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Jason John Whitehead
letters from mindy

“Jason John Whitehead should be in charge of this country. His ideas on compulsory drug taking and reclaiming the world from ‘the bastard children’ are pretty much a direct route to a better life for everyone” - *Crack Magazine*

“A genuine gift for saying the most outrageous things in the most disarmingly charming fashion” - *The Guardian*

★★★★★
The Guardian
★★★★★
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FEAR AND MISERY OF THE THIRD REICH

Cvenues The Lincoln Company

Stephen King
Secret Window
Secret Garden.

Cvenues The Lincoln Company

CHILDREN'S SHOWS

Potted Potter: The Unauthorised Harry Experience – A Parody By Dan And Jeff

Festival Highlights

There are dozens of observant and, most of all, downright witty 'Harry Potter' parodies circling the internet and right across the globe, yet there must be few quite like 'Potted Potter': a nearby child predicted before the show began, "This is going to be brilliant," and they weren't far wrong. Geared perfectly to children by CBBC's Dan and Jeff, it has all the elements of good live children's entertainment – pantomime cheers and boos, a touch of improv when things don't quite go to plan, and some audience participation in a game of Quidditch. Admittedly, a few of the jokes were a little anticipated by the adults but, overall, this is a mockery by Muggles that will leave you spellbound.

Pleasance Courtyard, 3 – 16 Aug, 4.00pm (5.10pm), £8.00 - £11.00, fpp28, tw rating 4/5 [ck]

Wolfman Investigations: Curse Of The Terror Tomb

After Dark Entertainment

You haven't heard of Wolfman, but he's a child of one of the Thunder Cats who hooked up with some cousins of the Scooby Team – at least, that's how I imagine it happened. 'Wolfman Investigations' is a live-action show in the style of an old-school cartoon, complete with an absurdly catchy theme tune that feels like it should have been a part of your childhood. Even the sound effects have a nostalgically grainy sound quality. Wolfman and his friends need the audience's help to solve puzzles and defeat Dr Clockwork's dastardly schemes, and the result is a wonderfully gripping comic drama. This is a show that will charm, enthrall and delight audiences both young and old – highly recommended.

Zoo Roxy, 6 – 20 Aug, 12.00pm (1.00pm), £6.00 (£20.00F), fpp30, tw rating 4/5 [jj]

COMEDY

Sam Simmons – Meanwhile

Gilded Balloon/Token Events

I'm not entirely sure what just happened at 'Meanwhile'. I might have just seen Simmons lose it with a rowdy stag-do and then mentally disintegrate his way to the end of his show, or it might all have been an intentional part of the performance. Being 'that kind of show', it is hard to tell. Simmons energetically combines song, sketches, dancing, audience-victimisation and a panoply of props, so you can never predict what he's going to do next. It's by turns unsettling, terrifying and hilarious, but it's always surreal: fir cones, a taco kit and a puppet llama all feature. It's very funny, even if you don't quite understand why.

Gilded Balloon Tivoli, 3 - 28 Aug, 9.15pm (10.15pm), £9.00 - £11.50, fpp146 tw rating 4/5 [lm]

Lunch With Quattro Formaggio

Quattro Formaggio

In the deepest darkest depths of Underbelly (a venue hosting some outstanding shows this year), four people are pretending to work in an Italian restaurant. But just barely. The restaurant link is tentative and confused, but it matters not. Quattro Formaggio bring forth a set of absurdist sketches not entirely dissimilar to 'Green Wing', and perhaps even better than 'Green Wing'. There is the same dark sexual undercurrent to everything, the same surreal meandering, inter-character tension and post-modern 'we know this is weird' winks to the audience. But it is a life-affirming and buoyant experience, and put this reviewer a good mood for the entire day. Let's fill their dungeon before the month is out.

Underbelly Cowgate, 4 – 28 Aug (not 17), 1.20pm (2.20pm), £6.50 - £9.50, fpp111, tw rating 4/5 [jh]

Joanna Neary: Youth Club

Joanna Neary / The Stand Comedy Club

Falling awkwardly between character comedy and straight stand-up, 'Youth Club' - a story of life, love and craft in the 1980s - never quite lives up to its promise. Neary creates amusing, accurate teenage characters with simple changes in body language, and it is here that the show shines. The supporting characters are funny, and Donna, the main character, takes us on hilarious, humiliating, Weetabix-fuelled flights of fancy. However, when Neary slips out of character to narrate or talk to the audience, the show instantly suffers. Fluffed lines and wayward accents at the dénouement don't help, either. There is potential here; Neary just needs to trust her characters to tell the story and the laughs will come.

The Stand Comedy Club V, 3 – 28 Aug (not 4, 15), 3.50pm (4.50pm), £8.00 - £9.00, fpp99, tw rating 3/5 [ab]

Paul Sinha: Looking At The Stars

Paul Sinha / Red Comedy With The Stand Comedy Club

Embarking on a quest to find a message for his Fringe show this year, stand-up comic Sinha sets out to discuss the moral, political and social imperfections that dictate our typically British idiosyncrasies. A true anecdotalist, Sinha holds the audience in the palm of his hand with a quiet humility, appropriate to both his position as a seasoned Fringe comic and also as a social-commentator who reaches from a fairly privileged background. While perhaps slightly drifting into plain storytelling, he fuses one-liners and puns with lengthy discussions on sexual identity and Jim Davidson, neatly rounding off a broader conversation on social-mobility. What's left is a sharply politicised show which oozes with appeal for both commercial and underground audiences.

The Stand Comedy Club III & IV, 3 – 28 Aug (not 4, 15), 10.40pm (11.40pm), £8.00 - £9.00, fpp132, tw rating 4/5 [aj]



SNAP OF THE DAY: With so many shows, will you sink or swim? Or possibly spin? 'Sink Or Spin' is at the Bannatynes Health Club. Photo: Stuart Armit

Pete Bennett – Tourette's And Stuff

Pete Bennett

Very much the product of a disorganised mind, this collection of stories, sketches and videos from 'the UK's most famous Tourette's sufferer' is something of a mixed bag. There are a handful of moments scattered throughout that genuinely entertain, mostly involving some charmingly obscene puppetry gags that could've been lifted straight from Avenue Q, and a closing song on a slightly out-of-tune guitar is quite fun, but it's such a shame these moments are swept aside in a wave of disjointed stand-up, unsettlingly bizarre anecdotes and painfully unfunny YouTube-esque videos. Existing fans might get a kick out of him bouncing about the stage, but this will struggle to win over the uninitiated.

Cabaret Voltaire, 5 – 29 Aug, 7.30pm (8.30pm), £7.00 - £9.00, fpp133 tw rating 2/5 [rss]

Pokermen

Time Out Live

The idea is that comedians are naturally competitive, right? So if you put them in an actual competition, that's sure to get some comedic results. It certainly works for Ed Byrne, one of tonight's guests in a constantly changing line-up. Ed is antagonistic and sublimely funny, at one point chasing a heckler out into the foyer, screaming at him. What with this and some technical problems, the poker play of course quickly becomes irrelevant, but no one cares. This is the type of comedy I'm always slightly wary of - namely the vacantly looking at some other people bantering pub-style (hello, 'Ricky Gervais Show') - but here it works. Recommended even for those utterly clueless about poker.

Assembly George Square, 5 – 6 Aug, 11 – 14 Aug, 18 – 21 Aug, 25 – 28 Aug, 11.59pm (12.59am), £10.00, fpp136, tw rating 4/5 [jh]

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A new play by Chris Sullivan

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Scott Agnew’s Scottish Breakfast Chat Show

Scott Agnew

Few shows greet you with Irn Bru at the door: our host even offers to top us up periodically, so we feel like we could be in Agnew’s living room. Guests change daily, giving a cross-section of the Comedy Fringe through four other performers who are welcomed like old friends. Today each guest managed to talk over our host, meaning the show over-ran; Agnew simply needs to keep his guests under control. As each plugs their own show, Agnew’s confidence is replaced by errn-ing over the next question and fighting to get a word in. Not always laugh-out-loud hilarious but certainly appealing, ‘Breakfast Chat Show’ is probably one of the warmest, friendliest hours you will spend at the Festival.

Cabaret Voltaire, 5 – 29 Aug, 1.00 pm (2.00pm), £5.00 - £7.00, fpp150. [tw rating 3/5](#) [ja]

Technodelic Comedy Show

Siro-A (Japan)

The lovechild of GamarJobat and Sirqus Alfon, this is a technical marvel. Conspiring to combine comedy, dance and technical wizardry with a healthy dose of thumping techno music, each of their sketches uses all of these tools to wonderful effect. Live performers superimpose themselves over projected material that is both pre-made and recorded in the auditorium, creating a frequently amusing and always visually impressive experience. Highlights include one of the troupe turning an attempt to swat a fly into a ninja sword fight against himself, and a light-catching routine that features a game of Breakout. A few technical hiccups show that perhaps their ideas are a little ahead of their budget, but this is still quality family entertainment.

C eca, 5 – 29 Aug, 3.50pm (4.50pm), £6.50 – £11.50, fpp n/a [tw rating 4/5](#) [rs]

The ‘Agent, Stylist and PA Wanted’ Show

Amrik Virk

Ever wondered what it felt like to be the only Asian on the Tube after the 7/7 bombings? Or if you’ve forgotten to shave and happen to be wearing an excessively large backpack at Heathrow? Stand-up comedian Amrik Virk enlightens us, and energetically fires out a host of amusing anecdotes – ranging from his school faux pas to a dislike of Shania Twain – ridiculing racism and cultural stereotyping as he goes along. Some gags are a little drawn-out, but Amrik is a slick and charismatic performer who engages and interacts with the crowd, and you walk out feeling a little guilty that it’s a free show. Entertainment for everyone - unless you’re a member of the BNP, that is.

Laughing Horse @ The Three Sisters, 4 – 14 Aug, 12.15pm (1.15pm), free, fpp34. [tw rating 3/5](#) [fm]

The Best Of The Fest

Assembly

A compilation show of some of the best performers at the Festival is always going to be pretty good. Carl Donnelly is an absolute delight as the show’s MC, wittily interacting with the audience with an ease and charm that puts lesser comics to shame. The American improv musical troupe, Baby Wants Candy, are hysterical and extremely impressive in their inventive creations. Meanwhile, Tom Flanagan’s silent movie-esque slapstick with a bucket and stepladder is elegant buffoonery at its finest, climaxing with a surprisingly heart-stopping piece of acrobatics. There are also some average performances amongst the line-up, but that only increases the exciting, albeit inaccurate, feeling that you have personally discovered the glittering stars of the show.

Assembly George Square, 5 – 28 Aug (not 8, 15, 22, 26), 2.15pm (3.30pm), fpp48. [tw rating 4/5](#) [jj]

The Great Big Sketch Off!

The Great Big Sketch Off!

Sketch comedy shows are notorious for their erratic, inconsistent humour, even following prolonged writing and rehearsal sessions. It was unsurprising, therefore, that joke quality varied massively during this ramshackle late-night competition, in which members of different troupes were thrown together and given a short amount of time to develop twelve minutes of brand new material. Some groups tackled the challenge more conscientiously than others, with one team dropping out on the morning of the performance after confessing to a shameful lack of preparation, but the overall atmosphere was drunken, disorderly and

disappointing. I would recommend saving your money and waiting for the final on Friday 26 August - hopefully the wheat will have been separated from the chaff by then.

Pleasance Courtyard, 5, 12, 19, 26 August, 11.45pm (12.45am), £6, fpp84. [tw rating: 2/5](#) [jj]

The Horne Section

The Invisible Dot Ltd

Full nudity, hula-hoops and an OAP in a wheelbarrow: Alex Horne was right when he said his audience would get a little bit of everything. To be honest, as the fearfully loud music and harsh strobe lights danced around the room, I feared what the next hour and twenty minutes would hold. Thankfully the show works, and this charming would-be gameshow host, with his loyal band, makes for excellent entertainment. And, of course, there are guests. The most amusing moments were supposedly improvised; and Josie Long’s earnest guffaws added delightful silliness. On the other hand, David O’Doherty began hilariously but lost my attention with some punchline-free blethering. Nonetheless, this does better than most music/comedy combo shows, while Horne’s band packs more punch than the genre-reigning ‘Four Poofs And A Piano’.

Assembly George Square, 3 – 27 Aug, 11.00pm (12.20pm), £10.00 - £14.00, fpp88. [tw rating 4/5](#) [sm]

The Kingsley And I

Various Special Guests And MCs Daily

Paul McCaffery didn’t seem to know what was going on: “We’re all going to go home nonplussed,” he says, and by the end of the evening, such a prediction was completely right. This is not a reflection on the considerable talents of either him or Damien Kingsley, whose anecdotal humour stands strong. A Gordon Ramsay impression - “Get Me That Crème Fucking Fraiche [Pardon My French]” - is a particular highlight. However, the bizarre composition of audience members, who quickly became the show’s focus and enhanced an already-engaging evening of comedy, makes it hard to know how this show would have panned out without an audience as fantastically diverse as that on offer last night.

Laughing Horse @Espionage, 4 - 28 Aug, 10.00pm (11.00pm), free, fpp105. [tw rating 3/5](#) [sj]

The Malcolm Muggeridge Memorial Hour

Thomas Ogg and Bradley Cloche

Had this show been called the ‘Malcolm Muggeridge Memorial Minute’, then I would still have doubted the ability of its performers to keep the audience entertained for the full duration. This was a dreadful litany of appallingly unfunny sketches, most of which involved Bradley Cloche shouting deafeningly into the microphone, bravely paying no heed to unnecessary subtleties like timing or humour. Thomas Ogg was considerably better, but ultimately the performers’ total lack of chemistry destroyed even the slightly cleverer sketches. If you do want to see this show, see it now, as I can only imagine that a zombie Malcolm Muggeridge is going to rise and extract a terrible vengeance on those that have involved his name in this enterprise.

Laughing Horse @The Three Sisters, 4 - 28 Aug, 1.45pm (2.50pm), free, fpp112. [tw rating 1/5](#) [sj]

The Man Who was Nearly There – Free

Dan Cardwell/ Free Festival

Being fat and sad does not automatically make you a comedian; Dan Cardwell would do well to remember this. He alludes to the fact that his show is more of a pitiful therapy session than comedy, apparently failing to realise that admitting that your jokes are not funny does not in turn make them funny. His bizarre inclusion of video clips of him playing himself in old age do not add humour and are just odd; odd and irritating. There are pity laughs from the audience, however, and there are some genuine laughs, too: his amusing improvisations when he has lost his place show that there is actually talent in there somewhere. Unfortunately, Cardwell needs to write better comedy of the scripted variety.

Laughing Horse @ The Three Sisters, 4 – 28 Aug, 1.45pm (2.45pm), free non-ticketed, fpp 112. [tw rating 1/5](#) [sm]

The Return Of O’Farahan And Keith – Free

Jon Reed And Kevin Dawson/ Free Festival

Dubbing over an old American cop show

with northern accents sounds naff and lazy, but this show is actually very funny. The obvious hard work that has gone into its production is impressive; being well-rehearsed and possessing the ability to use a projector without technical difficulties early on in the Festival is an achievement itself. These are two very clever guys with a bit of talent who clearly did not come to the Free Fringe to mess about. If you would like to see some original comedy that does not involve sketches or a bloke on an empty stage with a microphone, then this is for you. With their slick underground act, there is potential here for a cult following.

Laughing Horse @ The Hive, 4 – 28 Aug, 3.45pm (4.45pm), free, fpp139. [tw rating 4/5](#) [sm]

The Stand Late Show

Stand Comedy Club

The Stand returns with its riotous midnight Late Club. As different guests slot in throughout the Fringe, it’s a chance to unwind after a hard day of seeing shows with a cold pint and some cosy chat. Always offering Festival highlights, the all-year-round venue this time sees headliner musician/comic Steve Gribbin steal the show with a relatively humble Friday night crowd crammed in. Differing from show to show, the booked acts are often seasoned comedians who have shows on either at The Stand or some of the larger venues in Edinburgh over the summer. Whether it’s political satire, knob gags or heckle-comebacks you’re after, it’s a crowd-pleasing venue which never fails to impress.

The Stand Comedy Club, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28 Aug, 11:59pm (2:00am), £13.00 - £15.00, fpp154. [tw rating 5/5](#) [ajj]

DANCE & PHYSICAL THEATRE

In The Dust

2Faced Dance Company

Eloquent, moving, and just downright cool: pretentious this show was not. I risk pretension here because to fully describe the quality of the dance, I’d need to empty a thesaurus onto the page. Fusing Hip Hop and contemporary choreography, 2Faced present three fascinating pieces in which the dancers’ commitment and chemistry is palpable. This all-male company are talented and athletic, their choreography tender, violent, wonderfully quick and then hold-your-breath slow. Each piece seems to conjure a new world in which the dancers live as though for real, each movement occurring spontaneously from some private motivation. The rhythms of the steps and the beats of the music fit their bodies like gloves, and the audience can’t wait to applaud.

Zoo Southside, 5 – 29 Aug (not 11, 17, 23), 4.00pm (5.05pm), £10.00 – £13.00, fpp172. [tw rating 4/5](#) [dp]

MUSICALS

Hey, Piano Bar Lady!

Linn Lorkin

Adorable, classy, charming and fun. ‘Hey, Piano Bar Lady!’ makes for an excellent evening. The Henderson wine bar is the perfect setting; a low lit, intimate space, in which Linn Lorkin builds a healthy rapport with her audience. The songs are simple, but bouncy and perfectly constructed, definite highlights being her free jazz rendition of ‘As Time Goes By’, and ‘International Sofa Lady’. The puns are dreadful, but Linn’s wealth of anecdotes, flawlessly recreating the 80’s New York piano bar-scene in Edinburgh, are a delight. The show rattles along nicely, with Linn really hitting her stride towards the middle of the show, with a wonderful, slightly whimsical, slightly wistful finale. ‘Hey, Piano Bar Lady!’ is a definite treasure.

Henderson’s Vegetarian Restaurant and Arts Venue, 4 - 28 Aug (Not 8, 15, 22), times vary, £5.00 - £7.50, fpp227. [tw rating 4/5](#) [jc]

THEATRE

Fit For Purpose

Pleasance / End Child Detention Now

The detention of children by the UK Border Agency is abhorrent; many of the staff involved have an outlook borrowed from the Daily Mail, and those who try to help are often ill-equipped and over-worked. Catherine O’Shea’s meticulously researched play sheds light on these known but ignored problems. Centring on the 2010 hunger strike in Yarl’s Wood, the cast of ‘Fit For Purpose’ deliver

some varying performances. Antoinette Tagoe, however, has incredible stage presence and is very believable as Aruna, a Somali mother afraid to look into her horrific past, apathetic towards her cruel present. Though at times the script strays into over-wordiness, and the staging is uninspired, it is hard to truly criticise a play so clearly worthy of attention.

Pleasance Courtyard, 3 – 29 Aug (not 15), 12.45pm (1.45pm), £7.00 - £9.00, fpp263. [tw rating 3/5](#) [s]

GI Joe Jared... Based On One Really Bad Date

aWe Creative Group

Not only a warning about the perils of blind dating, this one-act play is a witty, honest portrayal of the complexities of friendship. Whilst Julie and Susan are sharing some long-overdue drinks, the arrival of the eccentric Jared (and his G.I. Joe tarot cards) forces the girls to acknowledge the importance of their friendship. The actors provide a naturalistic performance that allows the script’s wit to shine through, if they occasionally seem to be racing through it. Though it’s a bit like watching a sitcom, they are believable, and towards the end deliver their lines with raw emotion that is touching to watch. This heart-warming mini-drama might make you think twice about joining eHarmony, but will transport you seamlessly from laughter to tears and back again.

Laughing Horse @ The Beehive Inn, 4 - 14 Aug, 8.30pm (9.30pm), free, fpp265. [tw rating 4/5](#) [jb]

God’s Fool

Arden Players

Fresh from sell-out shows in New York, the Arden Players arrive in Edinburgh to present this enlightening production following the somewhat turbulent life of Saint Francis of Assisi, a man constantly at war with himself for his passions of the flesh, who renounces all worldly goods in favour of a simple life of compassion and devotion. An expertly told tale that bears witness to an important passage of Christian history is expressed through a well-written script and impassioned acting. ‘God’s Fool’ illustrates a man centuries before his time. Offering an understanding of the importance of inter-faith dialogue – an issue which is still relevant today, here expressed with tasteful consideration - ‘God’s Fool’ is a play well worth seeing.

theSpace on Niddry St, 5 - 13 Aug, 4.00pm (5.30pm), £6.00 - £9.00, fpp266. [tw rating 4/5](#) [aq]

Happiness

Wayfarer Productions Ltd

‘Happiness’ is an emotional rollercoaster capturing the insular dynamics of a complicated marriage. I felt rather voyeuristic watching this fly-on-the-wall exploration into the couple’s complex relationship, but, really, who doesn’t enjoy a little voyeurism? The audience were certainly gripped with complete engagement for an hour and a half, which is no mean feat at the Fringe. The set contributes to the intimate feeling of this piece, as does the venue with mirrors on both sides of the stage, drawing us further into their world. Performances are strong, covering gritty issues with clever dialogue of an almost schizophrenic conversation and engendering questions like, “How do we learn how to love?” and “What is the meaning of happiness?” Thought-provoking and smart.

The Playhouse At Hawke & Hunter Green Room, 3-29 Aug (not 8, 15, 22), 1.40pm (3:10pm), £8.50 - £9.50 fpp268. [tw rating 4/5](#) [efs]

Heavy Like The Weight Of A Flame

Susan Winter Productions

Ernie Silva’s smooth, skinny presence slides effortlessly between characters creating what feels like an autobiographical novel made visual. We are confronted with a question of faith, not in religion, but in the people who shape our lives, and how we read the signs that guide us. We follow a Brooklyn kid as he deals with the advice his family gives him, trying desperately to stick to his own path. All American phrases are good-naturedly spelt out for us and, in so doing, the fourth wall disappears, making it feels like an [extremely talented] friend relating a personal story. It’s hilarious and poignant, musical but modest; simply sublime to watch, I couldn’t take my eyes off him.

Udderbelly’s Pasture, 3 - 29 (not 16, 28), 5.00pm, £9.00 - £11.00, fpp268. [tw rating 5/5](#) [pr]

Laundry Boy

Horizon Arts with Richard Jordan Productions Ltd

‘Laundry Boy’ is a touching, contemporary comedy about Terry Orange’s journey of self-acceptance. The plot follows our protagonist, a manga-obsessed introvert, who works in his late father’s launderette. A surprise unintentional visit from a long-lost infatuation causes him to suddenly reflect upon his life (including his questionable relationship with a vacuum cleaner) in a play which proves refreshing, captivating, hilarious and deeply upsetting. Most of the performance is set in Terry’s mind, with the cartoon-esque set and 80s pop music intensifying this sensation, and though at times the writing is saccharine and clichéd, it is never boring. Imagine ‘Scott Pilgrim vs. The World’ set in a launderette in Yorkshire and you’ll have something close to ‘Laundry Boy’.

Udderbelly, 10 – 28 Aug, £8.50 - 10.50, fpp274 [tw rating: 4/5](#) [lmm]

Force Quit

SMC Youth Theatre

Rebecca’s assertion that she is in a “lucid nightmare” has a ring of truth about it. This chaotic show, ostensibly about memory, comprises of shouting, running, and music so loud that it threatens to drown out the performers. Apart from grasping the notion that the plot centres on a teenager in a coma (Jessica Hilton as Rebecca) and a traumatic incident involving a bridge, I was confused throughout, from start to abrupt finish. For all that, one’s disconnection from one’s nearest and dearest is a worthy theme, and the acting is competent, at times even good, particularly from Hilton. I would be pleased to see this young cast again provided that they weren’t writing their own script!

The Bongo Club, 5 – 16 Aug, 4.00pm (5.00pm), £5.00 - £7.00, fpp263. [tw rating 2/5](#) [lk]

Life Still

Folded Feather

This is one deeply, darkly sophisticated piece of theatre. ‘Life Still’ is a virtuoso puppetry performance, where objects are invested with startlingly nuanced personalities, before being turned back into objects. The transition between life and stillness is breathtaking. An array of unexpected and ever-morphing characters make their way violently and frenetically across the stage, accompanied by a minimalist soundtrack and a looped echo of their comings and goings. The show is at its best when a minimum of material is used, as in the memorable torture of a sack of cloth and the bickering of two turkeys made from pillows. Highly atmospheric, though lacking in overall direction: a patchwork of brilliance, rather than a seamless tapestry.

The Pleasance Courtyard 3 - 29 Aug (not 25), 3.40pm (4.40pm), £8 - £10, fpp275. [tw rating 4/5](#) [ij]

Mad About The Boy

Iron Shoes

Very simply staged with nothing but a couple of chairs for props, all the focus is on the incredibly nimble dialogue between actors in this intense drama. This play discusses the violence and the pressures facing today’s younger generation; particularly, as implied by the title, its disillusioned ‘boys’. Without pretending to provide any easy answers, the play’s three characters – a boy, his father, and his counsellor – expertly twist and manipulate each other’s words to highlight the tensions between them, and to occasionally stick the knife in. A gritty and compelling piece about the breakdown and re-establishment of communication which explores the full power of language’s capacity to hurt and, perhaps, to heal.

Udderbelly’s Pasture, 3 - 29 Aug (not 16), 2.20pm (3.20pm), £8.00 - £10.00, fpp278. [tw rating 4/5](#) [ka]



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