

ThreeWeeks EDINBURGH

Richard Tyrone Jones's Big Heart
A spoken word show about heart failure. But with jokes.
'Ringmaster of spoken word'
★★★★ ThreeWeeks
'fascinating, sobering, hilarious'
New Scientist
6pm to 25 August (not 19)
Banshee Labyrinth Cinema
Accessible Saturday matinees:
www.richardtyronejones.com

Heaven's Gate
by Annie James
V39 - Spaces on the Mile
Daily 7.05pm (not Sun)

NICK PYNN
with Kate Daisy Grant
"Delightfully off-kilter"
The List
"Highly, highly recommended"
5/5 ThreeWeeks
"A magical find"
The Scotsman
VENUE 258 - INLINGUA EDINBURGH

What is it like to be a real superhero?
MR. MILLENNIUM
One superhero. One super cabaret.
3-18 Aug (not Sun) @ 18:10, 20-25 Aug @ 19:10
SPACE
Surgeons' Hall (193)
www.thespaceuk.com

TIME: 22:30
MON TO SAT
ALL AN ACT
CLOWNS WITH ISSUES
7/5 POUNDS
@SURGEONS HALL

COMEDY

The Leeds Tealights: Sexy Chubby

The Leeds Tealights

Fast-paced, entirely unpredictable and highly entertaining, the Leeds Tealights snogged, danced, mimed and rib-tickled their way through an hour of brilliantly written sketches. Not once did a sketch go stale; every one seemed original and inspired. Each member of the group of four seemed perfectly fitted for their individual mini-roles, playing them with spades of charm and wit, blessed with the kind of expressive faces that only need to raise an eyebrow to get a giggle. By the end, we were all wiping away the tears, sides aching. With a perfect balance of clever and quirky humour, it is no surprise that the Tealights sold out shows last year, and it won't be if they do the same this year.

Just the Tonic @ The Caves, 2-16 Aug, 5.00pm.
tw rating 4/5 | [Grace Hardy]

Totally Tom

Mason Sisters @ PBJ
in association with Underbelly Productions

This riveting comedy duo enjoy their ride through a witty, fast-paced sketch show exposing life on the inside for a man too smart and too innocent to serve his time quietly. A fundamental friendship is forged with a whacky but endearing inmate whose flaws are made up for with pure, unbridled dancing talent. A barrage of dynamic characters are played with verve and the pair bounce off each other with immaculate timing and synergy. At times I get lost (setting and characters jump around a lot) but that's what the pace dictates; I'm found following the sequence again quickly. No props are used; old-fashioned thoughtful, solid miming gets a lot of laughs. Fantastic humour, brilliant acting, creative and original ideas; I look forward to next year already.

Underbelly Bristo Square, 1-27 Aug, 6.40pm.
tw rating 4/5 | [Joe Mountford-Smith]

Adam Larter: Happy New Year - A Free Comedy Show

Adam Larter / Laughing Horse Free Festival

Adam Larter takes 'alternative' and runs with it, in this New Year's - with bells on - themed performance. Complete with bagpipes, fireworks, sing-along and kite-flying, this is an endearingly madcap hour of high spirited-fun. Larter's original humour isn't always a hit: occasionally it shoots right past silly into entirely bizarre, leaving the crowd a few steps behind. But altogether this show's pure absurd hilarity and festive Fringe spirit will make you forget you're celebrating Hogmanay in August. So if you give it a try, you might discover that all your perfect New Year's Eve has been missing is Adam Larter: two parts comedy genius, one part borderline



SNAP OF THE DAY: Pondering where to head next? Gordon Southern is offering 'A Brief History Of History' at Gilded Balloon Teviot. Photo: Kat Gollock

lunatic, leaping around the stage in a mini-kilt. Who knows?

Captain Taylor's Coffee House, 4-26 Aug, 1.15pm.
tw rating 3/5 | [Pallavi Patel]

Alan Anderson: Whisky Fir Dummies 2.0

Ha Ha Comedy

"You're going to have to earn your whisky," bellows Alan Anderson, our slightly terrifying guide through the past and present-day life of the spirit, to his newly disappointed audience. If you like jokes about dogging, tits and Scotland (being Scottish might help too, because then you might understand them!), you'll love Whisky Fir Dummies 2.0. Even if you don't, you'll still get an incredibly well-researched show, in which Anderson turns a lot of quite dry information into a fascinating history. And don't worry, not everyone has to earn their whisky. Unless you count forcing nervous laughter at jokes about dogging sites in Paisley, just in case Alan spots your unsmiling face and shouts something offensive about your wife's tits.

The Tron, 2-26 Aug, (not 13, 14), 9.00pm.
tw rating 3/5 | [Rachel Aroesti]

Dead Cat Bounce... Howl Of The She-Leopard Off The Kerb Productions By Arrangement With The Lisa Richards Agency

Chimpanzees in buffet cars. Homophobic penguins. Illegal stews. Rucking. The list

of bizarre places the brilliant Dead Cat Bounce took us in this hour of comedy rock'n'roll would be endless. Slick, glittery and visually very 70s, the three glam-rockers rollicked through ridiculously worded parody songs held together by genuinely funny commentary and chat, and notably comedy-percussionist Demian Fox's drumming demonstrations. This type of silly, absurd comedy (these guys have perfected the unexpected twist) is exactly what we all need during this rainy August, and the viral youtube hit 'Rugby' is by no means the funniest of their surreal songs. Musical talent, comic wit and a polished performance - this trio is a true triple-threat.

Pleasance Courtyard, 1-26 Aug (not 13), 10.30pm.
tw rating 5/5 | [Sarah Macartney]

Alan Hudson's Not So Secret World Of Magic

Alan Hudson takes us on a journey through his magic career, starting at school when young Alan purchased his first ever magic book to "impress girls". Performing a series of his favourite tricks from different stages of his life, Hudson is endearing and entertaining, telling silly stories about his time as children's entertainer Al's Me Pal, as well as revealing show secrets and awkward slip-ups on cruise ships. Towards the end of the show one trick was revealed to a few audience members at the front due to poor staging, but never mind: this show is fun for all the family, and Hudson is an astounding magician, comic and mind reader. It is

clear that this man loves his trade.

Just The Tonic At The Caves, 2-26 Aug (not 14), 4.55pm
tw rating 4/5 | [Emma Obank]

All The Fun Of The Unfair 2012 Pete Starr, Henry Perryment and Guests / PBH's Free Fringe

You may feel somewhat hesitant about attending an afternoon show at a burlesque bar, but in reality, All The Fun Of The Unfair 2012 offered enough laughs to make it a worthwhile venture. Pete Starr, Steve Garland and Henry Perryment performed short sets of their very English, laddish material before a mystery stand up rounded off an enjoyable enough hour of comedy. The main three acts differed enough in manner and delivery to ensure that the show did not become monotonous, though the material was often based on stereotypes, despite the performers' apparent distaste towards such kinds of humour. Not so much all fun for everyone, more some fun for the lads.

Siglo, 4-25 Aug, 2.00pm.
tw rating 3/5 | [Christopher Rumbles]

The Quadrantines

Jack Campbell, David Murphy, Dan Nicholas / PBH's Free Fringe

This show offered three ultimately average comedians who didn't quite muster up a performance worthy of their apparent potential, so despite the presence of one or two decent jokes, the show as a whole was unexceptional. The first cont>

JOIN US FOR BREAKFAST
Free at all 10:30 performances
Going Green the Wong Way
4 - 18 Aug
(not 6 or 13)
CALARTS Festival Theater
VENUE 13 Lochend Close
100m past Cannongate Kirk
JOIN US FOR TEA
On the Venue13 lawn at 15:30
Free with a same day ticket
4 - 18 Aug
(not 6 or 13)

★★★★
BroadwayBaby.com
London Gay Men's Chorus Ensemble
Hi-de-Homo!
12-18 Aug at 7.35pm
VENUE 34
ADAM HOUSE
CHAMBERS STREET
0845 260 1234
www.CtheFestival.com

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cont> act, Jack Campbell focused on accents, a topic full of opportunities for laughs, yet disappointingly, he relied too much on his audience and his material inevitably fell flat. David Murphy gave the most fluent performance, discussing the likes of men at spa days and other embarrassing situations, though while it was funny in places, it was not significantly memorable. The final act, Dan Nicholas, performed with a monotonous style which had the potential to be funny, but in longer jokes it simply became dull.

Opium, 4-25 Aug, 4.00pm
tw rating 3/5 | [Bethanie Pochin]

Three For Free PBH's Free Fringe

Three young, fresh faced acts whose brand of comedy will seem quite familiar to those who are familiar with 'Mock the Week' and it's myriad offspring. That said, the three acts comprising the afternoon's comedy are all entertaining and different enough from one another to maintain interest. The highlight comes from the second act; the not at all aptly named Rory and Tim are a trio (yes, three of them) of sketch performers whose ideas are consistently funny and well thought out. The other two comics, Alex Kealy and Patrick Morris, stick to similar brands of observational comedy but avoid stepping on each other's toes or covering the same ground, which means that proceedings stay fresh.

Belushi's, 4-27 Aug, 1.20pm.
tw rating 4/5 | [David O'Connor]

The Blanks' Big Break CKP In Association With Hyper Agency And Sloat Entertainment

Creatively swerving their way around a potential agent's guidelines for a perfect show (scrawled on toilet paper), The Blanks, aka Ted's band from 'Scrubs', present hilarious Red Bull-fuelled moments of creativity interspersed with vocally epic songs. Face-achingly funny, the Blanks draw you into a charmingly feel-good world featuring a singing pumpkin head, an eager ice-cream vendor and a special mystery guest... Vocal renditions and covers include a mind-blowing medley of modern pop songs as well as traditionally quaint barber shop songs that are sure to put a smile across your face. Although the plot is rather loose, it doesn't matter, because the group rises above it with the quality of the mini-sketches, which are filled with physicality and goofy one-liners.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 1-27 Aug, 9.30pm.
tw rating 5/5 | [Khristine Gallagher]

Sexytime!

Tessa Waters and Kai Smythe

Sex has never been so hilarious. A physical comedy that involves sketches of interpretive dance, 'Sexytime!' will have you stunned into hysterics. Man and Woman take the audience on a journey from Adam and Eve and the sexual revolution to the all-familiar one night stand. Full bodily commitment (that never stopped being outrageous) from both actors resulted in unforgettable facial expressions and a comfortable atmosphere from the beginning. The exaggeration and tomfoolery generated roars of side-aching laughter, but the distinctiveness of this show lies in its perceptiveness and honesty. I sat with my mouth wide open the whole performance; partly in wonder, mostly in anticipation of whatever would come next. A must-see.

Underbelly Cowgate, 1-26 (not 14), 9.20pm
tw rating 5/5 | [Paige Wilson]

DANCE AND PHYSICAL THEATRE

My Plaiice/The Lake

The Lincoln Company

This double bill of pieces with water related titles contrast significantly with each other. 'My Plaiice' is a humorous piece about a goldfish's pursuit of an equally aquatic love interest. The gaudy costumes, use of popular music and beaming cast may not be for everyone, but will be sure to raise smiles from those who enjoy upbeat fun. 'The Lake' follows, and it's very different, focusing on

ballerinas going through turmoil whilst preparing for a production of Swan Lake. No, it isn't a dance adaptation of 'Black Swan', but it could easily tell the story of the chorus line from the blockbuster. It's an emotive piece employing an intelligent use of props: however the piece feels lacking in actual ballet technique, opting for a more contemporary style.

C, 2-18 Aug, 12.00pm.
tw rating 3/5 | [Beth Dawson]

The Gambler Theatre Re

Take a trip into the sinister world of addiction: following Edgar through his memories, 'The Gambler' has a cinematic feel, with sharp changes of pace and a constant soundtrack of piano and violin. Each character seems completely fleshed-out, and the two actors transition smoothly between roles and ages, just like the atmosphere fluctuates between romance and tragedy. The personification of Edgar's addiction and his conversations with her makes this performance not only an impressive piece of storytelling, but also a needling exploration of the nature of addiction. All the elements of this performance combine to create an immensely dynamic piece which will be certain to draw you right into a world where the casino is king.

Pleasance Dome, 1-26 Aug (not 13), 2.45pm.
tw rating 5/5 | [Beth Dawson]

Watch It!

Room 2 Manoeuvre

Technically this show is striking, even innovative, which is ironically why when dancer Tony Mills competes with a TV for attention, we are drawn to the YouTube clips playing on-screen instead of his movement. Rather than providing a platform for exploring the control television has over us as individuals, 'Watch It!' is a literal demonstration of that fact: The large, heavy televisions Mills uses as set and props limit his choreography, which only becomes inspiring when he interacts with the technology at his disposal. The tone is difficult to gauge, as the piece begins darkly and seriously, yet seems to evolve and become more light-hearted. A gimmicky multimedia experience rather than a 'dance' show, but an interesting idea fairly well-executed.

Zoo Southside, 3-27 Aug (not 14, 21), 1.00pm.
tw rating 3/5 | [Stephanie Taylor]

Into The Fog

CalArts Festival Theater

As you take to your seat at Venue 13, the stage is set with discarded objects - battered suitcases, old wooden chairs, numerous books and five people glued to the spot; It's like someone's pressed pause on their action. The stage descends into darkness and as light re-emerges, this small community move, ever so slowly, downstage. There is sorrow, uncertainty, hope in their eyes but what's their story? That's where the books come in. As they gather to share these tales, there are no words, only sights and sounds. Close your eyes and it's cinematic - open them again and poetry reveals itself in the choreography of the bodies on stage. Profoundly moving and totally absorbing, and a novel way to spend your evening.

Venue 13, 4-18 Aug, 7.00pm.
tw rating 5/5 | [Lucinda Al-Zoghbi]

MUSIC

Louis Durra Trio Louis Durra

The saying "could do it with their eyes closed" came to mind as I witnessed the Louis Durra Trio's show. I had thought it was way too early to be entering a jazz bar, but seeing how much passion the three men on stage had for their music and instruments soon woke me up. Like all good jazz musicians, these three seemed to be making love to their music, lost in the moment, eyes closed, unaware of their surroundings. The smooth and slick sounds were interrupted by awkward chat between songs, so it was a relief when the band started to play again. The trio used some well-known songs to get the crowd more involved, and they've introduced whole new worlds to at least one spectator; the musicians may have had

their eyes closed, but mine were certainly opened to a whole new music scene.

The Jazz Bar, 4-26 Aug (not 20),1.00pm, 2.30pm, 4.00pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Rachel Campbell]

MUSICALS AND OPERA

Party Worth Crashing

Theatre In Heights

Your twenties are the peak of your existence, right? A five-piece ensemble explored this controversial theory in a play about waiting for life to start, and what happens when adolescent dreams turn sour. A few sharp observations on twenty-something-hood followed, including a comical musical number on the advantages of anonymous sex (i.e. sex with a stranger), and the self-pity experienced when friends begin popping out babies, and you still can't get a date. Despite a few glimmering moments and an evident raw talent in the quintet of players, this party crashed and burned, the play's structure too incoherent to allow for character depth or attachment. Sadly there seemed little chemistry between performers - nerves shone where talent should have blinded.

theSpace On The Mile, 3-25 Aug (not 5, 12, 19), times vary. tw rating 2/5 | [Christy Brown]

Somewhere Under the Rainbow

- The Liza Minnelli Story

Biscuits For Breakfast Theatre

Company

A one woman musical biography of Liza Minnelli might not necessarily sound like a show with the potential to have a broad appeal. However, this lively, spirited, honest and occasionally touching show manages to achieve just that. Sharon Sexton elegantly combines monologues with some of the star's biggest hits, and the chosen songs are brilliantly sung and work well with the narrative; the rendition of 'Mein Herr' especially captured everything about the famous performance. Sexton's portrayal of Minelli makes it all work- she's invested in the character and it shows - and while it was occasionally a little too sentimental, for the most part she kept Liza bitinglly cynical, self-deprecating and funny. If anything this show could do with being bigger, but for capturing her story, it's perfect.

theSpace @ Symposium Hall - Amphi Space, 3-18 Aug, 5.45pm.
tw rating 5/5 | Katherine Cunningham

The Picture House

Play Pen Productions

We are thrown in to an emotional battleground with 'The Picture House', a musical set in the Second World War featuring brilliant costume, hair and make-up, all of which generate a tangible sense of authenticity. The story is centred around an old picture house - a young couple buy it but they are soon separated by the war - which provides the basis for an exploration of the sounds of the time. The brilliant actors would be well suited to a West-End spot in London; their voices are outstanding and never falter, and their acting is of a similar standard. We relate to the actors losing their sons, husbands and lovers to the war, whether it be for a short time or forever. There is absolutely nothing bad to say about this play, except the fact that it had to end.

theSpace on Northbridge, 1-18 Aug , 6.20pm.
tw rating 5/5 | [Rachel Campbell]

THEATRE

Flames Over New Jersey

Double Edge Drama

This funny and poignant piece is a cynical but romantic look at 1930s American Jazz Club culture; incorporating the nation's favourite clichés into a charming hour of theatre. The Double Edge group's youth discuss speakeasies, girls and alcohol in amongst some delightfully rompy jazz which has all the swing of a fairground ride in the height of summer. Here's the thing: the music is actually pretty good; the eight-piece jazz band could feasibly perform their own show. The acting is

impressive, too, as the cast recount the story of a Jazz Club and the traumas it encounters, including problems introduced by prohibition and the subsequent ill-dealings of a club owner who refuses to know where to draw the line. A delightfully interactive and vibrant experience.

Underbelly Cowgate, 1-18 Aug, 6.20pm.
tw rating 4/5 | [Adam Bloodworth]

Mother Tongue Brick Theatre

Set against an atmospheric visual backdrop of still and moving images, author Jillian Lauren used physical theatre and rhetoric to tell her moving, autobiographical tale of adoption, womanhood and finding her place in the world. Using a series of monologues, she created the voices of the female figures involved in the complex web of adoption, drawing the audience right into the lives of the troubled, yet determined women. Another dimension was added by telling one woman's story through the medium of a video diary, providing an intimate insight into her struggle. This was a simply created, beautiful, account. Through Lauren's compelling performance we felt despair at every failure, and joy at her final triumph in this stunning and provocative production.

Summerhall, 4 - 15 Aug, 4.00pm
tw rating 5/5 | [Emily Pulsford]

Oedipus - The Hour

Minotaur Theatre Company

The story of Oedipus is perfect for reinterpretations. It's archetypal, cruel, tragic and well known enough to stay recognisable no matter how it's treated. This performance is good, artistically directed, but almost doesn't go far enough in making the story its own. That's not to say that both the direction and performances weren't good; the creepy common people deserve special mention for being a genuinely, yet understated, unsettling presence, and the clean cut, elegant upper class nobles were convincingly human. Oedipus was genuinely heroic, making the character sympathetic without losing any of his strength. All that was lacking was that it could have gone further: there were bizarre touches, but there could, and probably should have been something more; slightly stranger.

Paradise in Augustine's, Aug 6-19, 3.00pm
tw rating 4/5 | [Katherine Cunningham]

The Dead Memory House

Theatre Corsair

A melancholic, slightly bitter examination of lost dreams and the façades we wear, 'The Dead Memory House' is a brilliant piece of abstract theatre; disconcertingly, uncomfortably intimate. We are given glimpses into the minds of three very different women, each with her flaws and insecurities. Leah Georges, Hanna Harlyn and Laura Corbett all perform flawlessly, mixing soliloquy, dialogue and characterful physicality in equal measure, each role an instantly identifiable archetype which doesn't resort to caricature. 'The Dead Memory House' also makes exceptional use of its space, although to say any more would be to spoil it. This is a sometimes difficult, intimate play, but one that will ultimately reward you for your efforts and well worth seeing.

Summerhall, 3-26 Aug, times vary.
tw rating 5/5 | [Andrew Bell]

The Price Of Everything

Daniel Bye

Daniel Bye's performance lecture self-consciously defied categorisation and switched styles throughout: just when we'd digested some research or a personal anecdote, meta-theatre disconcertingly broke in with Bye's announcement that what we'd just heard was untrue and merely part of a theatrical experience. Once the performer had revealed his untrustworthiness it problematically undermined what he said next - if that was the point, it wasn't especially clear. Behind the satire and false leads lay a potentially powerful central message about kindness and real value in this capitalist age. Those hoping for a bit more scientific or psychological content might leave

disappointed but those who like being beguiled will be entertained by Bye, who is a talented and engaging performer and storyteller.

Northern Stage at St. Stephen's, 3 - 25 Aug (not 6, 13, 20), times vary.
tw rating 3/5 | [Emily Pulsford]

Salome Kronos Stage

Just because you stage an old play in modern day does not make it "controversially relevant" and just because you stick a pair of combat trousers on your actors doesn't make it a harrowing satire on the situation in the Middle East. It really doesn't help that the pretty young cast struggle with the old fashioned dialogue, blandly spouting out line after line. The performers playing the King and Queen Herod and Herodias are the exception, and are the only ones who seem to be actually acting. When we eventually get to the famous Dance of the Seven Veils it is more a walk with a distinctive swagger than a historically altering event. It's not terrible, but it's been done before, and better.

theSpace On The Mile, 6-18 Aug, 6.10pm.
tw rating 2/5 | [Patricia-Ann Young]

The Idiot On The Wall

First Bicycle

This show tells of a heartbreaking legend set on a Hebridean island in 1919. Full of beautiful Gaelic singing and full-bodied believable characters, this story will suck you in with its approach to a prophecy, love, and a storm worn island just north of Oban bay. Brilliantly performed, Elspeth Turner's play 'The Idiot At The Wall' tells enough of the story without overloading you, offering a perfect balance of realism and fairytale to the audience's mind. With a multi-purpose set and clever writing, the play marries Scottish mysticism - and the culture that the Hebridean islands still possess - with the changing times and the ideas that they are two separate worlds that occasionally collide, for better or for worse.

Bedlam Theatre 3-25 Aug, 3.25pm.
tw rating 4/5 | [Charlotte Mortimer-Talman]

The Most Dangerous Toy

Playades

"Man wants two things: danger and play. Therefore he wants woman, as the most dangerous toy." This is the story of Nietzsche and of Lou Salomé; independent, childish, intelligent, Nietzsche thinks of her as "a voice I have waited for since childhood". Yet several marriage proposals later, he changes his tune. Merging documents, letters, poetry and devised theatre, 'The Most Dangerous Toy' focuses on the year 1882 and the relationship that drove Nietzsche into complete solitude and to write 'Thus Spake Zarathustra', one of his most famous works. A most engaging play focusing on a girl too modern for the age she lived in, and the mystery of what occurred between them at Monte Sacro.

TheSpace @ Surgeons Hall 3-18 Aug (not 5, 12) 19.05pm.
tw rating 4/5 | [Charlotte Mortimer-Talman]

Nggrfg Brownbox Theatre and Small Brown Package Productions

A one-man sketch show about the life of a gay, black man called Buddy, Nggrfg is a perceptive and thought-provoking lesson in morality. Buddy is not defined by his colour or sexual orientation but by the incidents of discrimination he repeatedly experiences from 'normal' people. But clad in eye-liner and pink tassels, we learn that Buddy is in fact exceptional. A simple set highlighted the craft of Berend McKenzie, a superb actor and engaging story-teller who lucidly portrays several characters simultaneously. The magic of this production lies in Buddy's capacity for maturity and forgiveness that ultimately rises above the persecution. Entertaining and tragic, Nggrfg familiarises us with torment to an uncomfortable level.
theSpace on the Mile, 3-18 Aug, 7.20pm.
tw rating 4/5 | [Paige Wilson]

ThreeWeeks

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