

ThreeWeeks IN EDINBURGH

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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" - *Scotsman*

"A genuine gift for taking the most outrageous things in the world and discerning charming fakery" - *The Guardian*

★★★★★
★★★★★
★★★★★
★★★★★

0844 545 8252 | 22.25PM (23.25PM)
underbelly.co.uk | 3-28 August 2011 (not 16)

PAUL McCAFFREY
SAYING SOMETHING STUPID

0844 545 8252 | 6.20PM (7.20PM)
underbelly.co.uk | 4-28 AUGUST 2011 (NOT 15)

Miracles
Short Notice at
14-20 AUGUST

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22.20HRS
www.bsiproductions.co.uk

15th - 27th Aug
excl. 21st | 18:30 - 19:30
£6/5

The Melody Blog
a modern musical

FRINGE REVIEW

COMEDY

Run, Deaf Boy, Run!

Steve Day / The Stand Comedy Club
As his title would suggest, Steve Day doesn't shy away from his disability, and neither does it impair his comedy. Sporting a pair of hearing-aids, he is the first to make self-deprecating jokes about being "deaf with a little D". The show's focus is the journey of a man in training for the London Marathon. With no hint of a sob-story, Day is warm and inspiring, but honest enough to discourage people from running the 26 miles for themselves, and still prone to tripping over words every now and then. A mixture of storytelling and stand-up, the show is pleasant without being belly-laugh funny, but at least Day is comfortable enough to find humour in the size of his audience.

The Stand Comedy Club, 3 - 28 Aug (not 4, 15), 1:10pm (2:10pm), £7.00 - £8.00, fpp145, tw rating 3/5 [j]

Seymour Mace: Happypotamus

Seymour Mace / The Stand Comedy Club
Mental illness and diarrhoea are not obvious topics for a show called 'Happypotamus', but Seymour Mace takes these difficult subjects and makes us laugh. Charting Mace's struggles with depression, 'Happypotamus' covers some dark ground, but it is in these pitch-black moments that the show is at its funniest. Mace's fight with the kitchen bin and the expression of his desire not to become one of the "local characters" are razor-sharp comic moments. However, when Mace is "being silly", the set loses focus and pace, with sections of wacky drawings and humorous poems feeling like weak padding. On topic, Mace is darkly funny, but when he tries to be zany, he falls short of the mark, resulting in a distinctly mixed set.

The Stand Comedy Club II, 3 - 28 Aug (not 4, 15), times vary, £6.00 - £7.00, fpp149, tw rating 3/5 [ab]

The Antics: Premature Ejokeulation

The Antics
"Much better than the title suggested." This was the consensus as we left the theatre after watching this, er, interestingly named show. Title aside, this is a very funny group of men who seem to enjoy their improv games - standard fare a la 'Whose Line...?' and 'Mock The Week' - as much as their audience did. The funniest moment of the show came when hapless Gav was unable to guess what his team-mates were miming to him; the audience howled with laughter as his team-mates grew more and more breathless and frustrated. They're not the slickest, or the wittiest at the improv game, but this show still offers unadulterated fun from a group of fairly skilled performers.
C, 3 - 13 Aug, 4.45pm (5.35pm), £6.50 - £9.50, fpp40, tw rating 3/5 [rs]

The Hollycopter

Holly Walsh
Some stand-ups rely on vulgarity and the shock factor to coax laughter out of their

audience. Not Holly Walsh. Instead, she combines original humour, personal anecdotes, and Venn diagrams to string together a hilarious narrative anyone can relate to. Detailing the true story of one epic broken elbow, complete with x-rays, she manages to comment on what it means to be a scared British woman. She jumps off a high dive, fights a Nazi, flirts with Rambo, and has the pictures to prove it. By the end of the show, I felt like I was sitting in her living-room watching her home movies. Not to miss for anyone looking for a light-hearted laugh and stories of rogue flashers.

Pleasance Courtyard, 3 - 29 Aug (not 15), 6.00pm (7.00pm), £7.00 - £9.50, fpp88, tw rating 4/5 [tw]

Tim Clare: How To Be A Leader

Show + Tell / Escalator East to Edinburgh / Tilt
'How to Be a Leader' is a show with an intelligent premise, performed by an even more intelligent comedian. This seminar on leadership is multidimensional and worryingly, despite Tim explicitly highlighting the simple tools leaders employ to gain power, by the end of the show, the audience are hanging on to his every word. It's like submitting to a true leader and competing for a reward for laughing the hardest. Giving everything from tyrannical rule and assassination attempts a skewed and comedic twist, Tim's show is entertaining, fast-paced and clever, forcing the audience to remain on their toes and engaged. In addition, hilarious raps on historical female figures demonstrate Tim's skills as a wordsmith and his extensive potential.

Underbelly Cowgate, 4 - 28 Aug (not 15), 8.55pm (9.55pm), £8.00 - £10.00, fpp158, tw rating 4/5 [kc]

Transformer

With their surrealist approach to sketch comedy that seeks to move away from cheap laughs and lurid gags, 'Transformer' have produced fifty minutes of comedy that is refreshingly different. Minimally offensive, they focus on producing quick scenes with memorable personae that are genuinely funny. The return of earlier characters at just the right moments throughout the show is testament to its structural success, while their disregard for the fourth wall provides an innovative approach to the genre. It is just a shame that they lack this intensity in all their scenes. Arguably, it's forgivable as sketches move at a decent pace, allowing the audience to be quickly introduced to something different, but sadly it prevents them from being truly brilliant.

Bedlam Theatre, 5 - 27 Aug, 18:00 (18.50), £6.00 - £8.00, fpp162, tw rating 3/5 [aq]

Joel Sanders - Jokes That Got Me Kicked Out Of Tennessee

Joel Sanders / PBH's Free Fringe
Joel Sanders is almost apologetically sincere; he humbly thanks his audience about five times for coming along. Anecdotes from twenty years in the US are reeled out one by one, and, while the show has a nice flow, it contains no real structure. His best material includes thoughts on feeling a disconnect with gay men in the



SNAP OF THE DAY: 'Anton's Uncles' get physical at the Bedlam Theatre this Fringe. Photo: Kat Gollock

public eye and a humorous letter-exchange with a solicitor. Unfortunately, for all Joel's charm, the jokes are sparse, so this show feels more like that of a fairly accomplished storyteller rather than a comedian. He also has a habit of announcing his punchlines with, "Wait for it," and finishing them with, "I thought that was good." This doesn't serve him well, either.

Dragonfly, 5 - 29 Aug (not 15), 6.40pm (7.40pm), free, fpp100, tw rating 2/5 [ek]

John Robins: Lift Your Skinny Fists Like Antennas To Heaven

John Robins
The immensely likeable John Robins possesses the remarkable ability of making the awkward and outdated charming and stylish. He utters the quaint adjective "smashing" eleven times during this performance without the slightest hint of irony; it makes him exactly the sort of polite, articulate man that you'd be delighted to

introduce to your grandparents. Conversely, he's so exuberant and idiosyncratic that he'd be a tremendous late-night drinking partner. After hanging onto his every antiquated turn of phrase and laughing at his heart-warming anecdotes, I left the show wishing he were my best friend. Go and see him now before he'll be headlining at the biggest venues. You will have an absolutely smashing time, I promise.

Just The Tonic at The Caves, 4 - 28 Aug (not 17), 7.00pm (8.00pm), £7.00 - £9.00, fpp101, tw rating: 5/5 [fl]

Sharron Matthews Superstar: Jesus Thinks I'm Funny

Sharron Matthews
Not only is Sharron Matthews a superstar, she is a force of nature. Far from her homeland of Ontario, Canada, she has squeezed herself into something black and shiny with feathers on the shoulders,

cont>>

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