

# ThreeWeeks IN EDINBURGH

## GET THREEWEEKS DIRECT TO YOUR IN-BOX

There are even more reviews in the ThreeWeeks eDaily email. Sign up right now for free at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/subscribe](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/subscribe)

**Showstopper!**  
The Improvised Musical

LAST NIGHT'S AUDIENCE CALLED THE SHOW 'Andrew Lloyd Webber Never Dies'

What will tonight's musical be?

Gilded Balloon Teviot 10.50pm  
[www.showstoppermusical.com](http://www.showstoppermusical.com)

**STOP THE ONE SHOW**

THE ROARING BOYS WILL SET YOU FREE

Underbelly, 5.40pm

The Ginge, The Geordie, and The Geek

'Genius' JOHNNY VEGAS

Caves 4:45pm

**STAND OUT!**  
Your show HERE for just £35\* or down below for just £80\*

Advertise in ThreeWeeks  
[www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/advertising](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/advertising)

\*PLUS VAT

## CHILDREN'S SHOWS

### Herbie Treehead's Mixed-Up Fairytales

Piggywood/Laughing Horse Free Festival

Zany entertainer Herbie Treehead claims his pop-up book is the largest in the world. That said, it's seemingly only large enough to hold two fairy tales, rather than the 'breathless dash through forty' we are promised in the programme blurb. The show is stilted because of Herbie's disorganised manner, as he claims to have forgotten vital props and repeatedly asks us to "bear with him", and although initially amusing, the unnecessary gaps and interjections eat up a fair part of the show; some children start fidgeting and the whole affair is a little lacklustre. Still, there are a handful of good gags involving a sellotaped Cinderella and a turtle puppet, and his final song is catchy. The format has potential, but needs more polish and practice.

Laughing Horse@The Newsroom, 5 - 28 Aug, times vary, free, fpp 13. [gjs]

tw rating 2/5

### Andrew Clover's Almost Famous Story Show

Andrew Clover

Kids are always told never to accept sweets from strangers, but this golden rule is temporarily suspended for a buoyant hour of storytelling fun and frolics. Andrew Clover is a curiously gangly and affable chap, and his animated and goofy demeanour seizes the attention of every child in the room. Armed with fizzy worms and fruit chews, a welcome and effective bribe for participation, Clover treats us to a comical explanation of his fundamental rules for good storytelling, as well as improvised stories made from audience suggestions, and a large helping of good old-fashioned silliness. Clover's performance is wickedly snappy, whilst an abundance of balloons and whoopee cushions helps create a mirthful party atmosphere. Guaranteed to put big smiles on children's faces.

Pleasance Courtyard, 7 - 29 Aug (weekends only), 11.00am (12.00pm), £7.00 - £9.00, fpp 8. [gjs]

tw rating 4/5

## COMEDY

### Tiffany Stevenson: Dictators.

Tiffany Stevenson/ The Stand Comedy Club

What makes good comedy? The charisma of the comedian, or the quality of their jokes? The best acts combine the two, but stand-ups like Tiffany Stevenson prove that a bubbly and likeable stage presence can redeem a show with slightly weak material and a clumsy format. This routine is structured around the theme of dictators, and it doesn't really work: genocide and torture don't mix too well with comedy, and while Stevenson avoids being crude or offensive, the results aren't exactly side-splitting. She's more witty and animated when talking about subjects closer to home, such as embarrassing parents and the evils of OK! magazine, but mainly it's her innate

charm and energy that make this show worth watching.

The Stand Comedy Club III & IV, 4 - 29 Aug (not 5, 16), 2.05pm (3.05pm), £7.00 - £8.00, fpp 132. [ac]

tw rating 3/5

### His Eyes Were Like Oysters

Oyster Eyes

"It's a bit weird, isn't it?" a member of sketch group 'His Eyes Were Like Oysters' remarks during the show. He's not wrong: this is one of the most peculiar - in a good way - hours of comedy I've ever witnessed. Combining grotesque character acts and bizarre sketches with an unhealthy fixation on June Sarpong, these four performers aren't afraid to push their surreal ideas to the limit, and any resulting moments of perplexity or discomfort for the audience seem to be part of the script. The act treads a fine line between obscurity and genius, but overall, genius wins out. It's certainly funny - but whether funny ha ha or just funny strange is for you to decide.

Just The Tonic at the Caves, 5 - 29 Aug (not 17), 6.15pm (7.15pm), £4.00 - £7.00, fpp 70. [ac]

tw rating 4/5

### AAA Stand-Up Bound & Gagged Comedy

Far from being a cheap gimmick to secure an early spot in the listings, the triple A in 'AAA Stand-Up' really is an indicator of quality, though you may not know the names - yet - you won't be disappointed. The first performer, Matt Rudge, was cheeky and personable, effortlessly winning over the crowd within moments. The second, Paul McCaffrey, was equally good, offering a mix of confessional and observational humour. The final act, Marlon Davis, was less confident, taking time to warm up, but although his act was the least polished, it was by no means poor; all three acts were very funny, and if you like stand up and fancy seeing some new faces, this is the show for you.

Pleasance Courtyard, 4 - 30 Aug, 7.15pm (8.15pm), £7.00 - £9.50, fpp 20. [ol]

tw rating 4/5

### Keary Murphy's Travelling Circus - The Greatest Show on Earth

Fit o' the Giggles

Standing on-stage in heels like some Glaswegian Amazonian, Keary Murphy introduces her Travellin' Circus focusing on the clownish antics of life. Her material ranges from unhealthy emotional attachments to sex toys to impersonations of Oprah Winfrey's televised world domination, and her tone is warming and indulgent; she speaks with a constant undertone of incredulity, as if perplexed by her own eccentricity. Material is sometimes a mite predictable: reliving her Catholic education conjures up familiar jokes about clergymen. Failed jokes, meanwhile, are repeated rather than abandoned, and it's all a bit forced after the fourth repetition. Yet Murphy is endearing enough to help you live with these faults, and overall, her homage to the carnival of life will definitely tickle your fancy.

Laughing Horse @ The Three Sisters, 4 - 29 Aug (not 16, 23), 8.30pm (9.30pm), free (non-ticketed), fpp 83. [np]

tw rating 3/5



**SNAP OF THE DAY:** Fringe favourite Reg D Hunter at the Pleasance press launch. Photo: Kate Edwards

### Jollyboat

Amazing Tom And Ed Brothers/ PBH's Free Fringe

While not as piratey as the name might suggest, this three man comedy-musical-magical medley is still undeniably choc-full of jolly. Featuring weevils, superheroes, balloon cutlasses, guitars, fish-shops and Jesus, all sandwiched around a chunky filling of magic tricks, the show may have skipped around a little but had plenty to offer. Like an evening with the sweet but odd boy next door, this was bizarre, entertaining, and only dragged occasionally; specifically, the magic was fun but far from spectacular, and provided more of a foil for the magician's excellent chat than anything else. A free show worth seeing, if only for the boys' truly inspired pirate pop songs.

Opium, 7 - 28 Aug (not 16), 7.45 pm (8:35 pm), free (non-ticketed), fpp 81. [es]

tw rating 3/5

### The Big Value Comedy Show - Early

Just The Tonic

This is what watching stand-up is all about - sitting in a dingy cave on a Saturday night,

surrounded by semi-wasted locals, not even knowing the names of the four acts about to appear before you. On this occasion, The Big Value Comedy Show yielded a quartet of good calibre comedians. The raucous weekend crowd challenged the performers to think on their feet and find witty comebacks to rowdy hecklers, a task they all approached differently: Nick Helm, for example, channelled some impressive rage to literally shout his detractors down, while Geordie Kai Humphries' tactics were more subtle, winning his audience over with solid gags and boyish charm. Muscular and entertaining stand-up all round: pretty good value actually.

Just The Tonic at the Caves, 5 - 29 Aug (not 16), 7.30pm (9.00pm), £9.00 - £10.00, fpp 35. [ac]

tw rating 4/5

### Monster Of The Deep 3D

Claudia O'Doherty

If I were asked who the most creative people at the festival were, I could easily put Claudia O'Doherty in the top strata. In her overwhelmingly original show, we are told the

cont>>

TWELFTH NIGHT

Shakespeare's classic case of mistaken identity, gender confusion, love lost and found.

4-30 Aug (not 16)  
2.15pm (1hr10)

c.venues vibrant vivacious variety

at sundown

£8 Gen | £5 Con  
tix: 07074 20 13 13  
[www.venue13.com](http://www.venue13.com)

VENUE13 On Lochend Close Off the Royal Mile

FLOOZY Silken Veils

CALARTS festival theater

ONE OF THE FUNNIEST COMICS ON THE PLANET  
HBO

BRIFF VINCENT FOR GETCOMEDY.COM PRESENTS

JIM JEFFERIES

ALCOHOLOCAUST

10.30PM  
4-30 AUGUST

UNDERBELLY'S MCEWAN HALL  
0844 841 8202 [www.underbelly.co.uk](http://www.underbelly.co.uk)

SUPPORTED BY COMEDY CENTRAL

cont>> story of a secret underwater colony called Aquaplex which exploded, leaving Claudia as the sole survivor. Claudia’s stunning world is brought to life, not with 3D glasses, but with lovingly crafted scale models, detailed descriptions and a hilarious surprise at the end which you simply have to see. However, it was quite a complex tale, and I might have enjoyed it more if it had been simpler. Nevertheless, it is well worth going to see, just to see the lovably enthusiastic host and listen to her creative tale.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 4 – 30 Aug (not 16), 6.30pm (7.30), £5.00 - £9.50, fpp 99. [dc]

tw rating 3/5

#### Roman Around: A Guided Tour of the Eternal City

Ryan Millar

Ryan Millar’s one-man show, ‘Roman Around,’ is a whimsical, witty account of his time as a tour guide in the Eternal City. A Canadian who trekked to Rome for love and spent two years shepherding gormless punters around the city’s most famous sites, Millar’s droll personal anecdotes are intercut with several of the Italian capital’s choicest historical and mythological yarns. Millar would make a most excellent drinking buddy, with chat educational enough to make you feel like downing a pint with him was a virtuous undertaking, and he can segue seamlessly into a good Michelangelo joke - quite the rare find. Millar’s show is a perfect example of the gems to be found in the Free Fringe.

Laughing Horse @ The Hive, 5 – 11 Aug, 12.30pm (1.30pm), free non-ticketed, fpp 116. [kc]

tw rating 4/5

#### Speed... Mating...

immaculate concepts

Rapist ducks, penguin prostitutes, promiscuous bonobos - youjizz.com suddenly seems tame in comparison to the sexual antics of animals in the wild. A German zoologist entertainingly explores their mating rituals, with a menagerie of interesting facts as well as a few rounds of the ever-popular game ‘Spot the Pervert’. Regrettably, this cheerful collision of David Attenborough and ‘Eurotrash’ was structured around Aidan Killian’s dreary and interminable anecdote about some girl he was trying to ‘ride’ (for her sake, I hope she was fictional). Killian’s jokes, more pedestrian than a zebra crossing, served as an unwelcome intrusion to proceedings, reminiscent of an irritating recessive gene holding up the evolution of this new and potentially enjoyable species of comic lecture.

theSpaces @ Surgeons Hall, 6 - 30 Aug (not 8), 8.33pm (9.23pm), £4.00 - £6.00, fpp 126. [gg]

tw rating 2/5

## DANCE AND PHYSICAL

### THEATRE

#### Cento Cose Compagnia Della Quarta

Cento Cose translates as “100 things”, and this playful, high-tempo Italian physical theatre piece certainly touches on many themes. Unfortunately, however, those budding ideas are too little developed in this whirlwind performance, which fails to mine the potential of its ambitious premise. The energetic performers skilfully incorporate the set into their dance, also using costume, masks and simple projection to create a variety of scenarios which parody the superficial aspects of contemporary corporate, commercial, political and social life, but the choreography often tries our interest and can be repetitive to the point of self-indulgence. Set to a thumping soundtrack, this piece grapples with challenging questions, even if its message is somewhat unclear.

The Zoo, 6 – 30 Aug, 8.30pm (7.20pm), £7.50, fpp 144. [hm]

tw rating 3/5

#### Scottish Dance Theatre: The Life And Times Of Girl A

Scottish Dance Theatre

A French actress, ten bewildered party goers and a camera; this eclectic mix comes together to create an interesting and unusual piece of contemporary dance that is thoroughly entertaining. The leading female, who acted rather than danced her way through the piece, was stunning in her stand out role, while individual and small group dances were breathtaking, and allowed the young cast to really show off their talent. When the performers came together, the group dances lacked the synchronicity and sharpness required to really produce the wow factor but despite this flaw, the combination

of contemporary dance and traditional elements of comedy seems to be a winning mix. Finally, the piece was just the right length; short, sweet and enjoyable.

Zoo Southside, 7 – 21 Aug (dates vary), 7.00pm (7.40pm), £12.00, fpp 154. [sj]

tw rating 4/5

### EVENTS

#### The Royal Mile History And Legends Tour

Edinburgh Free Walking Tours

A free historical tour like this one on the Royal Mile is the perfect introduction to Edinburgh, a place with as rich and varied history as any great city around the world. Here, guests are told tales related to Edinburgh’s most famous thoroughfare, from the sieges and battles that have punctuated the cobbles of the Mile, to interesting features such as the gold plaque marking John Knox’s tomb, which is unexpectedly located in the Parliament Square car park. There’s little new here for the hardened Edinburgh veteran, but for those seeking a taster of the sights that will this month be hidden under piles of show flyers and posters, this is for you.

Outside St Giles' Cathedral, 6 – 28 Aug, 12.30pm (2.00pm) and 2.30pm (4.00pm), free, fpp 163. [ef]

tw rating 3/5

## MUSICALS AND OPERA

#### Piramania! The Swashbuckling Pirate Musical

Bubonic Productions

Piramania might not be the musical to turn to if you're looking for something deep, meaningful and long on plot. However, if you're after something unashamedly light-hearted and very funny and you'd like it delivered with great voices and tons of panache, this journey aboard the Maiden's Ruin might be just the show you're looking for. It sends up everything – from pirate clichés to classic literature to the Fringe itself – and is kept flowing along by a wonderfully laconic narrator who works the audience with a boundless repertoire of cheerfully jaded insults. The show embraces its own rough edges and papers over the cracks with clever, slick choreography and delightful daftness. C. 4 – 30 Aug, 8.30pm (9.55pm), £8.50 - £11.50, fpp 215. [jm]

tw rating 4/5

#### Jump Tank Productions

You can jump for joy or jump out of despair, and our flawed protagonist seems torn between the two. The charm of this musical is that everyone will know at least one of the characters already – the privileged art student failing to live up to expectations, the catty gay best friend with a heart of gold, the borderline perverted and racist parents. Although frequently outrageous, the sheer humanity of the characters remains strong and gives ‘Jump’ real heart. The songs may not stay with you for long, but the ensemble cast make them zing and the staging is inventive. When jump time comes, you find yourself caring about the lives of these troubled, if not very likeable, individuals. Pleasance Dome, 4 - 30 Aug (not 16), 2.05pm (3.20pm), £6.50 - £10.00, fpp 213. [ij]

tw rating 4/5

#### Tick, Tick...Boom Triple Threat Theatre

This is a musical for those of the slacker generation; drifting through life, about to hit thirty and realising how little has been achieved. It exploits a few standard clichés about the importance of friendship and the difficult choice between living for your art and ‘selling out’, but a witty book and lyrics save it from becoming banal. The score manages to be forgettable in spite of being repetitive, but it is performed with such gusto by a talented trio of performers that this is easily overlooked. The use of four live musicians is a nice touch and keeps the piece connected to its pop and indie roots. A flawed but likeable show.

TheSpaces @ Surgeon’s Hall, 7 – 14 Aug, 5.00pm (6.00pm), £6.00 - £8.00, fpp 220. [jm]

tw rating 3/5

## THEATRE

#### No Child...

Barrow Street Theatre and Scamp Theatre
Featuring one of the best one-woman performances you are ever likely to see,

‘No Child...’ was an unexpected but entirely welcome delight. The show details the hilarious and heart-rending tale of a teacher trying desperately to motivate her hellish students to put on a school play. Brimming with gags, this show is wondrously brought to life by a force of energy called Nilaja Sun who transforms herself into a variety of very different characters in chameleon-like fashion. The frantic pace makes the performance slightly hard to follow. Nevertheless, this tour de force must be seen to be believed; she thoroughly deserved her standing ovation, and Nilaja Sun is definitely a name to remember.

Assembly @ George Street, 5 – 30 Aug (not 9 or 23), 2.20pm (3.25pm), £5.00 - £12.00, fpp 274. [dc]

tw rating 4/5

#### Performance Postponed/Reporte La Performance

Graduates

The performers in this physical two-hander deserve credit for their ceaseless commitment to the project – a mosaic view of the lives and dreams of two jobbing actors. Beyond that there is little to commend here among the bland, childish choreography, weak slapstick and thin monologues. The difficulties in the struggle for fame (unsupportive parents! demoralizing day jobs!) intended to seem poignant, end up seeming irrelevant and beyond any intelligent concern. In a particularly awkward moment, one of the ‘funny’ monologues, screeched at the end, starts to reference the sources to which the show is loosely indebted [‘what do you think of Samuel Beckett?’]. A piece of meta-pretence designed to lend false profundity to a somewhat shallow piece of theatre.

C aquila, 6 – 21 Aug, 11.30am (12.10pm), £6.50 - £9.50, fpp 278. [kb]

tw rating 2/5

#### Tales From The Blackjack

Bluestreak Arts

Who on earth actually thought gambling was a glamorous business? ‘Tales From The Blackjack’ is a performance that explores the addictive effects of gambling and its power to ruin individuals’ lives. Despite my low expectations (generated, I must admit, by the title) this performance was surprisingly good; the script was satirical and witty, which made up for the preachy tone of the message that was hurled at the audience at regular intervals. The best thing about this show, however was undoubtedly Alex Moran: you wouldn’t expect it, but this is a one man show, and Moran effortlessly transforms into four different characters on-stage to support the narrative, and his energy appears to be boundless. He makes you forget that time’s going by.

C central, 5 – 30 Aug, 8.30pm (9.20pm), £7.50 - £10.50, fpp 294. [ms]

tw rating 4/5

#### Beauty Is Prison-Time

Zoe Mavroudi With Support from Ramapo College of New Jersey

‘Beauty Is Prison-Time’ combines a fluid script with innovative direction and enchanting acting. Based on an inmate’s efforts to enter a beauty pageant held in a Siberian prison, this one-woman piece tackles difficult political issues in a confident yet deeply emotional way. Interest is captured from the very beginning as the likeable and intriguing protagonist invites the audience to get to know her. The talented Zoe Mavroudi builds a variety of invisible characters and scenarios through the precise execution of cleverly choreographed physical movements combined with well-timed insertions of sound and imaginative use of props. Reaching a poignant climax, this provocative piece raises political questions in a truly endearing manner. Definitely worth a watch. theSpaces@ Surgeons Hall, 6- 28 Aug (not 8, 16, 23), 12.55pm (1.55pm), £5.00-£7.00, fpp 229. [sh]

tw rating 4/5

#### Knights

Hand Stitched Theatre Company

A dressing-gowned vigilante, an underground fraternity of crime-fighting ‘Knights’, the occasional dragon: this new play is laden with promising ideas, though they don’t quite come together into a convincing whole. The plot - an intriguing dark super-hero fantasy in the style of Christopher Nolan - is unfortunately confused by some rather overwrought monologues by the amoral sleepwear-clad protagonist, off-set with some slightly cringey slang (of the 200 people he killed, he let one go because she was ‘fit as’). The other actors,

especially the girl, are rather under-served by the script. At its best it’s as if Sarah Kane had survived to write a sequel to ‘Kick Ass’. At its worst it’s a ranting nineteen-year old in cartoon pyjama bottoms.

theSpace on the Mile @ Jury’s Inn, 6 - 14 Aug, 5.00pm (6.00pm), free, fpp 264. [gg]

tw rating 2/5

#### Women Laughing

Big Girls Don’t Eat Soup

This decent student production bears all the signs of improving during its run. The script is difficult and the actors sometimes struggle with the complex timing, but when everyone’s on the same page the scenes come alive. A special mention must go to John MacCormick who delivers a delightfully twitchy performance as aggression-riddled Colin. The direction could highlight the play’s satisfyingly dark turns better, and more effort in the design would have been appreciated; for a play set at a luncheon, empty bottles of Budweiser and tortillas in place of crepes don’t really suit. All in all though, ‘Women Laughing’ is an inoffensive early afternoon play - and cheap too.

theSpaces on the Mile @ the Radisson, 6 – 28 Aug (not 8, 15, 22), 12.40pm (2.00pm), £5.00 - £7.00, fpp 306. [fm]

tw rating 3/5

#### Yo Girl!

Natalie Kim

Natalie Kim is dynamic and funny solo performer, and her account of life as a Korean adoptee navigating her way through an American upbringing is warm and even inspirational. This is storytelling with attitude: Kim has excellent delivery and shares anecdotes on everything from Internet dating to Buddhist retreats. Add in some music, poetry and a few dance moves, and you get a great show about the life and loves of a city girl with a difference. At times the pace drags a little and there are some repetitive moments, but the climax of the piece, in which Kim takes on the roles of her three mother figures in turn, manages to be both tender and comic.

theSpaces @ Surgeons Hall, 9 - 21 Aug (not 15), 12.05pm (12.55pm), £8.00 - £10.00, fpp 306 [crc]

tw rating 3/5

#### Blackout

ThickSkin

‘Blackout’ is a fascinating true story about a Glaswegian young offender with a script that has been adapted from a number of interviews with a youth serving a probation sentence for committing violent crime. The play follows how the changes in James’ life contribute to a build up of anger, hate and violence, illustrating the pressures that come to bear on a person, and the pain that grows from loneliness and bereavement. This innovative adaptation cleverly combines visual and physical effects with a deep and powerful script, creating a captivating, emotional and brilliant piece of modern theatre. ThickSkin’s production is an original debut show from an extremely talented group of young actors. A must see.

Underbelly, 5 – 29 Aug, 2.55pm (3.30pm), £6.50 - £10.00, fpp 232. [sr]

tw rating 5/5

#### The Big Bite-Size Breakfast

White Room Theatre Ltd

Like many of us in the morning, this show gets off to a shaky start, and the first of the four ten-minute sketches somewhat misses its mark. However, the acts quickly gather pace and the rest of the show proves to be slick, fresh, and surprisingly moving. The energy of the performers is contagious, with Penny Scott-Andrews in particular delivering a splendid performance as the neurotic on a blind date, tortured by a cruelly comic inner voice. The theatrical equivalent of a morning-after fry up, this is guaranteed to help you shake off last night’s excesses with intelligent and varied short plays: a refreshing menu of coffee, croissants and comedy that slips down a treat.

Assembly @ George Street, 5 – 29 Aug (not 24), 10.30am (11.30am), £10.00, fpp 231. [lw]

tw rating 4/5

#### Call Mr Robeson

Tayo Aluko And Friends

This gem of a production is as multi-faceted and talented as its protagonist. Fusing political speeches, sound clips, live musical numbers and biography, Tayo Aluko plays Robeson with remarkable energy and passion. His charismatic performance is often

humorous, never dull, and very convincing, confidently speeding through several bumpy patches in the script. Although some of the notes were oddly out of reach for the lead’s otherwise powerful voice, most numbers, accompanied by a live pianist, were sensitive and resonant. These moments of beauty, coupled with music hall sparkle, provided support for inspiring, persuasive speeches. This accomplished show hits almost all the right notes and calls for equality just as it does for quality evening entertainment.

Zoo Southside, 7 - 30 Aug, 6.15pm (7.30pm), £6.00 - £8.00, fpp 237. [jcl]

tw rating 4/5

#### The Flat - Free

Mad Props Productions

A hot mess of a play. There are some good gags, nicely observed moments and appealing performances, but sadly, it’s all about characters who are not as interesting as they think they are – that is, a bunch of twentysomethings; seriously, we’re a dull breed. ‘The Flat’ centres on the lead-up to an epic, messy flat-warming party, and its tragic aftermath - a mystery regarding a dead body that’s never satisfyingly resolved. Part of the Free Fringe, ‘The Flat’ is a pleasant enough way to wile away an hour, and has plenty of energy and a wilful desire to entertain. But you’ll emerge sort of wondering what the point was, and wish it had pulled itself together more.

Laughing Horse @ The Hive, 6 – 29 Aug, 2.30pm (3.30pm), free (non-ticketed), fpp 252. [kc]

tw rating 2/5

#### Are You There?

Muckle Roe Productions

This occasionally rambling comic play is wonderfully textured; as a couple’s domestic sphere is invaded by the supernatural, we are shown the rough and smooth of relationships. Spiky accusations, coarse declarations, soft affirmations and supple retractions fuel the drama. Particularly skilled at nuancing her performance with shifting emotion is Charlotte Duffy, who dedicates every muscle to portraying her character’s complex reactions to the frustrations of her and her lover’s reality, or unreality as the case may be. Yet despite its accomplished, humane performances this show errs on the side of light-hearted. Billed as exploring grief it rather jests with the characters’ complete denial of grief. However, the denial is sufficiently idiosyncratic and interesting to make the show worthwhile.

Zoo Roxy, 6 – 30 Aug (not 11, 17, 25), 5.00pm (6.10pm), £5.00 – £8.00, fpp 227. [dcp]

tw rating 3/5

#### First Love

Gare St Lazare Players Ireland

An intense theatrical experience, ‘First Love’ is one of Beckett’s less well-known works. Originally a prose short story, this adaptation is presented as a monologue with the speaker addressing the audience directly, taking us into his confidence as well as the darker recesses of his grubby, often revolting, life. As with all of Beckett’s work this contains a mix of refined thought and earthy realism; existential angst and meditations on death sit comfortably next to descriptions of bodily fluids and functions, and the smells thereof. If you are averse to Beckett this won’t be for you, but as a representation of life, love, death and humanity there really is something here for everyone.

Pleasance Courtyard, 4 – 25 Aug (not 11, 18), 5.30pm (6.45pm), £10.00 - £12.00, fpp 251. [al]

tw rating 4/5

## THREEWEEKS IN EDINBURGH

#### Publishers

Chris Cooke, Caroline Moses
Concept and content © ThreeWeeks Publications.
ThreeWeeks Publications is owned by UnLimited Publishing, a division of UnLimited Media, Unicorn House, 221-222 Shoreditch High Street, London, E1 6PJ. Tel: 020 7099 9050.

Daily printing by Smart Design & Print.

**TW RATINGS EXPLAINED: 1/5 BAD | 2/5 MEDIOCRE | 3/5 GOOD | 4/5 VERY GOOD | 5/5 BRILLIANT**