

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 musical 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 (NSA)
www.thespaceuk.com

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

CHILDREN'S SHOWS

The Boy And The Bunnet

Big Sky/The Famous Spiegeltent
'The Boy and the Bunnet' (it's probably not a spoiler to say that the bunnet is his hat, and not, as I thought, a rabbit) is James Robertson's enchanting story about Neil, a boy who lives with his grandma by a mountain. Though it's written in Scots, narrator Gerda Stevenson tells the tales in such a way that it is involving and fairly easy to follow, helped along by some gorgeously illustrated animation and a seven-strong band. Each of the traditional instruments is associated with one character, and James Ross' score blends these sounds together beautifully. It may be a little low energy for some children, but overall it's a sweet story told in a lovely and unusual way.

The Famous Spiegeltent, 6-19 Aug (not 13), 3.30pm.
tw rating 4/5 | [Holly Close]

COMEDY

Aaaand Now For Something Completely Wireless - Free Racing Minds/Laughing Horse Free Festival

Already doing another long-form show earlier in the day, 4-man improv troupe Racing Minds don sharp suits and bowties to exploit the 50s radio genre for everything it's worth. Stylistically, it's a great choice, allowing them to play multiple roles within the same scene and have great fun with sound effects. There's a slight tendency to carry on with scenes that have perhaps run their course, and on this occasion it took a while for any actual narrative to kick in, but when such good comedy is being put together so quickly, such problems seem fairly minor in comparison. Above all, these are some damned funny chaps putting on an absolutely top-notch show.

Laughing Horse @ Meadow Bar, 2-26 Aug, 5.45pm.
tw rating 4/5 | [Holly Close]

Comedian Dies in the Middle of Joke

Show and Tell / Escalator East to Edinburgh

Interactive Theatre. Two words guaranteed to strike fear into the hearts of all but the most intrepid of Fringe-goers. Luckily, there's nothing to fear here, as we're all in it together. Everyone in the audience has multiple roles to play as we cycle repeatedly through the last 5 minutes of a comedian's life in 1983. Each character has a simple instruction card to follow - heckle at a certain time, give a certain response to the comedian - switching places every five minutes. It's silly fun, and unlike anything else I've seen in the theatre; by the final iteration, you'll know the shape of



SNAP OF THE DAY: Les Dennis (appearing in 'Jiggy' at The Assembly Rooms) helps the Noise Next Door celebrate the end of their #24HourFringeAdventure - relive said adventure at www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/noisenextdoor. Photo: Kat Gollock

the story, but the devil, as always, is in the (improvised) details.

Pleasance Dome, 1-27 Aug (not 13), 2.30pm.
tw rating 4/5 | [Andrew Leask]

Rock N Roll Politics Presented By Steve Richards

Steve Richards is better known as The Independent's chief political commentator but rather than spending the silly season hanging around an abandoned Westminster, he's sneaked up to Edinburgh to put on an extremely good show which explores the politics of an uncertain age. His decades in the parliamentary lobbies have left him with a wealth of anecdotes, the ability to impersonate many a public figure and great analytical insight. Combined with the strong stage presence you would expect from a professional broadcaster, these qualities result in an hour which is at once very funny and incredibly interesting. If you have a lunchtime to spare and any interest in politics, do make an effort to see this show.

Assembly George Square, 1-26 Aug (not 13, 21), 12.30pm
tw rating 4/5 | [Nicholas Jones]

The Early Edition Get Comedy

As a comedy festival spin-off of the short-lived current affairs programme 'The Late Edition', the suitably renamed 'The Early Edition' is the perfect way

to commence any day at The Fringe.

Providing the audience with all the muck and magniloquence from the tabloids and broadsheets are hosts Andre Vincent and Marcus Brigstocke, who are accompanied each day by two surprise comedians. The show is similar to the US political comedy shows 'The Daily Show', 'The Colbert Report', and 'Real Time' in that it critiques the media and institutions though not at the expense of humour. Prepare for some seemingly unscripted appearances to keep things interesting as well. A raving, topless Phil Jupitus is all this reviewer has ever wanted.

Underbelly Bristo Square, 1-25 Aug, 2.00pm.
tw rating 4/5 | [Christopher Rumbles]

Cheese-Badger Presents... Midge (A Two-Man Musical)

Cheese-Badger/Free Festival
This show is an absolute gem, and that's especially satisfying when you consider that it's from one of the free strands. Brilliantly fantastical, with a surreal storyline, this tale follows the life of Midge, who is sent to live with his mad uncle Clive when his parents are killed in a car crash. The two man musical brims with almost ridiculous levels of intelligence and creativity, and the comic overacting lends itself well to the style of the show as well as to the hilarious, well-integrated songs. If you crossed Flight of the Conchords with a Tim Burton-esque plot, then you might have a shadow of an idea about the quality

of this production; an absolute must-see.

Laughing Horse @ The News Room, 2-26 Aug (not 6, 13, 20), 12.00pm.
tw 5/5 | [Jessamine McHugh]

Ford And Akram: Bamp!

Live Nation And MHA
Bearing a sketch-show with a twist, Ford and Akram return to the Edinburgh Fringe with a story that follows their quest to introduce the word "Bamp" to the world, in order to save the family business (they invent words) from falling into the hands of Phil the shoe, literally a trainer. The far-fetched narrative is bizarre, at times completely bonkers and sometimes seems to be all over the place, but if you are prepared to suspend logic for an hour and become enveloped in its zany surrealism, then the show becomes highly entertaining. Both Ford and Akram are wonderfully spontaneous performers, and their enthusiasm and sense of fun on stage is truly infectious. I have a feeling this extremely likeable duo will go far. Bamp-tastic!

Pleasance Courtyard, 1-27 Aug (not 13), 3.15pm
tw rating 4/5 | [Simon Thornton]

John Robins: Incredible Scenes!

John Robins
The frankly foolish decision to bump John Robins from a TV panel show is the narrative catalyst behind 'Incredible Scenes', directed by Robins' former 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)

'Amusing... engaging'
BroadwayBaby.com
Showdown Productions (Australia)
Binge Thinking
2-27 Aug at 6.00pm
VENUE 145
INDIA BUILDINGS
VICTORIA STREET
0845 260 1234
www.CTheFestival.com

JONNY-&-THE BAPTISTS
★★★★ COMEDY BLUES ★★★★★
'Genius' Exeunt Magazine
'Foot-tapping' Broadway Baby
★★★★ 'Hilarious. It rarely gets better than this' Ed Fest
★★★★ 'Awesome. Riotous songs... Joyful' Fringe Biscuit
The hit debut act! Underbelly, 9.10pm

cont> flatmate Russell Howard. With a whimsical turn of phrase, the comedian expertly weaves together stories about electric shavers, the comedy circuit and his native Bristol, in a style that is fiercely intelligent, but also genuinely sympathetic - an oft-overlooked trait in stand-up. It's all delivered so naturally, but there's brilliant craftsmanship and innate comedy timing working subtly in the background of the show. It's very sweet, occasionally saucy and ludicrously funny - I laughed so much it made my lungs hurt. For now, TV's loss is Edinburgh's gain. These truly are some incredible scenes.

Just The Tonic At The Caves, 2-26 Aug (not 14), 7.20pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Holly Close]

Juliet Meyers: Raised By Fridge Magnets Juliet Meyers / The Stand Comedy Club

Having already written material for the likes of the Now Show, Juliet Meyers proved herself to be a consummate stand-up performer in her own right with this inventive show. Meyers' personal anecdotes were endowed with insightful twists that demonstrated her sharp mind, while she created variety by physically re-enacting situations and transforming into her cast of characters, including an Australian motivational speaker she once knew. At one point, she even made a mimed sequence produce a happy chortle from the audience. Always in control of her thoughtful material, Meyers even managed to keep the recurring jokes from feeling like tiresome cop-outs. Expect to see the fridge magnets of the title, the people who own them, and much more besides in a new light.

The Stand Comedy Club II, 1-26 Aug (not 2, 13) times vary.

tw rating 4/5 | [Emily Pulsford]

Katherine Ryan: Nature's Candy Live Nation & MHA

Katherine Ryan is happy. Very happy. She generously shares this bounding happiness with you with wide-eyed wonder. Despite this, she is not afraid to go into dirty sexual detail or speak her mind. Including the discussion of celebrities' "asses" and introducing her own TV show, "This Bitch" which exposes her love of derogatory names, Ryan sends the audience into fits of laughter. She learns that a male audience member is wearing a pink sock with hearts on it - which to her absolute glee leads to one liners about incest when she learns that the sock belongs to his sister. Wonderfully perceptive and full of happily gritty surprises, Katherine Ryan will put a smile on your face with her infectious enthusiasm.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 1-27 Aug, 3.15pm.

tw rating 4/5 | [Khristine Gallagher]

Lucy Cox: Attractive Audience Required

Lucy Cox/Laughing Horse Free Festival

Honest, bubbly and exceedingly entertaining. Lucy Cox shares the story of her life as a single woman living with her parents in London: her dating disasters; the inherent threat of taking public transport; online dating and her love of winky faces and ridiculous milk toppers. Cox uses musical comedy throughout her performance, which is catchy, personal and very funny, plus her bright and bubbly attitude contrasts perfectly with her dark comedy and stories of everyday experiences everyone can kind of relate to. While there is nothing exceptionally different or unique to this show and it under runs a bit, it is structured with staple recipe for comedy that Cox pulls off extremely well. A strong, well assembled show which flows perfectly.

The Free Sisters, 1-26 Aug, 12.00pm

tw rating: 4/5 | [Miranda Cannibal]

Luke Milford: Things I Like Laughing Horse Free Festival

In this hit and miss comedy show, Luke Milford and his guest comedians talk about life, relationships and Pokémon. At times the show is pretty funny, and Milford himself stands out, and with different guest stars every day, hopefully other performers will be stronger than the ones I saw, who relied far too much on out of

context one liners and laughed at their own jokes; at one point one of the comics just gave up on a joke half way through and left. Milford spent a lot of time talking with the audience, which wasn't so much funny as an awkward getting to know people session. Milford's show is good though and whilst not hysterically funny, it will put a smile on your face.

The Free Sisters, 2-26 Aug, 3.15pm

tw rating 3/5 | [Miranda Cannibal]

Matt And Ian's Improv Show Matt And Ian

This is a traditional hour of improv in the 'Whose Line Is It Anyway?' mould, with two funny men playing the games you would typically expect and working in audience suggestions to prove it is truly improvised. As is often the case with improv there are very good moments but also a number of lulls, although I think that overall the parts that work outweigh those that do not. However, in the past few years there have been some very audacious improv shows at the Fringe which have really pushed the genre's boundaries, and in comparison this format does seem somewhat dated. If you wish to see some classic style improv, however, then this is a good example of the genre.

Sweet Grassmarket, 1-27 Aug (not 18,25), 6.25pm

tw rating 3/5 | [Nicholas Jones]

You Are Being Lied To 2012, David Mulholland

PBH Free Fringe

After reporting with the most prestigious American newspapers, David Mulholland now brings varied British tabloid facts to his Free Fringe comedy show. Mulholland lays down hard truths about papers and the lies within, spinning humour from headlines wherever possible. Admittedly, the show is not particularly funny, but it is quite interesting even though the themes are familiar; in recent times it seems easy to throw a punch at Rupert Murdoch or phone hacking to get a laugh, but its Mulholland's experience and passion for the media that forms the highlight. Mulholland shares tips on exposing a good story, and sneaking through traps to annoy big organizations with bad press, making his show an insightful story, rather than a stand up hit.

The Base Night Club, 1-25 Aug (not 15, 26), 6.15pm

tw rating 3/5 | [Susan Ford]

DANCE & PHYSICAL THEATRE

Knee Deep Casus and Assembly

"Australia's hottest new circus company", Casus and Assembly, defy gravity and, indeed, expectation with this mesmerising choreography of the limbs. But if circus is some loud, garish freakshow then this isn't circus. Watch them form human paper chains whilst suspended from aerial silks, catch them swinging from a static trapeze and maintain balances from the most unlikely points of contact - you couldn't image something as daring as this. This choreography of the limbs is a performance spectacular if ever there was one, yet it is also modestly contained and understated. These performers are athletic, artistic, even poetic, with their abundance of creative energy. Whoop, cheer and gasp your way through it - spectator satisfaction guaranteed.

Assembly George Square, 2-26 Aug (not 13, 20), 7.35pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Lucinda Al-Zoghbi]

THEATRE

The Blind The KTO Theatre 2

Based on the award-winning novel by Jose Saramago, 'The Blind' is thoroughly disappointing. On a technical level, the show is excellent: it's a loud, immersive piece of outdoor theatre with an epic vibe, but the technical aspects of the show by far outshine its content. Throughout, the chaotic choreography of the blind characters seems little more than just chaotic, and the narrative goes no further than the men and women forming teams and hurting one another, without any apparent intelligence in the way they do so; it's just pure, unadulterated stage

fighting. With this lack of depth, the show easily could have taken less than the hour it uses. 'The Blind' is visually impressive, but ultimately fails to push any boundaries.

Old College Quad, 3-27 Aug, times vary.

tw rating 3/5 | [Stephanie Taylor]

The List Stellar Quines

It's easy to forget that this show is comprised of one monologue. 'The List' is about a housewife that habitually pens down all of her duties on a to-do list. Poignantly capturing her immersion into isolated, rural domesticity, this production is engaging from the very outset. Sensational acting commands the audience to hang on to every word whilst intermittent interjections of the seemingly unconnected list are as alarming as they are humdrum. A touching glimpse of the effect we can potentially have upon each another, the show invites us to question the power of a pre-determined fate or destiny. This spine-tinglingly good play will leave you deeply moved.

Summerhall, 9-18 (not 12, 13) Aug, 2.00pm.

tw rating 5/5 | [Paige Wilson]

Mies Julie Baxter Theatre Centre, South African State Theatre and Assembly

"Mies Julie" is a modern adaptation of August Strindberg's play, dealing with sex and power in the struggle between the daughter of a farm owner in South Africa and a worker, a struggle of race, culture, and love. Featuring a rich display of regional musical instruments and equipment, the play incorporates props to full and innovative use. One forgets one is watching a theatre production; the acting is well-directed, illustrating the complicated states of mind of South African culture, yet the emotions are of a universal nature. This is an outstanding performance that will leave audiences agape and wide-eyed in amazement long after the play ends. Caution: this show incorporates graphic scenes of sexual violence, violent language, and physical abuse.

Assembly Hall, 2-27 Aug (not 13, 20), 2.00pm.

tw rating 5/5 | [Ana-Claudia Magaña]

Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus

Sally Humphrey Productions, Ltd

"Men / Women (delete as appropriate) - can't live with them, can't live without them," so the saying goes. This clichéd phrase along with other stereotyped views is at the core of this performance based on John Gray's best-selling book. Undoubtedly, it has fuelled pop-gender studies ideas in today's culture and the show is filled to the brim with gender over-generalisations. The absence of context to these generalisations nullifies any validity they may have; however, this is not a slight at this well-delivered and engaging performance of this stage adaptation, but rather an issue with the content itself. If you like the book, you'll like the show, but beware; alongside the nuggets of sense is content based on ridiculous myths about the sexes.

Underbelly Bristo Square, 1-27 Aug (not 13), 3.30pm. tw rating 2/5 | [Ciara Knowles]

Continuous Growth

The Group Theatre Of Helsinki Co-ordinated By Ace-Production

This satire, a relevantly hilarious take on the inefficiencies of the global financial system, manages to both shock and delight along the way. Andy, an ordinary Scottish man just wants his very own shed; instead, he sets up his own successful business and eventually manages to bring the global economy crashing to a grinding halt. With a compelling script and seamless transitions accompanied by enjoyably odd characters - it features the likes of a casual Scottish Jesus - this production is highly accomplished. At times this gritty Scottish adaptation contains reflectively meaningful snippets amongst the humour, but when it gets too heavy, the plot snaps back to its sharply satirical roots: fuelling an excitingly surreal exploration of the chaotic financial system.

Pleasance Dome, 1-27 Aug, 12.10pm

tw rating 4/5 | [Khristine Gallagher]

Villains, Heroes And Adventurers

The Whisky Anorak

"Real boys own adventure stories" says John Mark Di Ciacca, while describing one daring exploit, around which this unusual whisky tasting is based. During the course of the event, I glean many a fact or an anecdote I shall be quoting from the pub in future, as we jump from The Beatles' 'Yellow Submarine' to some biscuit crumbs that sold for 7000 odd pounds. Yet at times the whisky connection feels a bit forced; John Talbot Clifton, whose whole life was an adventure story, gets a good chunk of the presentation but without discernible link to any of the three whiskies. But once it gets sharpened up it will be a great event for both novices and old hands. And you know something? I don't even like whisky that much.

Valvona Snd Crolla Scottish Foodhall@Jenners, 7-25 Aug (not 12,14,15,19), times vary.

tw rating 4/5 | [Lia Sanders]

Virginia Ironside: Growing Old Disgracefully

Scamp Theatre & Virginia Ironside

Disclaimer: I am at least a few decades shy of Virginia Ironside's target demographic. Nevertheless, I found myself won over by The Independent columnist's "frank and forthright" (not to mention funny) account of growing old. There's no doubt that Ironside is witty and erudite, and she's a fine public speaker, but the show did lack a certain performance aspect. Much of her material was tame observational comedy; simply describing things her audience was familiar with, and waiting for the "ooh"s of recognition. One extended section consisted of her describing various print adverts: why not show the ads? A baffling choice. Though a slight let-down as a live show, this would have made a great column.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 1-26 Aug (not 14, 21)

tw rating 3/5 | [Andrew Leask]

Who's Dorian Gray?

Empty Photo Theatre

I still don't know who Dorian Gray is. Not that I'm complaining. In this play, we are thrown into the lives of 3 flatmates, the trials and tribulations they endure together, and how these events affect and damage their friendships. The six actors are convincing, and as an audience member, it's all too easy to empathise with what their characters are feeling and going through; at times, indeed, we get so immersed that the audience feels entirely burdened with the characters' emotions. There is a slightly awkward nude scene (given the small audience size, I didn't know where to look). However, the actors soon put us all at ease as the story continues and we yet again feel so emotionally attached to the characters that I was sad when the play ended.

Laughing Horse @ Edinburgh City Football Club, 2-26 Aug (not 16 and 23), 11.00pm.

tw rating 4/5 | [Rachel Campbell]

Educating Rita

Matthew Kelly and Claire Sweeney

Warm and funny, this production of Willy Russell's much-loved play holds no real surprises, but that's no bad thing. Given that the play features only two characters, Kelly and Sweeney carry all the production on their backs; luckily their performances are strong enough to bear the weight. Kelly is very good as Frank, all dishevelled academia and irascible charm. Once or twice, though, his performance became a little too broad, almost lapsing into farcical comedy. Sweeney as Rita was pitch-perfect, however. She brought an irrepressible, joyful enthusiasm to the role, making us empathise with her, but never patronisingly so. The chemistry between them was believable and vibrant; their pairing worked fantastically, lending the final scene a real poignancy.

Assembly George Square, 1-27 Aug (not 13), 5.40pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Andrew Leask]

Words And Women Skyers Productions/PBH's Free Fringe

Presenting confessions, secrets and streams of consciousness, Skyers Productions impress with this collection

of entertaining and assured new monologues by women, for women - but pulled off with enough flair to appeal to anyone. While stories of stalkers, schizophrenics and mid-twenties breakdowns may sound horribly hackneyed at first, the writing consistently catches you off guard with a blend of heartfelt sentiment, spot-on social observation and dark humour. Natural and confident, the cast bring verve and vivacity to their roles, and as their stories unfold, you can't help but be absorbed by the skewed perspectives and surprising sympathies they evoke. The specific monologues change nightly, but judged by the quality on display here, they'll always be short, sharp and sweet.

The Street, 4-25 Aug, 5.15pm.

tw rating 4/5 | [Dave Fargnoli]

Monkey Poet's Murder Mystery

Monkey Poet / makin projects / PBH's Free Fringe

This free show truly captures the dynamic and spontaneous nature of the Fringe. A engaging mix of storytelling and poetry, with a predominantly comedic edge, Monkeypoet takes you on a journey where geographic or temporal boundaries are not an issue. The show gives an insight into the state of contemporary poetry through the eyes of some classic literature heavyweights (Homer, Charles Bukowski etc.), while never straying far from the modern day. Monkeypoet flirts with the edge of surreal, but the show is always grounded in contemporary concerns. The easy back and forth between Monkeypoet's real life and stage persona make a comfortable atmosphere and create the perfect platform for his easygoing style, and also the perfect veneer for his anti-establishment tendencies.

Banshee Labyrinth, 1-25 Aug (not 14), 12.50pm

tw rating 4/5 | [Lewis Wade]

Statements after an Arrest Under the Immorality Act

By Athol Fugard The Fugard Theatre, Izinja and Assembly

Intimacy and exposure are combined to powerful effect in this production of Athol Fugard's play about the forbidden love of a married black man and a white woman in Apartheid South Africa. Opening in near darkness, the audience is immediately drawn into the relationship of the two leads as they sit talking, naked, on a rug in the centre of the bare stage. But the sense of intrusion that this implies is then shockingly brought to the fore, as their inevitable discovery is conveyed through evocative and clever staging. The play's main weakness is over-reliance on a third actor, who details their capture at an unnecessary length, detracting from the emotional impact. But despite this, an emotive and engaging production.

Assembly Hall, 2-27 Aug (not 6, 13, 20), 12.15pm.

tw rating 3/5 | [Sarah Richardson]

The Life and Sort of Death of Eric Argyle 15th Oak Productions

The perfect antidote to any Festival-fuelled fatigue, or theatrical cynicism, this heart-warming play takes the audience, with Eric, on a Scrooge-styled tour of key moments from his life. Given the premise, you may expect a morose, sombre tale, but instead this is a hilariously comic play, with laughter punctuating the drama at unexpected moments. Dynamic use of props and lighting aid the cast in flitting through Eric's life; the performances are almost perfect, barring a few moments where Olympic fever took over and they raced through their narration as if striving for gold. This doesn't diminish the play's undeniably cathartic effect. On leaving, the audience all had smiles on their faces and tears in their eyes.

Pleasance Dome, 1-27 Aug (not 13), 12.00pm.

tw rating 4/5 | [Andrew Leask]

ThreeWeeks

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