

# ThreeWeeks EDINBURGH

Reviews on your phone



Find the best of the Fringe on the move

For iPhone & Android

**IT'S FREE!**

Get iFringe at [iFringe.co.uk](http://iFringe.co.uk)

**It's the last ThreeWeeks Daily Edition of the Festival! But look out for plenty more reviews at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk)**

## CABARET

**Dorothy Squires: Mrs Roger Moore**

The Biggest Diva Of Them All

For a time, Dorothy Squires was among Britain's most popular vocalists and was married to Roger Moore, before he was 007. Al Pillay, in a blonde wig and thick stage make-up, is excellent as Squires - this is no over-the-top drag queen act, but a tender, emotional performance, depicting a rise and fall which could easily become very unsympathetic in the wrong hands. With a great supporting cast, Pillay belts out Squires' hits - the songs punctuating the narrative beautifully. The leading man does suffer with a slightly wandering Welsh accent and there were a few fluffed moments, but beneath the sequins and glitter, the show is a heartfelt portrayal of the melancholy of fading glamour.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 12-27 Aug (not 20), 12.45pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Holly Close]

**Scales Of The Unexpected**

Scales of the Unexpected are not the most original musical comedy act out there (other people have also figured out that pop songs use similar chord progressions), but they are certainly one of the most fun. Lampooning pop music may not be a challenging feat, but Scales of the Unexpected do it with such unabashed and infectious confidence that it would be impossible to watch them stony-faced. Their literal choreography numbers were carefully, well, choreographed and showcased the group's ample talents as performers as well as lyricists. Their segues were seamless and their excellent comic timing filled the space between songs, while the songs themselves were an hilariously tongue-in-cheek take on the pop genre through the medium of classic cabaret!

Gilded Balloon at Third Door, 1-26 Aug, 10.45pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Lewis Wade]

## CHILDREN'S

**The Velveteen Rabbit**

Backhand Theatre with C theatre

Slightly scary, pretty funny, and very entertaining, this is a great show for any parents who want their kids to see something they'll remember. How many children's shows have gigantic, slightly terrifying horse heads on stage? Using actors and puppets of various, but generally large, sizes, this show does a good job of not only including the audience, but incorporating the theatre



**SNAP OF THE DAY:** Last August we gave the marvellous Horne Section a ThreeWeeks Editors' Award, but they didn't manage to collect their plaque. Our Photo Editor Kat Gollock has been caring for it ever since, and yesterday made the presentation! This year's Editors' Awards will be presented on Saturday at 10.30am at theSpace @ Symposium Hall, info at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/awards](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/awards).

itself - the use of coloured spotlights is surprisingly convincing in creating sets. That's not to downplay the performances - the Velveteen Rabbit himself would be far too weird-looking to care about without the character provided by his puppeteer. The story isn't handled with great originality, but it doesn't matter - this is a strikingly visual performance.

C eca, 1-27 Aug, 10.45am. tw rating 4/5 | [Katherine Cunningham]

## COMEDY

**Basic Training**

Underbelly Productions

'Basic Training' has received a cherished Fringe First award from The Scotsman in recognition of its fantastic, heart-warming script, based on a true story - imagine if 'Billy Elliot' were set in Iowa rather than County Durham - starring a working-class boy trying to find his estranged father and a career in military entertainment. This show is a master class in versatile acting, with Kahill Ashanti playing the dozens of diverse characters in his own life with astounding aplomb and unerring conviction. It contains poignancy, hilarity, and almost every other emotion in between. Pick up your phone and call

the box office straight away. You need to reserve your ticket for this extraordinary spectacle before the run deservedly sells out.

Underbelly, Bristo Square, 1-27 Aug (not 19), 6.10pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Joseph Fleming]

**The History Girls Present: A Summary Of Things So Far**

Taking up the Python schtick of funny voices, eccentric characters and kooky animated inserts, The History Girls are a crack team of female sketch comedians who could and should be a great success. Giving their summary of things so far - mainly focused on the latter half of the last millennium - the theatrically-trained trio are completely engaging; even the slightly weaker sketches in the final third are fun to watch, thanks to the ladies' brilliant acting and killer moves. All the team are given ample opportunity to shine individually, but as a group their take on the Brontë sisters is truly sublime - I'll never be able to read 'Wuthering Heights' in the same way. Silly, brilliant, historically inaccurate fun.

Assembly Hall, 2-27 Aug (not 13), 7.45pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Holly Close]

**Ladies Live Longer: Ladylike**

Ladies Live Longer

Seeming to embrace the fact that ladylike

tendencies are in fact not always desirable, Louise Fitzgerald and Victoria Temple-Morris are the kind of women who are simply inherently funny. With sharp delivery, hilarious writing, masses of wit and first-rate acting ability, there was little this pair did which did not have the audience in stitches. Satirising every kind of woman from stalker to harassed mother to Essex housewife, and adding in the odd comical song, rap or mime, they constantly surprised us with their infectious energy, originality and animation, perfectly balancing that with audience involvement. An hour in the company of Ladies Live Longer will go quicker than many others at this year's Fringe.

C nova, 2-27 Aug, 3.30pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Grace Hardy]

**Armageddapocalypse: Threat Level Dead**

Exploding Fist Productions

A rampant piss-take of the disaster/action movie genre, Armageddapocalypse follows maverick Jack Lang who must save the world from armageddon, apocalypse and the evil Volkov. Despite not being a disaster film aficionado, their dry wit and brilliantly silly characters won me over immediately. Although stunningly slick and painfully funny, there was a lovely feel of it having been written in a pub **cont>**

**seeing double: FIGURES VISION**

Edinburgh's first simultaneous farce: two venues, two shows, two audiences linked by a live video stream.

Pleasance Courtyard, 11:30am

★★★★★ The New Current  
★★★★★ Three Weeks

33 PLEASANCE COURTYARD

**Richard Tyrone Jones's Big Heart**

A spoken word show about heart failure. But with jokes.

'Ringmaster of spoken word'

★★★★★ Three Weeks

'fascinating, sobering, hilarious' New Scientist

FREE FRINGE 2012

6pm to 25 August (not 19)

Banshee Labyrinth Cinema

(Accessible Saturday matinees)

Supported by [welcome.trust](http://www.welcome.trust)

**some News**

Are you addicted to news?

**FREE SHOW**

@ Captain Taylor's Coffee House, South Bridge

5.30pm Aug 4-26 [ed.some.news.co.uk](http://ed.some.news.co.uk)

THE STAGE MUST SEE!

\*\*\*\*\* Cream of the Fringe Review

\*\*\*\*

**THE INDESCRIBABLE PHENOMENON**

GREENSIDE VENUE 231, EH7 5AB

0131 557 2124

ENDS 25 AUG 2012



**Giddy Goat**

C theatre

1-27 Aug at 12.15pm

**Cvenue 34**

ADAM HOUSE

CHAMBERS STREET

0845 260 1234

[www.CtheFestival.com](http://www.CtheFestival.com)

**JAY FOREMAN'S MIXTAPE**

BEST BITS & NEW BITS

60 mins

★★★★★

THREE WEEKS

★★★★★

BRITISH COMEDY GUIDE

★★★★★

FEST

★★★★★

CHORTLE

1.25PM (2.25PM)

19-26 AUGUST 2012

Underbelly

**JONNY-&-THE BAPTISTS**

★★★★★ 'Awesome' Fringe Biscuit

★★★★★ 'Hilarious' Remote Goat

★★★★★ 'Genius' Exeunt

★★★★★ 'Foot-tapping' Broadway Baby

★★★★★ 'It rarely gets better than this' Ed Fest

★★★★★ 'Wild, raw... fieriness & heart' The List

The hit debut act! Underbelly, 9.10pm

for more reviews plus news, interviews, podcasts and exclusive columns check out [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk)

**cont**> and rehearsed in a student dive, and these friends clearly make each other laugh. You should know the names of the foursome who devised this now, before everyone else catches on. James Moran, Lucien Young, Alastair Roberts and Mark Fiddaman – possibly the guys having the most fun on the Fringe. Go and join them.

Underbelly, Bristo Square, 1-27 Aug (not 15), 9.30pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Sarah Macartney]

### **Liam Mullone: A Land Fit For Fuckwits**

Surprisingly softly-spoken given his slightly obscene show title, “posh boy” Liam Mullone manages to combine the two very different worlds of fascism and cuddly toys, mixed in with material about judgemental parents, weddings and the lakes of Canada. Finding a good balance between whimsy, intellect and exasperation, Mullone has a great eye for comic detail - conjuring up an excellent scene with the EDL in a craft shop - though some of his stories do feel a little too long. An early discussion of class was somewhat uncomfortable, but this was soon defused by the presence of cuddly raccoon Mr Eek and eventually lost amongst the callbacks and well-woven narrative threads of the show. Definitely worth a watch.

The Stand Comedy Club III & IV, 2-26 Aug (not 13), 3.30pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Holly Close]

### **The Wonderful World Of Wilfredo**

Matt Roper I don't think I've quite seen anything as weird and wonderful as Wilfredo at the Fringe before. Personally welcoming his audience into the venue he goes on to tell them about his life through hilarious comedy songs. Ladies should watch out though, as the charming Wilfredo serenades various women in the audience, throwing roses at their feet, leaving the women swooning and the men wanting to be him. He even helped his audience get through the lull 40 minutes in, using the Wilfredo meditation to keep us like putty in his hands. A great comedy genius, I really didn't want the show to end and could have sat and listened to him all night.

Just the Tonic at The Tron, 2-26 Aug, 10.20pm tw rating 5/5 | [Lauren Simpson]

### **Frisky and Mannish: Extra-Curricular Activities**

Phil McIntyre Entertainments by arrangement with United Agents

Five stars doesn't begin to justify how amazingly talented Frisky and Mannish are. The Fringe sensations don't just parody pop songs in a fantastically witty fashion; they dance, perform hilarious sketches, wear eccentric costumes and deliver vocals that will send a chill down your spine (Frisky certainly has some pipes!). The pop educators delve into different genres of music and put their own quirky mark on them. Frisky and Mannish are like chameleons, able to impersonate renowned artists such as the Bee Gees, and sing in different styles, from opera to grime. Frisky and Mannish are the King and Queen of the Fringe Festival, and their show deserved the standing ovation and rapturous applause that it received at the end.

Assembly Hall, 1-26 Aug (not 20, 21, 22), 7.30pm tw rating: 5/5 | [Emma Obank]

### **The Great Puppet Horn**

Socio-political commentary with shadow puppets sounds ridiculous, and it is; wonderfully and creatively so. This duo produce a constant frenzy of excitement and noise, flinging fantastically crafted and inventive puppets around, along with a variety of accurate impressions, a few exaggerated accents and some very enthusiastically hummed films anthems. Pedants will particularly enjoy 'Grammar Cop', whereas those less than fond of the Iron Lady will relish her miniature alter-ego's makeover; there truly is a puppet for everyone. This is not, however, just a glorified sketch-show, as the masterful manipulation of the puppets and the careful timing make it a visual feast at break-neck speed. This horn heralds the arrival of a new age of comedy, don't miss out.

Underbelly Cowgate, 2-26 Aug (not 15), 5.30pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Jessamine McHugh]

### **Carl Hutchinson: Acceptable?**

Carl Hutchinson

Carl Hutchinson is the comedic catalyst to a good night out. As an ex-maths teacher the probability of laughs stayed high throughout this phenomenal feel-fab stand-up as he tells the crowd what is “acceptable” and what is not: “Tapas can fuck off!” for example. Things I learned from the instantly likeable Carl were that men's pants have categories, One Direction have a second autobiography, street dancers have dreams too and that teachers have secret methods of revenge. Some mirth-making use of sound and lighting animate the sketches and Hutchinson even busts a dance move or two in his Accountancy 'X Factor' finale. One Carl Hutchinson show is not enough for me: More x more x more.

Just The Tonic at The Caves, 2-26 Aug (not 14), 6.20pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Mara Docherty]

### **Casual Violence: A Kick In The Teeth**

Casual Violence! Comedy Pitch black and twisted, sketch show 'A Kick In The Teeth' is not for the faint-hearted. As the name suggests, violence is a running theme, from the homicidal, Battleships-playing supercomputer to the Poppy Man, an air of dark menace pervades the show. The sketches do take time to grow on you, but by the end the laughs are coming thick and fast, interrupted only by counterpoint moments of bleak despair. Slick and sharp, the show doesn't miss a beat, even going as far as covering scene changes with musical numbers. Fringe sketch comedy as it should be – edgy, clever and inventive – 'A Kick In The Teeth' is a dark delight.

Just The Tonic at The Caves, 2-26 Aug (not 14, 21), 10.00pm. tw rating 4/5 | Andrew Bell

### **Nick Beaton Does Not Play Well With Others**

Nick Beaton

Comedian Nick Beaton certainly doesn't play well with others, but at least he will have you laughing non-stop in one of the most natural and comfortable comedy gigs. With the enviable confidence, timing and manner of a comedian with decades of experience beyond his years, his approach to observational comedy will have you in tears. Brilliantly mocking the contradictory behaviour of human society, and the absurd nature of celebrity and fame, Beaton has no gimmick, just the talent and look of a big-time comedian. With a bit of luck, he'll have a great future; he manages to make anything funny and, even with a crowd of six, masterfully creates a great atmosphere.

The Comedy Shack, Aug 1-25, 6.15pm tw rating, 5/5 | [James Valentine]

### **Mary Bourke: Hail Mary!**

Bourke warns the audience at the start of the show that this will be unlike other Edinburgh shows. There will be no dip in the middle, no obligatory sad bits and no pretentious bits. What there will be, she says, are jokes. Proper jokes no less, not women jokes, and lots of them. And she was telling the truth: this show is truly very funny and her take on everything from Mum jokes to Twitter is laugh-out-loud funny. She has a superb delivery style and the audience loved it, with lots of little ways to get involved including an audience rating system. If you're looking for good old-fashioned, highly entertaining stand-up, then this is definitely the show for you.

The Stand Comedy Club III & IV, 3-26 August (not 13), 4.40pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Anna McDonald]

### **Jollyboat**

“Big on the pirate comedy scene”, 'Jollyboat' is an hour of musical comedy delights. The Jollyboat brothers are a talented pairing, keeping the audience amused with sibling banter between laugh-out-loud funny, and borderline offensive, songs. From a medley of pirate pop to a song about religious masturbation, expect awful puns, hilarious gags and note-perfect musical parodies. A few jokes sail close to the wind, but the brothers keep everything just on the funny side of the line. This is a slick show for the Free Fringe – even if the props do self-destruct – and it won't be long before the Jollyboat boys are boarding the fame

galleon and plundering richly deserved booty.

The Voodoo Rooms, 4-25 Aug, 12.30pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Andrew Bell]

### **The Boy With Tape On His Face – More Tape**

The Boy With Tape On His Face

My expectations of this Fringe super-hit were high. Very high. So high, I was nervous that no act could actually meet them, but the supremely talented Boy With Tape On His Face certainly did. Sam Wills's character, completely mute throughout, is completely non-threatening as he brings audience members on-stage to join in his silent comedy. This most simple of ideas is handled artfully, as is the repeated formula of setting up a scene and then watching The Boy show his volunteers how to join in to create golden, hilarious moments, varying from silly games to more delicate visual jokes. The audience is with him every silent step of the way. Believe the hype and get your ticket before it sells out.

Pleasance Courtyard, 2-25 Aug (not 14), 9.40pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Sarah Macartney]

### **School Of Comedy**

'School Of Comedy' is a sketch show starring children aged between nine and sixteen, and it's much funnier than that description makes it sound. The scarily young cast have great timing and remarkable presence for their age and the appreciative audience eats up their antics. Some of the ensemble skits are a bit weak – the kids don't have their group timing down pat yet – but the individual items are knock-outs, with the 'Youth News', 'Suri Cruise's Diary' and 'Bob Diamond Is Forever' really hitting the spot. 'School Of Comedy' also contains the best tactical F-bomb I've seen this Festival, deployed with real aplomb and precision. More than a few future stars on display here, I suspect.

Assembly Hall, 20-26 Aug, 7.40pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Andrew Bell]

## **DANCE & PHYSICAL THEATRE**

### **Meitheal and Worst Case Scenario**

max.IMEALLdance Company And Taciturn Dance Company

Placing two contrasting pieces side-by-side doesn't always work but this mixed bill showcases emerging dance talent from Edinburgh and Liverpool. On their home turf, max.IMEALLdance Company presents 'Meitheal', a piece in which six individuals find strength in each other to form a community of united power. With clear-cut lighting design from Simon Gane, their interlinking structures become accentuated; reinforcing the idea that they're stronger together than apart, which indeed they are. Then the three blonde bombshells of Taciturn Dance Company explode onto the stage with clown-like facial expressions and baggy blue trousers. 'Worst Case Scenario' dramatically and engagingly portrays the creative side of health and safety by enacting the eventualities that we all wonder about.

Dance Base, 16-25 Aug, times vary. tw rating 4/5 | [Lucinda Al-Zoghbi]

### **Natyam**

Mythili Prakash and Ensemble

For her Fringe debut, California-based bharatanatyam dancer, Mythili Prakash, presents 'Natyam', a homage to the South Indian classical dance form in which she is trained. With the musicians in place – three men on violin, vocals and mridangam – the performance begins with Suraya, an invocation to the energy of the Sun and, indeed, of the dancer and her ensemble. In a costume of glistening gold, green and red, Prakash takes to the microphone to address her audience and explain the story that follows which she depicts through mudras hand gestures. A perfect circle of light marks Prakash's space, centre stage, a shape which creates symmetry between the moving body and shadow. A breathtaking performance

which captures the heart and soul.

Dance Base, 16-25 Aug (not 20), 7.00pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Lucinda Al-Zoghbi]

## **MUSIC**

### **Saskwatch**

Saskwatch/The Famous Spiegeltent

For Melbourne nine piece Saskwatch, a gentle warm up involves a blaring, brassy wall of sound complete with boisterous horns and filling-loosening drums. Things go up another gear with the arrival of singer Nkechi Anele, who brings along a huge, soulful voice reminiscent of Aretha Franklin. Together they're an authentic sounding blend of soul and funk with the volume turned to eleven, mostly originals but with a few cheeky covers thrown in, including a funky version of Robbie William's 'Kids' that's far better than the original. Near the beginning of the set, Anele playfully coerces audience members into dancing with the promise of free CDs. She needn't have bothered: by the end, the dance floor was full anyway.

The Famous Spiegeltent, 21-27 Aug, 5.00pm tw rating 4/5 | [Dave Fargnoli]

### **Kate Daisy Grant With Nick Pynn**

Kate Daisy Grant and Nick Pynn have managed an incredible feat; capturing the dynamic DIY spirit of the Fringe, while concomitantly appearing amazingly well rehearsed and professional. Performing in a converted office space, using unique and home-made instruments this pair create some of the most electrifying music to be found at this festival. Kate evokes the spirit of Zola Jesus in her ethereal and soulful vocals, though with a lot of quaint British charm. While Nick's ability to live loop creates majestic aural soundscapes that give the sensation that one is enjoying a full orchestra (if that orchestra includes bird noises and glass harps). This is highly ambitious musicianship that is as intriguing as it is impressive; truly original artistry.

Inlingua Edinburgh, 3-26 (not 6, 13 or 20) Aug, 8.15pm

tw rating 5/5 | [Lewis Wade]

## **THEATRE**

### **Bigmouth**

SKaGeN/ Valentijn Dhaenens

Go and see 'Bigmouth' now. Valentijn Dhaenens delivers an enthralling 90 minute monologue depicting 2,500 years of oratory. Everything about this show demands superlatives. Valentkin Dhaenen inhabits his characters immediately, easily mastering transitions between improbable characters such as Goebbels and General Patton; the script is superb, speeches are chosen and placed with precision and in such a way that the audience finds exciting and fascinating contrasts and thematic unities; the sound design is exceptional, breaks are provided throughout the show by the looping and layering of melodies and fragments of speech creating spellbinding soundscapes. 'Bigmouth' provides a meditation on the power of speech, war, justice, race, America and hatred that might just be the most important show on the Fringe.

Summerhall, 19-26 Aug, 12.00pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Joanna Barrow]

### **Molly Naylor And The Middle Ones: My Robot Heart**

Show And tell/Escalator East To Edinburgh

I went to this with romantic woes lying rather heavily on me. I left knowing what was really important again. Molly Naylor tells a story while the Middle Ones sit cross-legged on the floor, providing the seamless soundtrack with instruments like a child's xylophone and a suitcase. But first she tells us the story behind it, involving her own break-up and a robot called Kenji who was programme to fall in love. Never does this show tip over into the saccharine, due to Naylor's wit and original comparison which brings new

insight into the illogical nature of being in love, whether robot or human; for as she points out, in scientific terms, it is very similar to being mentally ill.

Pleasance Courtyard, 1-27 (not 13), 3.25pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Lia Sanders]

### **Evil Mittiprickteatern/Jesper Arin**

We have heard of the hierarchies of abuse that are said to flourish in boys' boarding schools, thus it seems a fitting location to explore the idea of evil. Unsupported by even a lighting cue, on a stage bare apart from a single chair, Jesper Arin performs as Eric in this adaptation of Jan Guillou's novel. Arin adopts the other parts as though it was Eric playing them but still acts them convincingly. The gruesome descriptions of punches and lashes make you squirm but are never used in a sensationalistic way. Ultimately the play refuses to simplify by providing any clear answers, leaving us uncomfortably pondering the questions it raises and wondering about the evil lurking in all of us.

The Bongo Club, 21-25 Aug, 1.00pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Lia Sanders]

### **Firing Blanks Fine Chisel**

Firing Blanks is an exquisitely crafted piece of theatre that portrays the emotional fallout from male infertility. Although initially I was unimpressed by the cliché concept of a man unburdening himself to a stranger he meets on a park bench, it was an absolute pleasure to be proven wrong over the course of the show. Robert McLoughlin gives a heartbreaking performance as he comes to terms with the truth of his situation, and creative cutaways depicting the relationship he'll have with his donor child are beautiful but harrowing in their truth. I urge you to see this play, the questions it raises about masculinity and fatherhood are ones we should all consider.

Zoo Venues, Aug 19-27, 2.00pm tw rating 5/5 | [Joanna Barrow]

### **Solve**

Bracket Theatre

'Solve' has the sort of premise that can cripple a show – state enforced Russian roulette to reduce overpopulation – but thanks to the subtlety of the script and the consummate skill of the cast it turns into an hour of brilliant, tense and involving theatre. Focusing on the reactions of those called to “solve”, this play is in turns warm, affecting and terrifyingly threatening. The cast are outstanding, from the horribly believable sex offender to the terrified just turned 16 year old, although particular mention goes to the decent but haunted Edward, who is the lynchpin of the show, drawing the audience in to the world of “solving”. Emotional, gut punch theatre of the highest order, 'Solve' is a must see.

theSpace On The Mile, 20-25 Aug, 7.05pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Andrew Bell]

### **Thread**

Nutshell

Down a narrow alleyway in a tiny church hall, the audience is invited to take part in the 20th and final Burntisland Beetle Drive before sharing in the memories of lifelong friends Izzy, Joan and William. It's an absolute delight, as the cast of three play out various passages from their lives, creating an authentic picture of small town Scottish life, in a uniquely intimate performance space that at times sees the actors virtually performing in the audience's laps. It is warm, funny and builds towards a heartbreaking end that could leave even the most stoic of souls with a lump in their throat. Shows like this are what make the Fringe so great. I can't recommend it highly enough.

Assembly St Mark's, 3-26 Aug (Not 6, 13, 20), times vary.

tw rating 5/5 | [Iain Martin]

## **ThreeWeeks**

Editors & Publishers: Chris Cooke and Caro Moses  
Published by ThreeWeeks Publishing a division of UnLimited Media, 221 Shoreditch High Street, London, E1 6PJ  
www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/contacts  
www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/advertising