not been in the UK that much at all, and we wanted to come back last year but ended up in Avignon and Antwerp instead... This year we were determined to bring *tabu* to the Fringe; the festival has such a great vibe and the audiences are always really up for it. As always it is a huge financial risk, but one we think is well worth it.

### Parts of your shows look really dangerous - are they?

Circus would not be circus without some element of danger. Obviously the performers train hard and we take precautions to minimise the risk but it's always there, and that makes it all the more exciting. Because the audience move around and they can get close to the action, that feeling is intensified: performers fly over their heads or come dropping down from the roof, keeping the audience on their toes. It might look like anarchy at times but it is actually a tightly choreographed chaos and a well drilled team of professionals keep each other and the audience safe.

*Tabu*, NoFit State Circus, 4 - 30 August (not 10, 17, 24), times vary, £12.00 - £16.00, fpp 154.

**"UK and Irish crowds are our favourite, though, because they are quite sceptical at first and then quickly and totally won over"**

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## 3 TO SEE: PHYSICAL SHOWS

### 3 THAT ARE A BIT COMIC

#### The Goldilocks Zone

This is billed as a "comedy dance drama for all the family". I'm not sure I even knew such things existed. Anyway, this sounds good. For one, it's on at Dance Base, and stuff on at Dance Base is usually good, plus it's by a young [est 2007] dance company called Legitimate Bodies who have already impressed at the Edinburgh Fringe.

Dance Base, 12 - 22 Aug (not 16), times vary, £5.00, fpp 148.

#### Potato Country

How on earth could I resist a show called 'Potato Country'? It's a show about the Swedish love of potatoes. I didn't even know the Swedish people loved potatoes. I kind of assumed their favourite form of organic vegetable matter would be a swede. Or perhaps a turnip. How wrong I was.

Dance Base, 11 - 20 Aug (not 16), times vary, £5.00, fpp 152.

#### A Commedia Of Errors

See what they did there? This looks fun: Shakespeare's classic performed by a Honolulu-based company with a production somewhat in the manner of an old Italian commedia, as well as a real set of twins amongst the cast. Lummy, there are quite a lot of twins and pseudo twins knocking around at this year's Fringe, aren't there?

C, 4 - 10 Aug, 11.30am (12.40pm), £4.50 - £7.50, fpp 239.

### 3 THAT ARE A BIT DRAMATIC

#### Beautiful Burnout

This sounds like a very intense piece of physical theatre; it's set in the world of boxing and claims to challenge your preconceptions about this controversial sport. It's presented by Frantic Assembly and National Theatre Of Scotland and Bryony Lavery, so I would be very surprised if this wasn't rather good.

Pleasance Courtyard, 4 - 29 Aug (not 9, 16, 23), 7.30pm (8.50pm), £5.00 - £14.00, fpp 229.

#### Following Wendy

I like the sound of this mainly because it offers a darker, adult twist to the 'Peter Pan' story, and as I've always found elements of 'Peter Pan' pretty dark, it seems like a very appropriate treatment to give it. Plus, one of last year's ThreeWeeks reviewers apparently liked it, and that's good enough for me.

C soco, 4 - 20 Aug, 4.35pm (5.35pm), £6.50 - £9.50, fpp 253.

#### Keepers

ThreeWeeks saw this show at the Brighton Festival earlier this year and our reviewer was bowled over by it, and gave it a total five star review. The enormous talent of the actors is key to the success of the devised piece, but the subject matter, the story of two lighthouse keepers, death and the loss of sanity, clearly help make for a dramatic and engaging play.

Pleasance Courtyard, 7 - 30 Aug (not 11, 18), 4pm (5pm), £8.50 - £11.00, fpp 264.

### 3 THAT ARE A BIT CIRCUS-Y

#### Soap: The Show

"Trapeze, stunning acrobatics and water antics abound". Well, that's me sold. Oh, hang on, though. "You will be amazed by the agility of the eight acrobats as they perform beautiful and stunning routines in, on and around multiple bath tubs". Bath tubs? Routines in, on and around bath tubs? Colour me even sold-er.

Assembly @ Assembly Hall, 7 - 30 Aug (not 16, 23), 7.15pm (8.25pm), £10.00 - £20.00, fpp 289.

#### Julien Cottereau: Imagine-Toi

Clown and mime artist Julien Cottereau is formerly of Cirque du Soleil, so you'd expect him to be a bit good, really, wouldn't you? He's created this show, which is full of "incongruous and astonishing characters" for audience members of all ages, so it's possibly a good one for a family outing.

Assembly @ Princes St Gardens, 7 - 29 Aug, 4.15pm (5.15pm), £12.00 - £14.00, fpp 149.

#### Tabu

Actually, I'm not sure one can categorise this as 'a \*bit\* circus-y', when it's by NoFit State, who are in fact a circus. This is the company's first visit to the Fringe in four years, with this critically acclaimed and award winning production. They're former ThreeWeeks Editors' Award winners, so you can't really go wrong with these guys.

NoFit State Circus, 4 - 30 Aug times vary, £14.00 - £50.00, fpp 154.

### 3 THAT ARE A BIT LATIN

#### Alba Flamenca

I love flamenco, and am fairly convinced that everyone ought to like it. I'm even convinced that if you aren't mad about it, you'll still like this. ThreeWeeks raved about these guys last year; our reviewer called them "intense, impeccable, vivacious, and explosive". It sounds like just the kind of show I'd like to see.

Alba Flamenca, 6 - 29 Aug, 8.00pm (9.15pm) with 3.00pm performance on some days, £10.00 - £12.00, fpp 142.

#### Tap Ole

Another one of my favouritest things is tap dancing. I used to do tap-dancing, I enjoy watching tap-dancing, hell, I even like listening to tap dancing. I also like Spanish things, especially Spanish music (though I am also quite fond of tapas). Spanish tap dancing? Lead me to it.

C Plaza, 5 - 30 Aug (not 17), 7.15pm (8.20pm), £6.50 - £11.50, fpp 154.

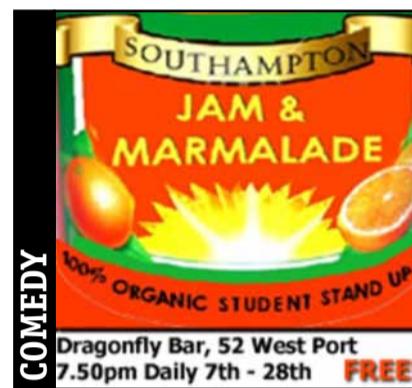
#### Água

Late choreographer Pina Bausch's Tanztheater Wuppertal present a playful piece inspired by and set amongst the beaches and rainforests of Brazil. It sounds really lovely; the EIF programme describes scenes of kissing competitions, men and women splashing each other, dancers illuminated by fairy lights. I really love fairy lights.

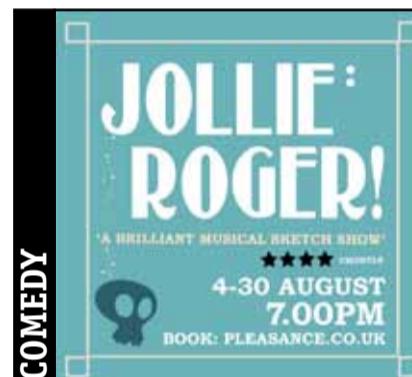
Edinburgh Playhouse, 27 - 29 Aug, 7.30pm (10.25pm), £8.00 - £28.50, eifpp 21.



COMEDY



COMEDY



COMEDY



COMEDY



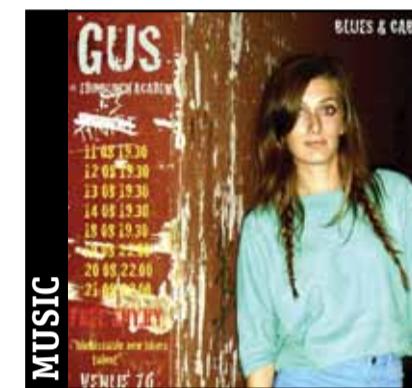
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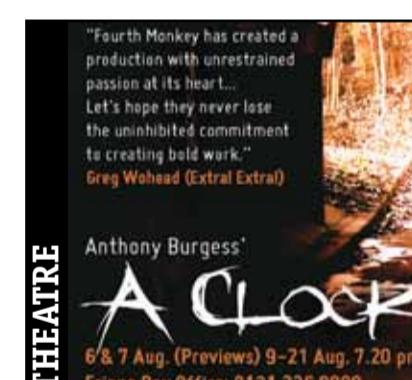
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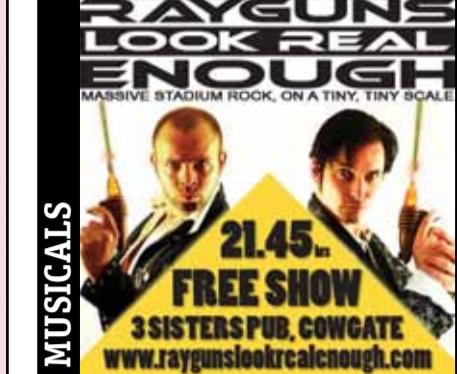
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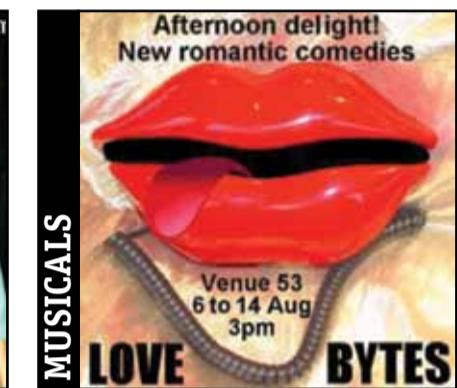
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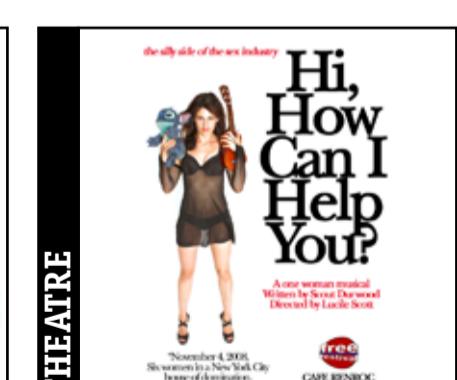
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# MUSIC

## JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL



The Edinburgh Festival 2010 properly kicked off last week when the Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival got under way with another ten days of, well, jazz mainly. And blues too. And very fine jazz and blues at that.

Once again ThreeWeeks' chief jazz man, Tom Bragg, has picked out ten artists playing at the Jazz Festival this year that he and his team reckon are definitely worth looking up. And to get you in the mood he's even compiled a special download album featuring a track from each of them. Says Tom: "This is the fifth time we've put together a playlist of music from some our favourite artists at the

Jazz Festival, it's just our way of bringing this - the first of Edinburgh's August festivals - to life online, and letting ticket buyers try before they buy with our gig recommendations".

"For those involved in the Fringe", he continues, "this coming week - with all its get-ins and previews - can be extra busy, but it is definitely worth squeezing a couple of hours into your schedule to take in a bit of the Jazz Festival. In amongst the jazz programme are a few of the best performers you'll see in Edinburgh during the entire festival, so you'd be a fool not to find the time to dip in and see what's on offer".

The Jazz Festival runs until 8 Aug alongside the Edinburgh Fringe's preview week. You can check out Tom's recommendations and download his preview album here by getting online and visiting this here URL: [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/jazzalbum](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/jazzalbum)

## CMU PLAYLISTS AT THE FRINGE



CMU is ThreeWeeks' sister media, the year round insiders guide to all things music. From next week CMU will be providing ThreeWeeks readers with some extra music-related goodies related to the Fringe programme.

First up, pretty much every day of the week ThreeWeeks asks a new artist or band the 'same six questions' as part of a fun quick quiz interview. We'll be putting those same six questions to three of the artists playing at the Edge music festival within the Fringe this year.

Another regular feature in CMU is the

Powers Of Ten playlists where we get a different guest each week to compile a playlist of some of their favourite tracks. You can then access those tracks by a pre-made Spotify playlist, and read a little about why said guest chose the tune they did. For the next three weeks the Powers Of Ten playlists will have an Edinburgh theme, and will be available via the pages of ThreeWeeks as well as on CMU. If all goes to plan we'll be raiding the record collections of MJ Hibbett (pictured), Reginald D Hunter and Andrew Collins over the next three weeks.

Says CMU Editor Andy Malt: "The Fringe's music section is one of its best kept secrets. But it's a secret that really shouldn't be kept. By tying up with ThreeWeeks this year we hope to let our music community readers know more about Edinburgh's festival".

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## Q&A: MOISHE'S BAGEL

**These musical Editors' Award winners always please the ThreeWeeks review team with their annual Fringe shows. We caught up with Moishe's Bagel's Phil Alexander to ask some quick questions...**

**How did Moishe's Bagel come into being?**

We began life as a tango band (with a singer), but it soon became apparent that we all loved the kind of music we do now. So one day we got together for a rehearsal, and it sounded pretty good. I managed to get us a gig at Edinburgh's jazz club Henry's, and we've not looked back since then.

**You're a Scottish band made up 80% of Brits, yet you have a very international sound. Why is that?**

We have all played many different kinds of music. I think one of the things we all most enjoy about the band is the

geographical and musical range that we get to cover.

**Your music spans various genres, how do you describe yourselves?**

We've always had difficulty describing ourselves, but these days I would say that we play original acoustic music.

**You all seem to be pretty prolific musicians, what do you guys get up to outside the band?**

Plenty! Greg is principal second violin with the BBC Scottish symphony orchestra, I am on the road a lot with English folk singer Eliza Carthy, Mario plays with Camille O'Sullivan...

**You've toured a lot - do you find you get a different reaction to your music in different parts of the UK and the world?**

We tend to get a pretty good reaction wherever we go, but for some reason Wales, the South west and the Czech Republic have always been favourites.

**While some locals escape the city in August, you always perform at the Fringe - is it a great place to perform?**

Yes! The atmosphere in the city is

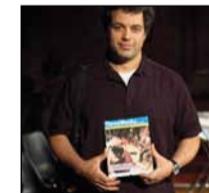
fantastic for the whole month. Although there's also a sigh of relief when it's over.

**Is there any sort of Edinburgh folk or jazz music scene, and do you consider yourself part of that?**

There is a very strong Edinburgh folk scene, and also a strong jazz scene, and although we may not be such a part of it now, it's certainly where we began. One of the great things about Edinburgh's music is the way that different musicians from different traditions end up playing together - it makes for a very creative scene.

**What have you got planned for the next year?**

We have just released our third album, 'Uncle Roland's Flying Machine', so we will be on the road promoting that. Keep an eye on [www.moishesbagel.com](http://www.moishesbagel.com) for dates!



Moishe's Bagel,  
The LOT, 27 - 28  
Aug, 10.00pm  
(11.15pm), £10.00 -  
£12.00, fpp 194.

**the BIGGEST picks the BEST**

**ThreeWeeks Editors' Awards 2010 | Sunday 29 August**



## 3 TO SEE: GIGS, CONCERTS & MUSIC SHOWS

### 3 GIGS

#### Fool's Gold

Like fellow New Yorkers Yeasayer and Vampire Weekend, Fool's Gold mix African musical influences with Western pop music, though without the broad knowledge of the former or the preppy annoyance of the latter (yes, that's right, I am dissing Vampire Weekend). The band's eponymous debut album, released last year, is a largely overlooked gem. Take this opportunity to acquaint yourself.

Sneaky Pete's, 26 August, 7.00pm, £8.00.

#### Steve Mason

Former frontman of The Beta Band Steve Mason has released solo albums before, but this year's 'Boys Outside' is the first under his own name. An incredibly personal record, it's filled with great songs given a pop treatment by producer Richard X and has brought Mason levels of acclaim richly deserved. Performed live, the songs are just as powerful, and Steve will also slip a few Beta Band classics in there too.

Liquid Room, 18 August, 7.00pm, £8.00.

#### Pantha Du Prince

If you're looking for something with altogether fewer guitars, Pantha Du Prince could well be your man. This German techno producer was lauded with near universal acclaim for his latest album, 'Black Noise', which was recorded in the Swiss Alps using field recordings made as he trudged around the mountains, merging nature and technology until they are indistinguishable from each other. Live it'll be much the same, but with less likelihood of death in a landslide if you dance too much.

Sneaky Pete's, 14 August, 7.00pm, £10.00.



### 3 INSTRUMENTAL RECITALS

#### Trio Zimmerman (pictured below)

Frank Peter Zimmerman impressed 2006 audiences with his work as a soloist with the Berlin Philharmonic. The violinist returns with viola player Antoine Tamestit and cellist Christian Poltéra for a recital of Beethoven's 'Opus 9 String Trios'.

The Queen's Hall, 18 Aug, 11.00am (12.45pm), £7 - £27, eifpp50.

#### Absolutely One Handed,

This is "Stefan Warzycki's debut recital in his reinvented form as a left-handed virtuoso" and "includes Bach's famous 'Chaconne' and some of Godowsky's sumptuous 'Studies On Chopin's Etudes' - You'd never believe it can be done with one hand!" I don't believe it can be done with one hand. Come on, prove me wrong, Mr Warzycki.

St Andrew's and St George's West, 20 Aug, 12.30pm (1.30pm), £7.00 - £9.00, fpp 172.

#### Bartok and Shostakovich late (pictured lower right)

This sounds like a nice one to round off a busy Fringe/Festival day. Works by Bartok and Shostakovich, as well as other 20th century composers, performed from 10.30pm by the Brodowski Quartet whilst you sit back and relax with a complimentary glass of Hungarian wine. Lovely.

Royal Over-Seas League, 19, 26 Aug, 10.30pm (11.30pm), £10.00 - £12.00, fpp175.

### 3 TRADITIONAL EVENTS

#### The Red Earth

I like the sound of this because it's not just folk music, it's folk music with a narrative:

Mairi Campbell and David Francis tell a story - based on events that happened to members of Campbell's own family - about two generations of Scottish missionaries and their experiences in war-torn China in the first half of the twentieth century.

Acoustic Music Centre @ St Brides, 23, 27 Aug, 5pm (6pm), £8.00 - £10.00, fpp 200.

#### Tenchi Shinmei (pictured upper right)

Ah, Taiko drumming. Who could fail to love it? This is the latest show from Wadaiko Ensemble Tokara, the group headed by Art Lee, the only non-Japanese person ever to win first place in Tokyo's Odaiko Championships. 'Tenchi Shinmei' means 'The Gods Of Heaven and Earth', and is all about Shinto and spirituality and stuff. It sounds lovely.

St John's Church, 9 - 20 Aug (not 12, 19), 7.30pm (8.30pm), £8.00 - 12.00, fpp 204.

#### Blueflint

It sounds like this banjo playing duo are a band to watch. I have heard nothing but complimentary stuff about their lyrics - which tell dark, melancholic stories - their harmonies, and their UK take on Americana... plus, I love a bit of bluegrass, me. Very much looking forward to hearing the actual music.

Brunton Theatre, 26 Aug, 7.30pm (9.30pm), £12.50 - £14.50, fpp 177.

### 3 WITH MUSICIANS IN THEM

#### Dinosaur Planet

Written by and starring indie legend and ThreeWeeks favourite MJ Hibbett, who made his Edinburgh debut with his autobiographic show 'My Exciting Life In ROCK' two years ago, returns with the second run of his altogether more fictional 'Dinosaur Planet'. Now featuring a full cast (there are two of them), the lo-fi rock opera promises "dinosaurs, giant robots, space invasions, high quality academic research and the outright destruction of Peterborough".

The GRV, 5 - 14 August, 12.00pm (1.00pm), £5.00, fpp 210.

#### Guy Pratt's Wake Up Call

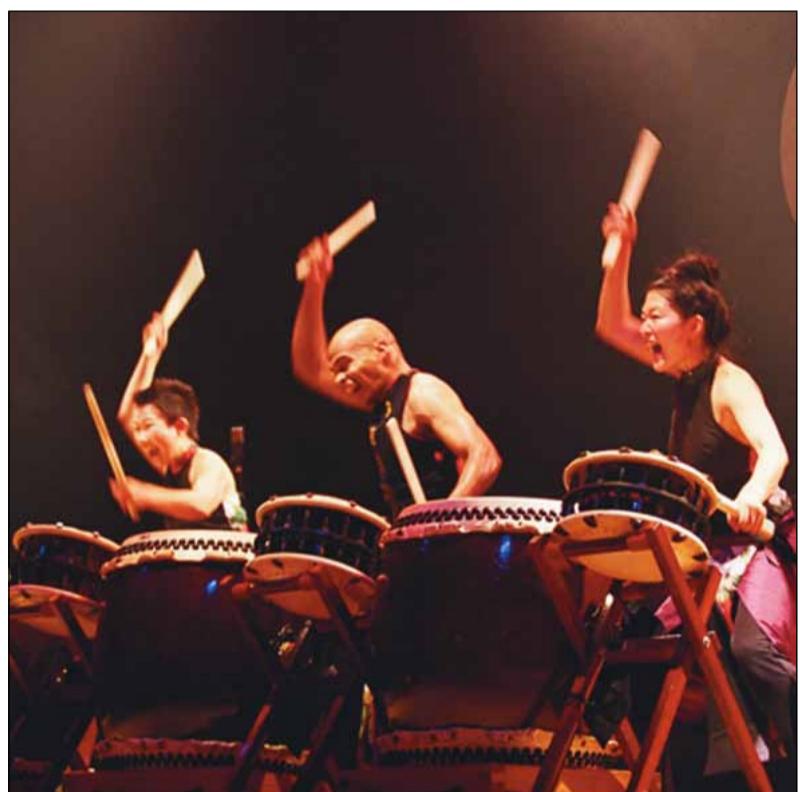
As a session bassist, Guy Pratt has recorded and toured with artists including Pink Floyd, Madonna, Echo & The Bunnymen and The Orb. As you might expect, he's picked up an anecdote or two on the way, all of which he's quite happy to share with anyone who'll pay a fiver and listen for an hour. Described as "wonderfully indiscreet" by Mojo, this will be a must see for anyone interested in the bizarre and hilarious world of the touring musician.

Fringe at Le Monde, 22 - 30 August, 1.45pm (2.45pm), £5.00, fpp 68.

#### Inside

My previous two tips here are likely to be quite light-hearted affairs, but if we all went around watching jovial shows all the time, where would be be? Time spent at the Fringe could always do with a bit more intensity, which is where 'Inside' comes in. Soundtracked live by instrumental electronic rock band 65daysofstatic, this dance performance choreographed by the award-winning Jean Abreu will explore "violence, incarceration, solitude and hope within the prison walls".

Zoo Roxy, 6 - 14 August, 6.25pm (7.25pm), £12.00, fpp 148.



'With his stories within stories  
**DANIEL CAINER**  
reminds me of Buñuel...' **ALAN BENNETT**

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# ART & EVENTS

## 3 TO SEE: ART & EXHIBITIONS



### 3 PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITIONS

#### World Press Photo Exhibition

The World Press Photo Exhibition is a cornerstone of the Festival Of Politics programme, though, fortunately, it lasts longer than the political fest itself, giving you more of a chance to see it. The show, which includes winning photographs from this year's World Press Photo competition, features the work of 62 press photographers covering a diverse range of subject matter. Some of that subject matter includes natural disasters and war zones, so be aware that some of this stuff might be distressing.

Scottish Parliament, 3 - 28 Aug, free.

#### Rosita MacKenzie

A photography exhibition featuring a diverse range of images, from a couple with their newborn to a local politician to Edinburgh's Poet Laureate. All quite mundane you think? Well, what's interesting here is that Rosita MacKenzie is blind. I can't help thinking this will be a rather different sort of photography show.

Edinburgh City Library, 12 Aug - 24 Sep, 10am - 8pm (Mon - Thu), 10am - 5pm (Fri), 9am - 1pm (Sat), free.

#### Ulf Mark Pedersen

This exhibition of photos by Ulf Mark Pedersen focuses on nature, which is surely good in itself, trees and skies and what-have-you always making for good images, in my opinion. There's a twist though, because Pederson uses a technique called lenticular imaging to animate his photography. I like the sound of that.

Assembly @ George Street, 5 - 30 Aug, 11am - 11pm (daily), free, fpp 170.

### 3 COMPILATIONS

#### Another World: Dali, Magritte, Miru and The Surrealists

I love surrealism, and I'm in particular a fan of Magritte and Giacometti who are both represented here. Plus, the Dean Gallery is situated conveniently close to the Edinburgh Gallery Of Modern Art, and both are placed in a rather nice part of town. So have a stroll about while you are there.

Dean Gallery, 2 - 31 Aug, 10.00am - 6.00pm, £5.00 - £7.00, fpp 166.

#### Impressionist Gardens

You know that these critical picks are all about me, really, don't you? Well, last September I visited an impressionist's garden - Monet's garden in Giverny, France to be precise - and that may be why this exhibition leapt out at me. Or it might just be that, like anyone with any sense, I like pretty impressionist pictures of gardens. Anyway, all the big names are represented here, so it's definitely worth a look. And by the way, it isn't really all about me, that was a joke. It's about the shows, of course.

National Gallery Complex, 2 - 31 Aug, 10am (6pm) (Thu 7pm), £10.00 (£7.00), fpp 169.

#### Six Of The Best

This is a collaborative collection of work by six award winning digital artists, which is good, because I often think digital artists are a bit overlooked by most normal people, even if the arty establishment and arty aficionados accept it as an established art-form. Gosh, what a lot of incidences of 'art' there were in that sentence.

Digital Design Services, 9 - 27 Aug, Mon - Fri 10.00am - 4.00pm, Sat 12pm - 4.00pm, free, fpp 170.

### 3 WITH ADDED BONUS TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

#### From Another Kingdom - The Fascinating World of Fungi

I love fungi, me. Or I did, until my two year old daughter kept trying to eat it. Here is the perfect compromise: a multimedia exhibition about it, and its importance in the grand scheme of things. The bonus is,

it were removed the capital

might lose something important yet difficult to pinpoint; the way celebrities sometimes do, when they have a nose-job. Enough rambling. There's a photography exhibition in it this year; if you climb up to the top to see the pictures, you won't actually have to look at the monument.

The Scott Monument, 6 - 30 Aug, 9.00am - 7.00pm, (6pm on Sun), £3.00, fpp 170.

#### The Scott Monument - Edinburgh 283

I have to admit to something. I hate the Scott Monument. I think it's a horribly ugly thing, and I don't like the fact that it sits in the middle of beautiful Edinburgh, looking ugly. That's just my opinion though, and who knows, if

Talbot Rice Art Gallery, 3 - 31 Aug, Tue - Sat 10.00am - 5.00pm, free.

### 3 PAINTERS

#### Witness: The Spectre of Memory In Contemporary African Art

When I first selected this for preview in this here paper, I thought it was just one artist exhibiting. But in fact, it turns out it is four. I was drawn in by the sentence "Kenya's Richard Onyango can remember scenes from his childhood and the more recent past with almost perfect recall and then paint them in vivid detail". Also on display, however, is the work of fellow Kenyan Petersen Kamwathi, Lovemore Kambudzi, who documents life in Harare, and Soly Cisse, who hails from Senegal.

English-Speaking Union, 6 - 30 Aug, 10am (6pm), free, fpp 171.

#### Joan Mitchell

This is the first solo UK exhibition of works by late American abstract expressionist painter Joan Mitchell, featuring key paintings on canvas and works on paper. Should be good. And, as even the blurb points out, it's on at a beautiful venue.

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, 2 Aug - 4 Sep, 10.00am - 5.30pm, free, fpp 169.

#### Child: Julie Roberts

Julie Roberts' paintings deal with what's described in her blurb as "unflinching subject matter" - in the past she has dealt with crime scenes, for example. Here, she shows paintings dealing with children, exploring gender, authority and visual interpretation with a range of different images, including those of evacuees and refugees, and of schoolrooms.

Talbot Rice Art Gallery, 3 - 31 Aug, Tue - Sat 10.00am - 5.00pm, free.

#### Pictured

Above: 'Garden With Path' by Van Gogh from Impressionist Gardens.

Below: 'Le Temps Menaçant (Threatening Weather)' by Rene Magritte from Another World.





## 3 TO SEE: OTHER EVENTS

### 3 WORKSHOPS

#### **Nothing But The Poem**

This sounds nice, because it's basically a workshop about how to read poetry. Or not 'how to' in fact; rather, it seems to be about approaching poetry with a clear mind, and allowing discoveries about the text emerge. Well, that's what the blurb says to me, and I like that idea.

Charlotte Square Gardens, 18, 25 Aug, 11am (12.30pm), £12.00 - £15.00, bfpp 22.

#### **Axel Scheffler**

This actually isn't a workshop, it's a masterclass, which is different. But I didn't have space for a masterclass section as well as a workshop section so I am putting it in here. Axel Scheffler is, as you may already know, famous for illustrating books like 'The Gruffalo' and 'Room On The Broom'. I wish I could draw like him, which is why I would like to attend this.

Charlotte Square Gardens, 27 Aug, 7pm (8pm), bfpp 60

#### **Acting And Creating A Character**

I'm pretty sure I've tipped this at least once before in my Edinburgh Festival life, but I have no qualms about doing it again, because this workshop is run by the lovely and talented Julian Caddy who is very good at stuff like this.

Sweet Grassmarket, 7 Aug, 10am (11.25am), £8.50, fpp 156

### 3 TALKS

#### **John Prescott**

John Prescott is one of the star speakers at this year's Festival Of Politics, even though he's more used to hanging out in the Palace of Westminster rather than the concrete bunker of Holyrood. I doubt the former Deputy Prime Minister needs any introduction to any of you - even if you don't care a hoot about politics - so I won't waste any more time introducing him.

Scottish Parliament, 21 Aug, 5.00pm (6.00pm), £6.00 (£3.50).

#### **Annie Lennox**

Another speaker who surely needs no introduction, Annie Lennox is returning for a second time to the Festival Of Politics this August to give an update on her SING campaign, which aims to fight HIV/AIDS in South Africa.

Scottish Parliament, 21 Aug, 6.30pm (7.30pm), £6.00 (£3.50).

#### **Philip Pullman**

This is the sort of event that sells out in seconds (certainly it's already sold out as I write this), so following this recommendation might involve spending some time on eBay or getting a summer job stewarding at the Book Festival. But I like Philip Pullman, on account of his writing some of my favourite books ('The Sally' books, 'His Dark Materials'), and demand to be able to ramble on about him. His re-imagining of the story of Christianity, 'The Good Man Jesus And The Scoundrel Christ', has certainly caused some controversy, if he hadn't already with his earlier work, so now is an especially good time to hear him speak.

Charlotte Square Gardens, 14 Aug, 11.30am (12.30pm), £10.00 (£8.00).

### 3 DISCUSSIONS

#### **Anthony Browne**

The immensely talented children's laureate leads a discussion about his work as an illustrator and author, the importance of visual literacy and the role of picture books in enthusing children and encouraging them to read. His books are worth reading even if you're not a child, and I feel sure this will make for a really interesting event.

Charlotte Square Gardens, 26 Aug, 5pm (6pm), £5.00, bfpp 55

#### **Stuart Kelly**

Mr Kelly argues that renowned novelist Walter Scott is basically the architect of everything now associated with Scottish national identity. It's not an especially new theory, it's one that's been argued quite a bit before. But this event will put the claim to the test. Was Scott really behind all things tartan etc, or is that an over simplification? Discuss.

Charlotte Square Gardens, 15 Aug, 8.30pm (9.30pm), £8.00 - £10.00, bfpp 12

#### **Who Controls What You Eat**

This Festival Of Politics debate looks at the current obesity and over-eating epidemic, and looks into the possible causes of it. I already have lots of opinions on what those causes are, but will still be interested to hear what Professor Julian Mercer, head of obesity research at University of Aberdeen Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health, and Lydia Wilkie, from the Food Standards Agency, have to say.

Scottish Parliament, 17 Aug, 4.00pm (5.00pm), free.

### 3 WALKS

#### **City Of The Dead Tour**

This tour has been 'doing' the Fringe for the last three or four years, and has received rave reviews, so could already be regarded as something of a Fringe institution. The material delivered by Black Hart Entertainment's guides has been written by historian and author JA Henderson, and I'm assured that this is one tour that makes for a genuinely terrifying experience.

Large Black Sign Outside St Giles' Cathedral, 2 Aug - 5 Sep, 8.30pm (9.45pm), 2 Aug - 5 Sep, 10pm, (11.15pm), £5.50 - £8.50, fpp 157.

#### **Graveyards, Mystery and Murder**

If the 'City Of The Dead' sounds a little too scary for those of a slightly sensitive disposition, perhaps this is a slightly more sedate alternative. Or maybe not. I'm basing that on the fact that the company says that their tales are told in a humorous way; you're still getting a tour of allegedly haunted graveyards, though.

Outside Greyfriars Bobby Bar, 6 - 28 Aug (not 8, 11, 15, 18, 22, 25), 7pm (8.30pm), £7.50 - £8.50, fpp 160

#### **OOR tours: The Musical Walking Tour of Edinburgh**

Now this one is truly horrifying, a tour punctuated by musical numbers. Only kidding, I'm assured by those in the know that this is an entertaining and interesting tour, and that your host, Edinburgh native Graeme E Pearson, is a well of information about the Old Town, and has a very fine voice indeed.

Blue Police Box Outside the Tron Kirk, 2 Aug - 2 Sep, 11.45am (1pm), £7.00 - £9.00, fpp 163

## Q&A: POLITICS FESTIVAL

We've given two **ThreeWeeks Editors' Awards to entire festivals. The first went to the Festival Of Politics, a great addition to Edinburgh's festival month since August 2005. We spoke to Festival Manager Chris Berry.**

**Tell us a bit about the history of the Festival Of Politics, why was it set up?** Openness is one of the founding principles of the Parliament, and public engagement is key to this. During August the Scottish Parliament is in recess, at a time when the world's biggest arts Festival takes place on our doorstep. So the idea came about to host a series of events, all with a political theme, at this time that engaged the public in a unique

way. The Festival has now taken place each August since 2005.  
**As an event at the Scottish Parliament, is the Scottish electorate**

**your primary target audience, or are you aiming to reach out even further?**

We're obviously keen to ensure that the Festival engages the Scottish electorate, and encourages Scots to visit the Parliament and participate. However, many of the events we host cover issues - such as climate change, HIV/AIDS, conflict and peace, and the politics of food - that will resonate with people no matter where they are from.

**How do you go about choosing what events to hold and what people to invite to speak?**

It's quite an organic process. We try to anticipate topics that might be important or topical around the time of the Festival. Equally important however is working with stakeholder groups and the public to get their input. A significant number of events and speakers featured in this year's programme result from suggestions from various people and organisations.

**What do you think will be the highlights of this year's festival?**

With nearly 50 events, I think there will be something for everyone. I think there will be significant interest in Annie Lennox's update on her SING Campaign, which fights HIV/AIDS in Africa. I think many people will be keen to hear former Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott interviewed about his life in politics. We also have an event on the politics of comedy - featuring former Perrier winner Simon Fanshawe

- and one examining how people who are not 'professional' politicians can make a difference to the political landscape, which includes comedian and campaigner Mark Thomas amongst the panel.

**By covering the political dimension of things like comedy and football, do you hope to show that an interest in politics is about more than just an interest in party politics?**

Absolutely! The underlying theme of this year's Festival is 'Changing Politics', with many events looking at how the choices made and actions taken by people who might consider themselves to be 'non-political' actually do have a political resonance and impact.

**What would you say to someone in town for Fringe comedy or theatre to entice them to the Festival Of Politics?**

We have had some great quotes from politicians from various parties over the years. I think a particularly appropriate quote came from former Labour leader Neil Kinnock who appeared at the first Festival in 2005 and who said "...politics shouldn't be all about middle aged men in grey suits, arguing for the sake of it". Our Festival certainly demonstrates that politics is far from this, and can be engaging, challenging and definitely entertaining.

The Festival Of Politics runs from 17 - 21 Aug at the Scottish Parliament. More at [www.festivalofpolitics.org.uk](http://www.festivalofpolitics.org.uk).

# CHILDREN'S SHOWS



## theatre with youth

**There are a fair few youth theatre groups that perform at the Fringe each year, but one stands out for consistently coming up with top quality shows. We speak to the team behind the Editors' Award winning Newbury Youth Theatre.**

Newbury Youth Theatre has been in existence for nearly three decades. Why was it originally set up, and what are its aims in 2010?

Newbury Youth Theatre was originally set up as part of the then Berkshire County's Youth & Community service to provide local young people with an opportunity to develop their theatrical skills and interests under the guidance of professional practitioners and to have fun! It hoped to empower them with transferable skills that could be used throughout their lives. Its aims in 2010 have not really changed. We are the resident Youth Theatre of the Newbury Corn Exchange and that gives access to further professional industry support. We always aim to produce high quality professional work and engage our members in the making process – giving them a sense of ownership over the outcome.

**How do you recruit your actors, and how do you go about casting them?**

We are still a non-auditioning, open access youth theatre run by the members through a management committee. Recruitment is mostly from local schools and colleges much of it achieved by word of mouth and our reputation. In fact one new member has recently joined us from Edinburgh and heard of us through the National Association Of Youth Theatres – with whom we're affiliated. Casting is always a delight. We have a reputation for strong ensemble work, through the guidance of our directors Amy and Tony Trigwell-Jones, and consequently have no 'stars' in the shows. The devising process allows members to take on as much or as little as they feel comfortable with, with much of the casting being done organically.

throughout the process.

**Despite working with different generations of young actors, your productions are of a consistently high quality, what is the secret in making youth theatre good theatre?**

Now that's a really difficult question to answer. However, treating the members as young adults and giving them the responsibility for running their theatre company is very important. There has to be a sense of ownership – provided by the style of direction, in which the company are led (in small groups) through ideas, themes, styles and techniques and allowed to experiment with them. Amy and Tony then work through these often wild ideas with the full company to create a series of finely tuned theatrical moments, which, hopefully can be enjoyed by an audience. We think the real power of what we do though is to give the young company a sense of responsibility over something that is theirs to invest in and (hopefully) make successful.

**How do you choose what plays to stage?**

Choosing plays is always an issue since youth theatre members stay with us for about four years before they go off to university, college, or the world of work. Several of them have become teachers and one member has recently been playing in 'War Horse' in the West End. It's a process of developing the youngster's talents and finding a vehicle for that exuberant flair. We try to steer clear of overtly earnest dramas that tackle 'issues' in a heavy handed way but still aren't shy to use moments of pathos and tension when it's appropriate. We want to stretch them, by trying out new genres, styles, and approaches. Next year for example we will be working with the tremendous Red Cape Theatre Company with an exciting new play called 'From Newbury With Love' which we will be working on in collaboration with a youth theatre in Moldova and will be exchanging a visit with them in October after the Festival.

**Tell us a bit more about this year's show 'Cautionary Tales'**

Belloc's late Victorian stories tackle a way in which a child might do something wrong and how, often, they could end up dead! So

we have Jim, who ran away from his nurse and was eaten by a lion or Matilda, who told lies and was burned to death. They can be quite gruesome but very much in the same way that Roald Dahl's kids' stories are (Dahl was a self-confessed Belloc fan) and in the way that under tens tend to find completely fascinating! It's also a return to children's theatre, which we've done previously with the 'Just So Stories' and 'The Wind Tamer' – both of which were very rewarding experiences for the company and for us as the creative team.

**Is bringing a show to the Edinburgh Fringe an important part of what you do?**

It's central to our ethos in many ways. Being the largest international Festival Fringe in the world it provides a unique opportunity for the members to work together as a touring company, taking on roles in production and marketing as well as performing every day – not to mention the potential to see an incredible range of international work – unheard of anywhere else in the UK. Aside from the huge opportunities creatively, a trip to the festival may also be the first time some of our members have been away from home and so they learn how to cook, do laundry (occasionally) and share domestic roles and responsibilities. As one member said last year, "I now know how to cook an egg in four different ways." Job done.

**Are there any other youth theatre groups you admire?**

The Pleasance's Youth theatre unfailingly produces splendid work and we look forward to seeing 'Soho Storeys'. The exciting and controversial Ontroerend Goed company are back at the Traverse with a new youth show 'Teenage Riot' (following 2008's incredible 'Once and For All') and Jeremy James Taylor (formerly from the National Youth Music Theatre) is directing 'Azincourt' at the Edinburgh Academy. We often say that we wish audiences would take a chance and see more youth theatre shows - they may well be surprised by what they see.

Cautionary Tales, Zoo Roxy, 9 - 14 Aug, 12.45pm (13.45pm), £6.00 - £8.00, fpp 9.



## 3 TO SEE: KID'S SHOWS

### 3 TRIED AND TESTED

#### **The Dandelion's Story**

This one's on the list because I happened to remember that it was at the Festival last year, and our reviewer thought it was great. When I first read the blurb last July, I remember thinking it sounded a bit icky but, ultimately, it's about the fact that everything has its place in the circle of life. Fortunately, however, no soundtrack from Elton John. For ages 5+

C, 15 - 30 Aug, 1.50pm (2.40pm), £5.50 - £10.50, fpp 10.

#### **Twinkle Twonkle**

The company producing this are just really good at producing children's shows, so anything they do is recommended really. They've brought their 'Gruffalo' to the Fringe more than once, and recently staged 'Room On The Broom' here too, plus they are no strangers to the West End. And this show is about the stars, which, I know from experience, is a popular theme with little ones. For ages 4+

Pleasance Dome, 7 - 30 Aug (not 18, 25), 2pm (2.50pm), £7.50 - £9.50, fpp 18.

#### **Patrick Monahan - Stories And Tales For Kids, Who Can Run Faster Than Snails**

Our reviewers always like Patrick Monahan, whether they're seeing his adult stand-up or his shows aimed at children. And it's not just us. Other publications - which I've heard exist, somewhere - like him too. Go and take your brood to see this, and then go and see his grown up show too. For ages 4 - 12.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 7 - 29 Aug (not 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24), 3.15pm (4.15pm), £6.00 - £8.00, fpp 15.

### 3 SHOWS BASED ON BOOKS

#### **Hairy Maclary and Friends**

Having a child ushered me into a whole new world of literary fun. Of course some children's books, even those for very young children, can be entertaining for adults too, and the works of Lynley Dodd definitely fall into that category. This children's show is based on the writer and illustrator's most famous character Hairy Maclary, and his friends. I'd really like to go and see this, and just for myself really (though I might invite Cecily along too). Suitable for all ages.

Assembly @ George Street, 7 - 29 Aug, 10.40am (11.30am), £9.00, fpp 13. Click here for tickets.

#### **Stick Man Live (pictured below)**

You know that whole new literary world I've been ushered into? Well, also living in it is 'Stick Man'. It's a slightly sad tale of a poor stick man who gets lost, and is gradually taken further and further away from his

tree home. Don't worry, though, this story by 'Gruffalo' author Julia Donaldson ends happily. For ages 3 - 7.

Udderbelly's Pasture, 7 - 30 Aug (not 16), 12.30pm (1.20pm), £8.00 - £11.00, fpp 18. Click here for tickets.

#### **The Twits**

My childhood reading was peppered with the works of Roald Dahl, and I assume that his stuff is just as popular as ever it was. Interestingly though, while I was glued to the likes of 'Charlie And The Chocolate Factory', 'The Magic Finger' and 'James and The Giant Peach', I never actually read 'The Twits'. Which gives me an especially good reason to see this show. Though I'm sure it'll be good viewing for 'Twits' connoisseurs as well. For ages 4 - 10.

Zoo Southside, 8 - 14 Aug, 12.25pm (1.10pm), £4.00 - £7.00, fpp 18. Click here for tickets.

### 3 BOOK FEST THINGS

#### **Historical Fiction with Sally Gardner and Eleanor Updale**

This sounds like an interesting one for older children. The above named authors come together to discuss the joys of writing historical fiction, and the fun of making sure that the historic fact and detail is all there. I haven't read their work, but it all sounds pretty exciting. In fact I'd quite like to read it myself and I'm not eleven (last time I checked). For ages 8-12.

Charlotte Square Gardens, 15 Aug, 11.30am (12.30pm), £4.00, bfpp 13.

#### **Appalachian Stories And Puppets**

All children love puppets. Every last one of them. Hang on though, I know of at least one who is terrified of them. But as long as your charges are not suffering from pupaphobia, I reckon they might enjoy this. It's a workshop, so they get to make their own puppet from a paper bag in the company of storyteller Ruth Kirkpatrick and artist Linda McCann. What's not to like? Unless you're the aforementioned pupaphobe. For ages 3 - 5.

Charlotte Square Gardens, 18 Aug, 12pm (1.30pm), bfpp 25.

#### **Each Peach Pear Plum**

This, if you are not already aware of it, is a book for very young children. If you own a child and this book, it's highly likely that you know the text of it off by heart, and could recite it for me, right here, right now. At this event, your toddler will get games, songs and stories based on the book and if your toddler is like mine, that will guarantee smiles and probably a degree of participation. For ages 2 - 4

Charlotte Square Gardens, 19 Aug, 10.30am (11am), 2pm (2.30pm), bfpp 29.



## MORE THREEWEEKS IN EDINBURGH

The ThreeWeeks review team see more shows at the Edinburgh Festival than anyone else, while the ThreeWeeks news team keeps its ear to the ground for all the latest developments, and the feature and podcasts teams are already talking to some of our favourite artists, directors, comedians and performers. You can check out their coverage in all the following places:

**ThreeWeeks Weekly Edition:** Future editions of this newspaper, published each Tuesday evening of the festival and with Guest Editors Brendon Burns, Pip Utton and Janey Godley lined up to entertain you. Pick a copy up from 75 sites across Edinburgh.

**ThreeWeeks Daily Edition:** All the latest reviews packed onto one A3 sheet, published every evening of the Fringe from Friday 6 Aug and available from 25 sites across Central Edinburgh.

**ThreeWeeks eDaily:** This is the best place to keep up to date with the whole Edinburgh Festival during August, our daily e-bulletin delivered directly to your inbox with all the latest news, reviews and interviews. To sign up for free send an email to [edinburghsubscribe@threeweeks.co.uk](mailto:edinburghsubscribe@threeweeks.co.uk), or sign up at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/subscribe](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/subscribe).

**ThreeWeeks iDaily:** Every weekday of the festival Co-Editor Chris Cooke will be presenting the iDaily podcast that includes news, performances and interviews about, with and from Fringe people. You can subscribe to the iDaily podcast and listen to and download full interviews at [www.threeweeks.co.uk/idaily.html](http://www.threeweeks.co.uk/idaily.html).

**ThreeWeeks Radio Show:** Guests, chat and music, live on Fresh Air at 8.30pm each Tuesday and Saturday evening and available on demand from [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk)

**ThreeWeeks on iFringe:** If you have an iPhone, then the best way to navigate the Edinburgh Fringe is using the iFringe app, in which you will find every single ThreeWeeks review, and lots more besides. Check out [www.ifringe.co.uk](http://www.ifringe.co.uk) for more information.

**www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk:** To access all of the above and more point your browser of choice in the direction of [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk), the year round home of all things ThreeWeeks.

## MORE FROM THE MAKERS OF THREEWEEKS

If you like ThreeWeeks, you might want to check out these other media from UnLimited Publishing.

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**CreativeStudent.net:** Free resources for creative students across the UK, plus internships directory and details of how to get involved in the ThreeWeeks media-skills programme.

UnLimited Media also provide creative, training and consulting services. For more details on these check [www.UnLimitedMedia.co.uk](http://www.UnLimitedMedia.co.uk) or to discuss a project send an email to [chris@unlimitedmedia.co.uk](mailto:chris@unlimitedmedia.co.uk)

## FIVE FACTS ABOUT THREEWEEKS

Here is just a little bit more information about us, ThreeWeeks – what we do, why we do it, how we do it

1. ThreeWeeks was set up at the Edinburgh Festival by three then Edinburgh University students in 1996 with the double aim of providing a unique training opportunity for aspiring journalists while giving exposure to those Edinburgh Fringe shows the mainstream media didn't cover. Fourteen years later the aims remain the same, but ThreeWeeks is much bigger, involving over 150 students from all over the UK each year and seeing hundreds more shows than any other media at the Edinburgh Festival, over 1800 in 25 days in 2009.

2. Since 2006 ThreeWeeks has also covered the Brighton Festival and Fringe each May. Having covered fourteen Edinburgh and four Brighton festivals and fringes, the ThreeWeeks editors are among the most experienced arts festival journalists in the world, with unrivalled knowledge of the festivals they cover, and the theatre, comedy, dance, music and art communities they showcase, feature and feed.

3. ThreeWeeks remains committed to discovering and championing talented companies and performers who are new, or alternative, and who are otherwise ignored by the mainstream media. We do this by seeing more shows than anyone else at both the Brighton and Edinburgh festivals. Because of this commitment, many other journalists and media keep an eye on ThreeWeeks for news on the 'next big thing'. This is a role ThreeWeeks is proud to play.



4. Ever since 1996, sitting behind ThreeWeeks has been a unique media-skills programmes offering aspiring journalists a combination of formal and on-the-ground media training. Hundreds of young people have now been through this acclaimed media-skills programme, most of which have gone onto pursue careers in the arts, media and creative industries, and many of which describe their time with ThreeWeeks as a life and career defining moment.

5. ThreeWeeks is owned and run by Chris Cooke, Caro Moses and their company UnLimited Publishing. The project is run on a not-for-profit basis, all advertising and sponsorship revenues are invested into making the media-skills programme better, into covering more shows and performers faster, and into getting ThreeWeeks coverage out to more people in more places. If you would like to support the ThreeWeeks project in any way send an email to [chris@unlimitedmedia.co.uk](mailto:chris@unlimitedmedia.co.uk).

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