

# ThreeWeeks

## EDINBURGH



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# C the Festival



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ThreeWeeks

Jonathan Prag  
**Classical Guitar**

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'Daring... imaginative'  
Stage, Must See

Kipper Tie Theatre with C theatre  
**Our Island**

2-27 Aug 1.20pm C too



C presents... with Showdown Productions  
**News Smash**

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ThreeWeeks

C theatre  
**Giddy Goat**

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★★★★★  
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Dead Posh Productions  
**Still Life (also known  
as Brief Encounter)**  
2-27 Aug 3.20pm C aquila



Showdown Productions  
**Xavier Toby:  
Binge Thinking**  
2-27 Aug 6.00pm C nova



London Gay Men's Chorus Ensemble  
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Kipper Tie Theatre with C theatre  
**The Ugly Duckling**

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## Remembering an Edinburgh Festival champion

**You do know that if it wasn't for a horse, there wouldn't be an Edinburgh Festival, don't you?**

Well, we might be exaggerating slightly, but way back in 1945, when the Edinburgh International Festival was first being conceived, one of the event's earliest champions was Lady Rosebery, who also provided funding for the first festival programme in 1947. And some of that money - the history books tell us - came from the winnings her husband Lord Rosebery had made when one of the horses he owned, Ocean Swell, won the Derby and the Jockey Club Cup in 1944.

Recognising Ocean Swell's role in helping what is now the world's greatest cultural party to first emerge way back in the mid-1940s, one of the Festival's newest venues - and a new year-round cultural space for the city - Summerhall, has just unveiled a statue in honour of the horse,

pictured here with legendary Fringe impresario Richard Demarco, who is presenting events as part of this year's Summerhall festival programme.

A Summerhall spokesman told ThreeWeeks: "Ocean Swell, whose winnings at the 1944 Derby and Jockey Club Cup were used by Lady Rosebery to pay part of the costs of the first Edinburgh Festival, bridges a link between what Summerhall is doing now and the site's history. The Summerhall Brewery used horse and cart to deliver its beer. And when the brewery closed, the site became the home of the Royal Dick Veterinary school, which was initially founded for the treatment of horses, cows and pigs. The statue also pays homage to the founding of the Edinburgh Festivals, and the unique founding principles employed to this day".

Read about Summerhall's festival programme at [www.summerhall.co.uk](http://www.summerhall.co.uk)

## News Bites

### First Edinburgh Festival awards presented for 2012

The Edinburgh Festival's many awards have already started to be dished out, with The Scotsman presenting Fringe First prizes to new play productions 'Mark Thomas: Bravo Figaro!' (Traverse), Ontroerend Goed's 'All That Is Wrong' (Traverse), Pepperdine University's 'Why Do You Stand There In The Rain?' (C), Vicky Araico Casas's 'Juana In A Million' (Pleasance Dome) and The Group Theatre Of Helsinki's 'Continuous Growth' (Pleasance Dome).

Meanwhile, broadsheet rival The Herald has handed out some of its Angel Awards, to 'Mies Julie' (Assembly Hall), Rob Drummond's 'Bullet Catch' (Traverse), New Rope String Band (Famous Spiegeltent), Mike Oldfield's Tubular Bells For Two (Assembly George Square) and Assembly Roxy's entire Russian season. Oh, and to Mark Thomas for 'Bravo Figaro!', just in case the Fringe First was feeling lonely in his dressing room. The Herald also has an outstanding achievement gong called the Archangel, which went last week to 'The People Show 121: The Detective Story' (at Assembly George Square).

As more awards start to be unleashed, we'll document them all at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/festivalawards](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/festivalawards). And don't forget our ThreeWeeks Editors' Awards. These go to the ten things that the ThreeWeeks editors believe made this year's Edinburgh Festival extra special. Winners can be people, plays, productions, companies, venues or even whole festivals. This year's Editors' Awards will be presented at theSpace @ Symposium Hall on Saturday 25 Aug at 10.30am. More info at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/awards](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/awards)

### Politics Festival kicks off at Parliament once again

A certain Gordon Brown is among the people set to appear at this year's Festival Of Politics, which kicks off this weekend at the Scottish Parliament in Holyrood, and which will continue the following weekend (so 17-25 Aug).

Malcolm Rifkind and Jack McConnell are among the other political heavyweights to appear, while Louise Welsh, Iain Banks and the Mull Historical Society will represent the creative community in an eclectic programme under the header of 'Politics. Culture. Creativity. A Force for Positive Change'. Also look out for the ThreeWeeks 3 To See recommended Politics Festival events: 'Libraries In The Digital Age' at 1.30pm on 17 Aug, 'An Incredibly Brief History Of Political Satire' on at 10.30am on 18 Aug, and 'NGOs Against Modern-Day Slavery' at 3.30pm on 24 Aug.

Commenting on this year's political fest, the Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament, Tricia Marwick MSP, remarked: "The Festival Of Politics shows the kind of innovation that sets the Scottish Parliament apart from others in engaging both the head and the heart. While debate and discussion remain the bedrock, we have added contemporary art, music and theatre to our programme that continues to push boundaries".

She added: "This year's Festival Of Politics continues to offer an exciting and intelligent addition to Edinburgh's festivals season. We are delighted to be part of these internationally renowned cultural events".

The full programme is online at [www.festivalofpolitics.org.uk](http://www.festivalofpolitics.org.uk).

## Are you sitting comfortably? Let the marathon begin

**Mark Watson may have stopped marking each Fringe with some crazy marathon of a show, but other non-stop 24 hour extravaganzas have appeared to take their place. And this year that includes what we are reliably informed is the first ever "24 hour storytelling marathon".**

The people behind the Grant's True Tales Festival Of Storytelling, the main show of which led our reviewer to say "it reminds us how intriguing the forgotten art of personal narrative can be", are wrapping up their 2012 Fringe activities this week - pretty much as this issue of ThreeWeeks hits the streets - with 24 hours of back-to-back storytelling, featuring tales from the likes of Ophira Eisenberg, Brad Lawrence, Martin Dockery, David Dinnell, David Dobbs, Rad Radcliff and Julie Kertesz.



The proceedings will be overseen by the True Tales Master Storyteller Peter Aguero, who told ThreeWeeks: "I'm really excited about taking part in the 'Grant's True Tales 24 Hour Storytelling Marathon', as not only is it a totally unique event at the Fringe but it's also something that's never been tried before".

He continues: "We'll be working alongside a host of different performers, some professional, many amateur, and we'll also be involving the audience in open mic sessions. The best thing about it is the fact that anyone and everyone can get involved - there's no money in storytelling, we're just doing it because we love it and enjoy the connection that it creates between us and the audience - something that really fits with the ethos of what the Fringe is all about".

The marathon kicks off at midday on Wednesday 15 Aug at Riddles Court, and runs for 24 hours, obviously. More at [www.facebook.com/grantswhisky](http://www.facebook.com/grantswhisky)

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## CARO WRITES...

### Gosh, those days just slip away once it's all started, don't they?

Like very slidey beads off a very slippery bit of string. I keep thinking I'm going to have a day to catch up, but I never do. Once the work on one Weekly Edition is finished, the next one is demanding to be started. By the time I've finished selecting reviews for a Daily Edition, I'm busy sorting through more reviews and features for the website... there really is not a moment to breathe.

But that's my life. Not yours. At this stage in the Festival, I am going to recommend that you give yourself a little time off. Yes, I realise you may be a relentlessly busy actor or comedian who is trying to pack in a full Festival of show-seeing in addition to appearing in four shows a day. Or an addicted theatre-goer with not a moment to spare from immersing yourself in, er, immersive theatrical experiences (immersive's very much where it's at these days, right?). Or you are one of those tireless promoters, or publicists, or talent scouts, and you have to make sure you don't waste a second.

But honestly, if you are going to be Fringing until the death, it really is time to have a few hours away from it all. I promise you that when you return, it will all seem even better. So take yourself off to the beach for the morning (it's only half an hour on the train to North Berwick) or head off for a turn around the Botanics, or, and this is my best suggestion so far, spend an afternoon at the much more relaxed Edinburgh International Book Festival - it began at the weekend - in the leafy gardens at Charlotte Square.

But before you do that, read this issue of ThreeWeeks, because yet again, in addition to lots of reviews, we've got a great line up of features for you. Guest columnists John Fleming and Lynn Ruth Miller kick things off for us again, but we also hear from Paul O'Mahoney from 5/5 show 'Unmythable' and ace magicians Morgan & West. And then there are the Q&As: we hear from the up and coming playwright Molly Taylor; the folks behind the brilliant show 'Sealand'; sketch comedy stars The Ginge, The Geordie and The Geek; comedic multi-tasker Dan Nightingale; Fringe cabaret legend-in-the-making Tricity Vogue; the talented team from Jackinabox Productions; Fringe veteran and classical guitarist Jonathan Prag; Alexander Wright, the brain behind the brilliant 'Beulah'; and popular Flamenco-focused puppets Lucia and Scot. Yes, that's right. Puppets.

Oh, and I didn't even mention our cover star Tony Law, one of our all time Fringe favourites. Don't miss his Q&A on page 8. Or I'll be cross.

Caro @ ThreeWeeks

## Lynn's letter to Edinburgh: Now it's time to enjoy yourself

### SP COLUMN

**Lynn Ruth Miller had to sit this Fringe out with her foot in a cast. But that's not stopping her from sharing some thoughts with Edinburgh performers from the other side of the Atlantic...**

I really love the second week of the Festival. By that time, I am comfortable with my show; I understand the limits of my venue and I have an established routine to bring in my audiences. I know where I want to flyer and when the best times are. And I have figured out the times when I can rest and the times when I am not too stressed to catch a few other shows. The Festival all comes together for me in this week.

Last year, I did my comedy show at Sweet Grassmarket. The performances blew hot and cold through the first week. Audiences were fair but not great, and not one reviewer managed to come see me. On the last Saturday night of that week, I had a full house and you know how unusual that can be. The room was filled with people I not only knew but fans who had been following me for the past six years. How could I fail? Filled with false confidence. I

stood before these people who so wanted me to be amazing and did my routine. No one laughed. Oh, there were smiles and a chuckle or two. Every now and again, I heard a hearty guffaw... but not one joke really caught fire. The technician, who felt my pain, told me, "They LOVED the show, Lynn Ruth. They all listened to every single word you said". And I replied, "I am a comedian. I want them to laugh".

I trudged home in the rain that night and thought seriously of throwing the last seven years into the nearest bin and taking up lap dancing. I was ashamed and distraught. However, instead of shopping around for some hemlock to drink, I cried bitter tears to that wisest, most philosophical and kindest of men: Sweet Venues founder Julian Caddy. Julian thought for a moment, and then he said: "You know what, Lynn Ruth. You're not having FUN on that stage".

And then I understood why the first week is so difficult. Those first seven performances, I was worried about my timing; I was adjusting to incessant rain; I was trying to find the places I could settle in for a meal; I was constantly distracted by all the friends I was seeing for the first time in a year. My performance was only one of hundreds of things on my mind. It was incredibly difficult to



focus totally on my show.

By the time I finished that first week, all my variables were in place and I could give my full attention to the one thing I came to Edinburgh to do: my show. I had my content under control and I could see the tone and the slant that was most comfortable for me. I established my networking and I'd scheduled all my late night promotional appearances. For the first time in a lot more than seven days, I had time to breathe. That is why it is in the second week of the Fringe that you can have a good time.

And that is just what I did. I started having fun and so did my audience. When you think about it, what else did I want to happen? Do I want national recognition? Well, maybe, eventually. Do I want five star reviews? Well, of course I do. But that isn't the real reason I came to Edinburgh. I came

to get better at what I do. I love performing and if that love doesn't show, I am not doing my job. If I want my audience to have a great time, I have to have fun too.

I am hoping all of you are beginning to enjoy yourself too, now that the first week has come to an end. That is when you figure out that this Festival isn't about the reviewers that haven't got to your show, or the people who didn't particularly care for what you do. It isn't about the rain or the fatigue. It is about the marvellous friends you are making and the beautiful opportunity you have to do one show over and over and over until you get it right... not for the audience... but for yourself.

Lynn has some more Week Two tips for you in the full column at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012LRM2](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012LRM2)

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## Fleming's Fringe: Seeking some stunts most cunning

### SP COLUMN

**Malcolm Hardee Comedy Awards organiser and prolific blogger John Fleming writes...**

I started the Malcolm Hardee Comedy Awards because I felt the Fringe had become too responsible and respectable. It was / is now part of the career path of aspiring comedians.

The name Malcolm Hardee remains unknown to the woman in a Leamington Spa bus queue. Modern Fringe performers almost see her as their target audience. Malcolm did not come to the Fringe to get on TV. He came because he could get drunk, make some money, get sex and had a licence, under the guise of the Fringe, to be anarchic.

He (and Arthur Smith) wrote a review of his own show, submitted it to The Scotsman under the name of one of the paper's critics - and they published it! He drove a tractor, naked, through American performance artist Eric Bogosian's show. Eric had annoyed him, so he annoyed Eric. Likewise, American ventriloquist David Strassman annoyed Malcolm, so he abducted David's hi-tech dummy, held it to ransom and sent it back to Strassman piece by piece, demanding hard cash.

But Malcolm (who drowned in

2005) was much-loved in the comedy business and could spot talent at 200 yards in a thick mist. He nurtured more comedy talent in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s than you could fit into many a TV comedian's ego. He helped many of today's big TV names - some of whom would not return his phone calls after they bought their second Armani suit.

So the main Malcolm Hardee Award For Comic Originality seeks to celebrate risk-taking. The more recent Act Most Likely to Make a Million Quid Award seeks to find more mainstream acts. And then... And then... we have the Cunning Stunt Award. This started in 2008 when comedian Gill Smith sent me an e-mail saying she was nominating herself for the Malcolm Hardee Award on the basis she could then logically put on her posters 'MALCOLM HARDEE AWARD

NOMINEE'. "I think Malcolm would have approved" she added.

"Yes," I thought, "he would". So we created a new Cunning Stunt Award for best Fringe publicity stunt and we gave it to Gill before she could give herself an award. Last year, Kunt & The Gang and their éminence bald Bob Slayer got the award for their 'Cockgate' stunt, in which paper penises were stuck on everyone else's posters all over Edinburgh. Personally, I did not like the stunt itself, but they built up an extraordinarily effective publicity campaign on the slender back of it.

'Cockgate' did not appear until about halfway through last year's Fringe - roughly where we are this year - so I am praying for another unexpected stunt. At the moment, contenders might include Stuart Goldsmith, who turned the Fringe

Programme's ridiculous censorship of his 'PRICK' show as 'PRICK' into an effective piece of publicity. And I rather admired Chris Dangerfield, who got his show Sex Tourist sponsored by an Edinburgh escort agency - anyone who takes his flyer gets a 10% discount on the agency's wares. Dubious taste is no barrier to winning an award.

At the other end of the spectrum, Charmian Hughes had a 'knitathon' in which punters were encouraged to knit throughout her 'Charmageddon!' show (about the end of the world). She then used the half-knitted garment(s) as part of an erotic 'Dance Of The Seven Cardigans' at the end of the show.

But none of these truly excite me. There is no Malcolm Hardee element of danger. No real authority-annoying anarchy. Where are the Naked Balloon Dance and Banger-Up-The-Bum elements? PR man Mark Borkowski twice - twice! - managed to get Edinburgh Council in a tizzy by claiming French troupe Archaos were going to juggle chainsaws. They were not. But it got acres of publicity. Malcolm's erstwhile comedy troupe The Greatest Show On Legs are in town from 22nd August. Is their anarchy-stewn inspiration forgotten?

John Fleming writes a daily blog at [blog.thejohnfleming.com](http://blog.thejohnfleming.com)

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Metro



The List



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# JIM JEFFERIES

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## An isolated territory - Alchemists on Sealand



Photo: Kat Gollock

**'Sealand' intrigued us from the start. A 'broken Britain' themed piece, inspired by the rather bizarre story of the real life sea fort principality, it had a lot of promise. Then our reviewer saw the show and was entranced, making us determined to track down Luke Clarke and Anthony Stephen Springall from The Alchemist, the recently formed company behind the show, to ask some questions.**

**TW: For the uninitiated, tell us about the real Sealand?**

Luke: The real Sealand was set up in 1967 by Roy Bates. After realising one of the old World War II sea forts in the North Sea was outside British territorial waters, he and his wife started to live on it and claimed it as an independent sovereign state. He gave himself the title of prince and his wife the title of princess, and a legal battle ensued. His son still lives there today.

**TW: When did you first learn about the real life Sealand story, and how did it inspire the new play?**

Luke: I found out about the real Sealand while flicking through a news website. I was looking for the perfect place to set the play, some where isolated and cut off from the mainland. Sealand ticked every box. The real story is fascinating, but their reason for creating Sealand seemed to stem from them wanting publicity. In my story I ask, if someone really wanted to start a new nation, would it be possible and how would they go about achieving it?

**TW: Recent economic woes also influenced the play, didn't they?**

Luke: Yes. As a recent graduate, I was struck one day (as most students are, I think) by the realisation that I would soon be entering into a climate that offered me little to no employment opportunities. The play is my response to the recession, the economic down turn and the feelings that both students and working adults have toward broken Britain at the moment. However, the play also explores the

strength of family and the divide between the youth of today and the older generation

**TW: It sounds like there are parallels with some other attempts-to-create-a-Utopia stories - Alex Garland's 'The Beach' comes to mind - did any other works inspire you?**

Luke: 'The Beach' certainly has some parallels, though I would say the film 'Mosquito Coast' was more of an inspiration. I think like a lot of utopia stories, it's never about the new place you're creating, it's about what's wrong with the place you've come from, and why you had to leave it.

**TW: How have you gone about recreating an isolated sea platform on stage?**

Anthony: We enlisted the help of Charlie Robb, a graduate designer from The Wimbledon School of Art. To translate the feeling of claustrophobia and isolation onto the stage, she designed a raised platform where the actors are forced to live on top of each other. Using a simple pulley system we

were able to add another level to the set, the basement.

**TW: Tell us about your backgrounds, have you written/directed and produced before?**

Anthony: We have just graduated from the Contemporary Theatre Course at East 15 Acting School. During training Luke devised and performed in the National Theatre Studio's production of 'Doing The Idiots' and the Georgian National Theatre's production of 'Touch Me'. He's also directed at the Southwark Playhouse and The Nottingham Arts Theatre. Though 'Sealand' is his first full length play. This is my fourth year at the Edinburgh Fringe, I composed and produced 'Facebook: The Musical' in 2009, transferred to the Arts Theatre London with the Hartshorn-Hook production of 'A Tribute To The Blues Brothers live' in 2010, and produced 'Perfection' by Charlotte Josephine last year. 'Sealand' is the first production for our new company The Alchemist.

**TW: Do you think Edinburgh is a good place for premiering new work?**

Anthony: Edinburgh is the perfect platform for a new piece of theatre, providing you can pay the escalating venue guarantee! It gives you the opportunity to take risks, be creative and get what might have started as just a simple plot idea to an international audience. New work is the heart of the Fringe.

**TW: What are the biggest challenges about producing a brand new play?**

Anthony: Getting the public interested enough in new writing that they'll part with their well earned pounds. You have to know how to sell your show and be able to talk freely about it, word of mouth is God in Edinburgh and the challenge is to get an audience that will then go and talk about your show.

**TW: What are the best bits?**

Anthony: The best thing about producing this show is the cast and team behind our new company. They're passionate and committed to giving the public an hour of pure theatre.

**TW: And finally, beyond the Fringe, what are your future plans for The Alchemist?**

Anthony: We plan to tour 'Sealand' in 2013. And we both have a number of other productions in the pipeline. But for next year's Fringe Luke, Charlie and I, are planning a totally different theatre experience to this year. Live music, giant puppets, acrobatics and of course time travel. And that's all I'll say for now.

**SEE LUKE & ANTHONY'S SHOW**  
Sealand, Zoo, 9-27 Aug, 5:15pm

**LINKS:** [www.thealchemisttheatre.co.uk](http://www.thealchemisttheatre.co.uk)

## Transported to the Fringe: Molly Taylor

**As a long term users and lovers of public transport, the ThreeWeeks editors were immediately drawn to Molly Taylor's new play, 'Love Letters To The Public Transport System'. And if our reviewer's opinion is anything to go by (hint: it is), the resulting piece of theatre is really something special. Molly spoke to ThreeWeeks about the show, and its journey to the Fringe.**

**TW: Tell us about the concept behind 'Love Letters...'**

MT: 'Love Letters' was born out of a pretty heady love affair, and a time in my life when lots of exciting things were happening. And I got a bit obsessed with the idea of timings, how I'd been in the right place at the right time, and how other people had played their part in that process. And that included the bus and train drivers who got me about every day. So I set myself a task, to see if I could find the

## Standing out from the crowd: The Ginge, The Geordie and The Geek

**Fringe success story The Ginge, The Geordie and The Geek have been appearing around Edinburgh in their underpants (on posters, obviously) for a number of years now. They've proven popular with ThreeWeeks reviewers and Fringe punters alike, so we decided it was time to find out about the secret to their success. Other than the pants. And also about the BBC pilot we'd heard about on the grapevine.**

**TW: Let's start at the start, how did you guys come together in the name of comedy?**

GGG: We trained together as actors at the Royal Scottish Academy Of Music

TW

public transport workers who were responsible, to find out more about them, and to thank them.

**TW: Once you'd decided to create a piece around public transport, you started with some real life stories. Where did those come from, and how did they develop into the play we can now see?**

MT: I was really lucky that a few brilliant stories from friends and colleagues sought me out. So I did a couple of interviews with folk who had had really significant and memorable experiences on public transport - journeys that had altered the course of their life in some way - and I transcribed the interviews and then re-wrote them in my own words, as short stories essentially, and then tried to weave them into the piece.

**TW: The play had an acclaimed work-in-progress airing last year, how has the final piece developed from there?**

MT: If anything, it's simpler! It's a very self-contained piece, and I had to accept that simplicity was the key - of course I wanted puppets and pyrotechnics and a massive set - but I think that was because I was worried the writing wouldn't stand up to scrutiny! This time round I've worked with a director called Graeme Maley, who suggested staging ideas and helped finesse my performance. I was thrilled that the work-in-progress was so well received, but at that time I was just trying to get through the show and

remember all the bloody lines, so this time I feel a bit more confident about how it should be performed.

**TW: How did you begin working with the National Theatre Of Scotland?**

MT: I first starting working with them in 2006. I ran the education and outreach project that went alongside 'Wolves In The Walls', so I developed a really good relationship with their Learn department. In 2008 I spent a year as an associate, and it's then I first started flinging ideas around about making my own work.

**TW: How has your writing style developed and advanced thanks to the NTS programme?**

MT: They've got an amazing team in their Artistic Development department, and I was really lucky to work with a series of great literary managers who gave me enormous feedback on my writing, and Caroline Newall who produced the show last year. She's an absolute legend, and has brilliant creative instincts.

**TW: Does being a performer yourself have an impact on your playwriting?**

MT: Yes! When I was re-reading the script before I went back into rehearsals I was thinking "who on earth wrote this, this is so bloody WORDY!" As a performer I reckon I'm quite hard on myself as the writer, because I've got an instinct about what's play-able, or how I want a line to sound. Sometimes I will just

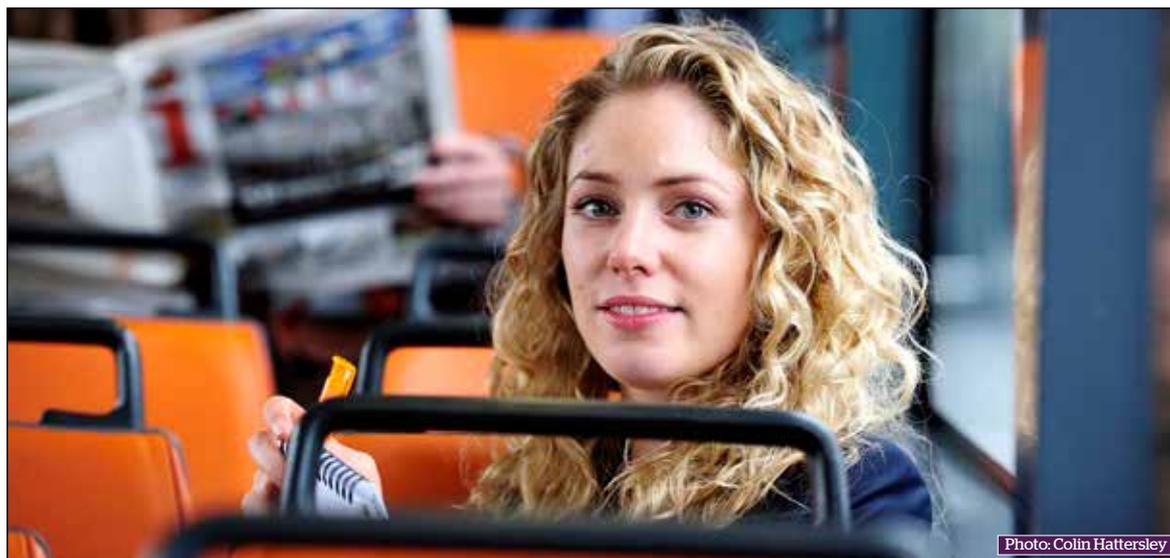


Photo: Colin Hattersley

stare and stare at the same sentence until it becomes a line I wouldn't be embarrassed to perform! So you go through quite a severe filtering process, trying to needle out the rubbish text from the good stuff. And as the sole performer, if I wouldn't be happy to perform it it doesn't go in!

**TW: Is the Edinburgh Fringe a great place to present work like 'Love Letters...?'**

MT: Yes, I think so. What's lovely about the Fringe is that it supports work on all scales and stages, and story-telling is a massive part of that programme. Also there's a huge transitory audience who come here from all over the world,

so presenting a piece about public transport seems apt, without those networks very few of us would be able to get here in the first place!

**TW: Were there any stories you discovered in developing the piece that don't appear in the play, but which interested or amused you?**

MT: Yes, there were lots, but they're probably not printable! I did hear an amazing story from a woman who had stopped a bus one night when she was pished - she literally jumped out into the road and stopped it because it was her last bus and she'd have missed it. On the bus was a guy who'd been stabbed, and the driver was hurtling to

the hospital, going through red lights, speeding all the way there, and this woman had to sit with the injured man and hold his hand through the whole thing. The guy survived. And she claimed that without that bus driver, then, well, who knows...? I'm sure there's acts of heroism like this every day on public transport, but they are the stories we don't always get to hear.

Find out about Molly's own thoughts about public transport in the full interview at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012MT](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012MT)

#### SEE MOLLY'S SHOW:

National Theatre of Scotland Presents Love Letters To The Public Transport System, The Assembly Rooms, 1-26 Aug (not 9), 6.15pm.

TW

And Drama a decade ago. We all then jobbed about as actors for a few years but didn't make our fortunes, so we decided to make a sketch show instead. It was blind faith. We approached it as a business and said we wanted a TV pilot after three Edinburghs. Looking back it seems mad, as we now know how hard it is for sketch groups to get their own shows. So the fact that we got a BBC pilot at the start of the year feels amazing. We're very lucky.

**TW: You seemed to quickly build a following at the Fringe despite**

**having a self-promoted show - was it as easy as it looked?**

GGG: It was insane!!! We moved out of our London flats to afford to come up, so failure was never an option. We probably worked fourteen hours a day in the first year to make sure we got an audience. It's not just about flyer-ing, it's the whole promoting package you need to get perfect, and we just learnt on the job. By the end of that first year we'd sold 3000 tickets, which had us gobsmacked. Even with all the work, we were expecting to lose a packet! Again, there was an element of luck. Actor James McAvoy and Nathan

Connolly from Snow Patrol saw our London previews and loved the show, so we got quotes from them and that probably helped ticket sales. As did the silly name (which industry people don't like very much, but Joe Public do). And the picture of us in our pants helped a lot as well!

**TW: Ah yes, that photo! It has certainly served you well. Do the capes and pants ever feature in your shows? And are you planning on using the same photo concept forever?**

GGG: The photo has helped sell a lot

of tickets. The image is striking and in amongst a sea of comedian's faces, it really sets us apart! In past shows we've started in our pants before getting into the actual sketches wearing our usual costume of black cargos and white polo shirts, but this year has been very hectic for us and we've all eaten a lot of take aways, so it's much kinder for all of our fans if we don't subject them to our semi naked chips and cheese ridden bodies. Although the Geordie does have to wear a skin tight morph suit at one point! The photo concept is our branding so yes, we will use it forever. It's a bit of a metaphor for what we represent and who we are: three blokes without pretension and always up for a laugh. It's a striking image and, love it or hate it, it hopefully makes us stand out from the crowd, just like our comedy.

**TW: For the uninitiated, tell us what we can expect from a GGG show.**

GGG: It's a feel-good populist sketch show with 32 sketches in 55 minutes. Big punchlines, lots of jokes, silliness, big characters, clean humour, no swearing and a brilliant 80s soundtrack. One of the things we're most proud of is the fact that you can bring your 12 year old kid and your gran and the whole family can enjoy it. It's not easy to achieve, and the show is constantly evolving, but we've sold out every day so far with great audience reactions so it's definitely worth a punt if you haven't seen us before.

**TW: So, tell us about this BBC pilot.**

GGG: The pilot was brilliant. We got to work with a fantastic new team of people while managing to stay true to our own style of comedy. We shot the whole thing in Glasgow and worked with a brilliant director called Mandie Fletcher who has previously directed shows like 'Blackadder', 'Roger And Val' and 'Absolutely Fabulous'. Mandie has so much experience of what works for television and it was fascinating to see how we could adapt comedy ideas and make them work on the small screen. We did the live studio filming in front of 300 people which was terrifying, but they seemed to love it which was a real buzz.

**TW: You obviously love doing the Fringe; what are the best bits and worst bits of doing a show here?**

GGG: The best bits are those audiences that really get the show. The ones that clap between sketches and generally make the atmosphere amazing. The worst bit is the lack of sleep and alcohol poisoning!

Find out more about the pilot and doing two Fringe shows a day in the full interview at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012GGG](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012GGG)

#### SEE THE SHOW:

The Ginge, The Geordie And The Geek - All New Show 2012, Just The Tonic at The Caves, 1-26 Aug (not 14), 4.45pm and 7.45pm.

LINKS: [www.gingegeordiegeek.com](http://www.gingegeordiegeek.com)

TW



Photo: Stuart Armitt



Photo: Stuart Armit

## Dan Nightingale: Well conceived notions?

### ©© INTERVIEW

**We were impressed with the concept: take nearly-twelve ill conceived ideas and turn them into one winning show. Then our reviewer was impressed with results. A Q&A had to follow.**

**TW: I think we can guess the premise of the show, but tell us the basics, and how the idea came about.**

DN: It's obviously a show of all the ideas I had for shows. The Fringe Programme deadline was upon me and I didn't like any of the ideas I'd had enough to do them for an hour, so I thought it might be funny to do them all. And I have. It's an insight into the creative comedic process of an indecisive stand-up. It's ended up being a really fun show to put together and perform. There's a lot of variety in what I'm talking about and it's interesting to see people's reactions to each section of the show. I've done a fake poster for each one and good God do I look ridiculous in some of them.

**TW: Eleven and half ideas for Fringe shows - ill conceived**

**they may be, but were you not tempted to hold onto these for eleven and half years of Festivals?**

DN: No, the next eleven and a half years of shows need to be much better conceived than this lot.

**TW: Or perhaps you could have sold them on to eleven and half other comedians desperately trying fill out their Fringe Programme forms?**

DN: That could be a good way to make some money earlier in the year. Sell on the duffers and keep the gems.

**TW: What persuaded you back to Edinburgh this year?**

DN: I love the Festival and this is my fourth full month of being here. Last time I was here properly, in 2008, I did my first full hour. It went pretty well, but I knew I needed a little longer out of the Fringe spotlight to develop my comedy. Last year I was at home during the Festival and I actually missed being here and knew I'd be much more able to do a show to the standard I wanted.

**TW: Have you seen any good shows at this year's Fringe yet? How about 'The Eleven And Half Stolen Shows Of Dan**

**Nightingale' for Fringe 2013?**

DN: That's a fucking great shout. Good thinking. Although I've not got round to seeing many shows yet. I'll be going to see: Chris Stokes, Matt Forde, Danny Buckler, Carl Donnelly, Luisa Omelian, Danny McLoughlin, Harriet Dyer and Paul McCaffrey. I've also heard David Trent's is a great show to see. So they'd better all be prepared for me to steal their concepts.

**TW: What are the best and worst bits about doing Edinburgh?**

DN: Best bit, being in Edinburgh for a month. What an amazing place to live, even if it's just for a month. Worst - the constant temptation of late night boozing. I've done well with that so far.

**TW: Have you caught up with Auntie Christine yet? (Yeah, it's possible we read your quick quiz with The Skinny)**

DN: She's coming on the last night. Good grief that'll be interesting, because she joins in!

Get a bit more Dan by reading the full interview at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012DN](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012DN)

**SEE DAN'S SHOW:**

The 11 and a ½ ill-conceived Edinburgh Shows of Dan Nightingale, Pleasance Dome, 1-26 Aug, 6.50pm.

### ©© REVIEWS

#### Marek Larwood - Typecast Big Potato Productions

The result of a disconcerting self-Google, Marek Larwood's 'Typecast' is his attempt at definitively proving just how versatile a performer he can be. What follows is an hour of truly off-the-wall, anarchic comedy. Exploring the tropes of period drama, method acting and that most technical of disciplines, the panel show, Larwood's performance is sharp and endearingly irreverent. His satire of the recent trend for inane observational comedy is a particular highlight, and there are more than a couple of gags which leave the audience stunned into a state of "did that actually just happen?". Despite the odd moment of utter bemusement, Marek's hilarious quest to release his inner "shit swan" is a real joy to watch; a messy, crazy joy.

Pleasance Courtyard, 1-26 Aug (not 14), 6.20pm.

tw rating 4/5 | [Rebecca Low]

### TW RATINGS

- 1/5 Bad
- 2/5 Mediocre
- 3/5 Good
- 4/5 Very Good
- 5/5 Brilliant

# GARY GOLMAN

Debut show from  
"Best dead-pan act  
since Jack Dee"

(GQ)



Broadway Baby



The Venue Magazine

**FREE ENTRY**

2.45pm (1hr)

Aug 4-25

Whistlebinkies  
Venue 158  
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EH1 1LL

"... and still rarely rong"





Photo: Stuart Armitt

## Nonsense to the max: Tony Law

### INTERVIEW

**Comedian Tony Law is a Fringe veteran, not to mention a Fringe favourite, and not just with us lot here at ThreeWeeks. If you haven't heard of him you a: must be pretty new to the Festival and b: need to get along to his show as soon as you can, no nonsense...**

**TW: Your Fringe blurb promises us the 'meaning of life' in your new show. Well, sort of. Do you know the meaning of life?**

TL: Try and not be a dick. I fail daily, but I try. I attempt to be kind. And keep trying. Oh the meaning????? Ask Coldplay!

**TW: What's the plan with new show 'Maximum Nonsense', tell us more.**

TL: It's about identity and comedy, all wrapped up in a nonsense blanket. People who have watched a lot of comedy and know their onions tend to love it, noticing stuff, whatever their age. People who are newer to comedy see a crazy jumpy moving man! I'm happy about that. So the plan is up at the top of this answer.

**TW: How does it compare to last year's show (which was excellent by the way)?**

TL: It's like a step forward. Moving a little onwards. Attempting to be original (impossible) and funny for an hour, and maybe making some

points along the way without being the preachy, obvious twat that I can sometimes be.

**TW: As a comedian, does Edinburgh provide the impetus to create a new show?**

TL: Abso-fricking-lootley. The yearly panic begins around September 1st.

**TW: There are very complimentary quotes from Stewart Lee, Adam Buxton and Sean Lock on your website. Would you like to return the favour?**

TL: Heroes. Each one of them. Completely different but funny bones in all. Not craftsman but naturally funny wizards. Funny in life. Just funny. And smart. So not just funny. Funny funny smart. I lack a vocabu...

**TW: Do you share Stewart's well documented concerns about the continued growth of the more commercial end of the Fringe, or do you prefer to stay out of such debate?**

TL: I have my head too far up my own arse to give a shit. I'm doing my own thing. I need things to bang up against. So put up as many giant posters as you like. I shan't be. Got kids to feed and clothe. And make sure they're better educated than their silly father.

**TW: As a Stand performer, it must be exciting being part of a Fringe enterprise with a big new sister venue next door?**

TL: It's great. The more stuff on this side of town the better. Tommy and all

those guys are decent folks with the best intentions. Looking after the acts and treating us all like adults. Weird drinks sponsor this year though. What the hell is it?

**TW: Would you like to do something a little more theatrical again at a future Fringe? (We still fondly remember The Dinks).**

TL: Ahhh The Dinks. I think I am doing that right now on my own. Maybe someday, with someone who lives near me. Lots of amazing mental acts coming through doing great odd stuff.

**TW: And we saw your brief cameo in Tim FitzHigham and Tiernan Douieb's kids' show last Festival - have you ever considered doing a show for children?**

TL: Nah. I swear too much. Plus, I do that with my own kids everyday and it's knackered. And I loathe the kids.

**TW: Your Fringe blurb also promises clichés. What are your worst Fringe clichés?**

TL: Posters. All the genius's's here. People who write "on at a time that doesn't conflict with shows you actually want to see?" - not a cliché but just rude. And a pointless thing to say. Knob. Comics who act self deprecating but really actually think they're ok. See above. Knob.

**SEE TONY'S SHOW:**

Tony Law Maximum Nonsense, The Stand Comedy Club, 1-27 Aug, 12.30pm.

**LINKS:** [www.mrtonylaw.com](http://www.mrtonylaw.com)

### Patterson and Ranganathan Patternathan

Join James Patterson and Romesh Ranganathan for an extraordinarily hilarious hour of witty anecdotes and social cynicism. Patterson doles out hysterical tales of the first woman he brought to his mother's house and his attempt to get out of being mugged by poking fun at the mugger's trouser choice, while Romesh harks back to his not-so-careful use of sarcasm as a school teacher, and learning life lessons at the 'Avengers Assemble' film showing. Both Patterson and Ranganathan complete excellent stand up routines that are seamless and clever, and they definitely delivered more than I expected. Don't miss these two comedians, because it will most likely be the last time one can see them for free.

Laughing Horse @ The White Horse, 8-26 Aug, 3.30pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Ellie Willis]

### Yianni: Numb And Number - Free

Yianni/PBH's Free Fringe

Yianni Agisilaou manages to inject heart and hilarity into the potentially stark world of numbers. Diagnosed as mildly autistic in his early thirties, Agisilaou describes the traits of autism with good humour and sensitivity, integrating his own personal narrative into a fascinating chronological discussion about the numbers 0-10. References to Ashley Cole, toilet paper and the joy of passport stamps make the show

accessible for all, though Maths fans are unlikely to be disappointed. The comedian did occasionally seem to lose concentration and skipped over certain sections too quickly, but this may partially have been down to the presence of some unhelpful hecklers. Overall though, it's a well-structured show that's funny and informative in equal measure.

The Canons' Gait, 4-25 Aug (not 14), 4.55pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Holly Close]

### Hennessey & Friends: A History Of Violence

Miranda Hennessey

Miranda Hennessey is a force to be reckoned with, a diminutive blonde packing a powerful punch both physically and comedically: hitting, kicking and leaping through sketches about foxes, James Bond and some violently romantic dates. Brilliantly assisted by put-upon 'friends' David Seymour and Steve Chapman (both of whom manage to play female characters without turning them into fey caricatures), Hennessey is a bubbly, confident performer with a great line in accents and physical comedy. Not every sketch is perfect, but they twist and turn with such skill that weaker segments are soon forgotten, particularly as many of the recurring characters form a strongly funny backbone at the core of the show. An excellent Fringe debut for this talented team.

Underbelly, Bristo Square, 1-27 Aug (not 13), 2.50pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Holly Close]

TW

**ANDREW WATTS**  
**BORN TO BE MILD**

"STAND-UP LACED WITH A CEREBRAL CUTTING EDGE"  
★★★★ **THREEWEEKS**

AS SEEN ON: ITV'S 'STAND-UP HERO' & COMEDY CENTRAL'S 'THE WORLD STANDS UP'

**THE SHACK COMEDY CLUB (FRINGE VENUE 324)**  
1<sup>ST</sup> - 18<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST (NOT 13<sup>TH</sup>) @ 5PM / 19<sup>TH</sup> - 24<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST @ 7.30PM

**THE SHACK**  
COMEDY & CULTURE

TW

# COMEDY

Get daily comedy reviews from **ThreeWeeks**

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## Quick Quiz

### Other than your own show, who else would you recommend we see?



**Rob Beckett:** "I think Chris McCausland (at Pleasance Courtyard) is excellent and can't wait to see his show. I also want to see Batman

The Dark Knight Rises in a cinema at some point!"

Rob Beckett's Summer Holiday, Pleasance Courtyard, 1-26 Aug (not 14), 6.00pm. [robbeckettcomedy.com](http://robbeckettcomedy.com)



**Danielle Ward:** "Sarah Kendall (at Pleasance Courtyard). She's been one of my favourite "comics you've not heard of" since I started

stand-up. She's a proper master"

Danielle Ward - Speakeasy / Play Dead, Pleasance Dome, 1-27 Aug (not 7), 8.20pm. [danielleward.co.uk](http://danielleward.co.uk)



**Matt Forde:** "Danny Buckler (at Just The Tonic at The Caves) and Paul McCaffrey (at Underbelly Bristo

Square). Two proper funny men who can recreate their personas onstage. No stagecraft, no tricks, these men are the real deal. Authentic comedy at its best"

Matt Forde: Eyes To The Right, Nose To The Left, Underbelly Bristo Square, 1-26 Aug, 4.05pm.



**Sammy J:** "Felicity Ward in 'The Hedgehog Dilemma' (at Underbelly Bristo

Square), because her show was nominated for an award at just about every Australian comedy festival earlier this year.

Sammy J and Randy - The Inheritance, Underbelly Bristo Square, 1-27 Aug, 6.05pm.



**Catie Wilkins:** "I'm looking forward to seeing Nick Helm (at Pleasance Dome), Grainne Maguire (at Underbelly Bristo

Square) and Lou Sanders (at Pleasance Courtyard) because they're crazy in a good way, and also their shows don't clash with mine!"

Catie Wilkins: Joy is my Middle Name, Underbelly Cowgate, 2-26 Aug (not 14), 7.45pm. [catiewilkins.com](http://catiewilkins.com)



**Up & Over It:** "We're dying to see award-winning cabaret duo Bourgeois & Maurice (at Underbelly

Cowgate), their twisted songs on life are hilarious. Also, Jonny Woo (at Assembly George Square), performance artist and east London legend. It just happens that we'll all be sharing a flat too, so there's a slight bit of favouritism there"

Up & Over It. Back On Our Feet, 2-26 Aug 18.05 Assembly George Square. [upandoverit.com](http://upandoverit.com)



**The Beta Males:** "We saw a preview of McNeil & Pamphilon's show last month so we can confidently say that it's low-fi sketch

comedy of the highest order. We're certainly seeing it again (at Pleasance Courtyard). Also - if there's any justice in the world, everyone who reads this will go and see Jonny & The Baptists comedy blues revue (at Underbelly Cowgate).

The Beta Males in... The Space Race, Pleasance Courtyard, 1-27 Aug (not 14), 5.45pm. [thebetamales.com](http://thebetamales.com)

[www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/quickquiz](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/quickquiz)

## REVIEWS

### Well Done You - Free

Trodd en Bratt / Laughing Horse Free Festival

Less of a comedy performance and more an experiment in character acting, this duo's foray into sketch show territory is, well, sketchy. The theatrical talent - particularly of Ruth Bratt - is undeniable; with very few props or scenery, both transform themselves time and time again. The faultless accents and surprisingly good singing are high points in the performance. Indeed, though the acting is not under question, the comedy perhaps is; whilst I marvel at the chameleon-like ability of the two stars, there are few laughs to be had here - the jokes are well worn and often overstretched to last an entire sketch, and some just don't make sense.

Laughing Horse @ The Free Sisters, 2-26 Aug (not 13), 5.45pm.  
tw rating 3/5 | [Olivia Sleet]

### Luke And Harry's Dot Dot Dot

Luke And Harry

Luke Davies and Harry Carr appear to think that blurting out a non sequitur then slapping the floor and saying "touchdown!" is an adequate substitute for humour. It isn't. Sketch shows are always hit and miss, but 'Luke And Harry's Dot Dot Dot' has few hits and a lot of misses. There are moments of hope, like the menopausal mother telling her son about "the change" and there are chuckles to be found in some of the blacker sketches, but all too often Davies and Carr simply fling some random, theoretically funny, elements together - backscratcher, piles, grandchildren - and hope that laughter will follow without bothering with such niceties as punchlines or point. I like to shag cabbages! Touchdown!

Just The Tonic at The Caves, 2 - 26 Aug (not 14), 2.00pm.  
tw rating 2/5 | [Andrew Bell]

more comedy:  
[ThreeWeeks.co.uk/comedy](http://ThreeWeeks.co.uk/comedy)

5/5



### John Robertson - The Dark Room

John Robertson / PIAS / It's The Comedy You Deserve

If you don't like to get involved in your comedy, then this is not for you. However, if you like it to be interactive, you'll struggle to find better than John Robertson's show - or perhaps game show - 'The Dark Room'. The host's infectious energy does not allow for dull moments, or indeed, quiet ones, with a premise based around the audience participating in a bleak, yet somehow hilarious video game that is not won (at least not at my viewing, give it a try). In someone else's hands this idea could become tiresome, but Robertson's own charisma and incredibly loud voice keep proceedings fresh, interesting and hilarious. And loud. Cruel, well thought out, and hilarious.

Alternative Fringe @ The Hive, August 4-26, 5.00pm.  
tw rating 5/5 | [David O'Connor]

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8.50pm C Venues Aquila  
Sunday's Child's  
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## Max and Ivan Are... Con Artists

Phil McIntyre Entertainments

Unlike their criminal counterparts, Max and Ivan are staggeringly professional. The pair performed this epic sketch narrative centred on the final hustle of six con artists with nothing more than a couple of well-chosen special effects and their own sweat and blood (nearly all of it imaginary). Although it teetered on the verge of outright hilarity almost constantly, it was a bit too slick to actually fall over the edge, a fact which was more than made up for by the incredibly well-constructed plot and the creation of enough in-jokes and reference points in the hour to form a miniature comic universe. It was a pleasure to be a witness to this masterminded subterfuge.

Pleasance Courtyard, 1-27 Aug (not 14), 3.30pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Rachel Aroesti]

## Michael Mittermeier: A German On Safari

Mick Perrin for Just For Laughs Live and Eddie Izzard

Germany's top comedian had a hard journey to get to Edinburgh (he flew Ryanair), but has settled into the Fringe well. Listening to the other voices in the crowd, I'd say about seventy per cent were German, seeing this show for a fraction of the price they would back at home. The obligatory I'm-the-only-German-comedian jokes came first, followed

by the war and the English on holiday, all of which are common to other German-in-Britain comedians. However, Mittermeier is a real pro, carefully weaving stories together and pulling some of the best call-backs out of the bag at the end. There was too much lazy stereotyping for this to be excellent, but it's brilliant nevertheless.

Pleasance Courtyard, 6-27 Aug (not 13, 20), 9.30pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Claire Hoyda]

## Susan Calman: This Lady's Not for Turning Either

Underbelly Productions

For a small amount of time I feared for Susan Calman's wife. But while Susan spends most of the hour trying to convince us of the reasons why nobody should marry her, you can see why somebody would (lucky wife). She comes to the stage with orchestrated pizzazz, receiving the stadium welcome she truly deserves, and carries it through the entire performance with her chatty, I-am-your-best-friend style. If nothing were wrong in this world, her show would have an ending, but she leaves it up to us to support her in her quest (I hope this gets a theme tune too) to marry her one true love. All I can say is Calman for President!

Underbelly Bristo Square, 1-27Aug (not 13), 6.00pm  
tw rating 5/5 | [Claire Hoyda]

TW

## A magical mystery tour

### ©© COLUMN

**Time-travelling conjurors Morgan & West challenge some popular stereotypes, and offer some magical recommendations at this year's Fringe.**

"I don't like magic". When promoting a magic show, at some point someone will say those four little words. After four years doing magic at fringe festivals, we are more than used to hearing them and have come up with any number of witty ripostes. Though we still find that very idea - well - strange.

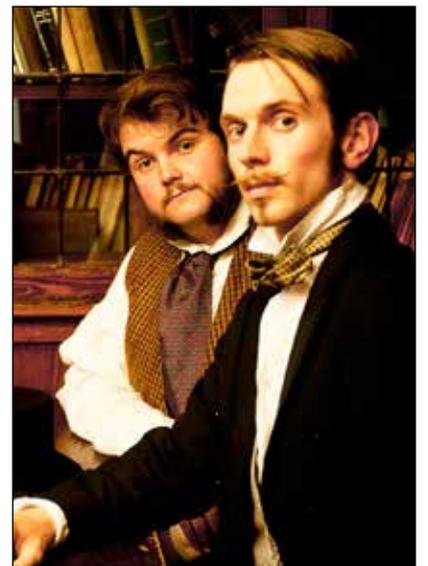
I strongly doubt a comedian flying on the Mile ever hears "No thanks, I don't like comedy". The reason? People are used to comedy. They see comedy everywhere: on the TV, in big theatres, in tiny free fringe venues, on the street, in the pub. They are spoilt for choice, and more importantly they know they have a choice. Audiences know that the irreverent style of Josie Long will be markedly different to the quick-fire puns of Tim Vine. They know that the ramshackle chaos of Pappy's will seem leagues away from the carefully crafted comic stories of Humphrey Ker. Everyone has comedy acts they like, and comedy acts they don't.

In contrast, most people have never seen a magician in real life. The

majority of people couldn't name you three different magic acts, let alone describe the differences between them. When someone says 'magician', it conjures up images of dicky bows and dinner suits, or mullets and giant collars, of girls cut in half and rabbits pulled from hats. They think of kids' parties and brightly coloured silk handkerchiefs, and often enough they think it's all a bit cheesy and all a bit tired. Well, good news ladies and gentlemen! Magic has grown up. Much as comedians have forsaken mother-in-law gags and fezzes, so too has magic moved out from the shadow of stereotype into the bright light of originality.

Take a stroll around the Fringe's comedy and cabaret strands and you will see magic acts of all shapes, sizes and styles. At the Pleasance, the world's grumpiest Magic Dragon fires his pet Chihuahua from a cannon for the entertainment of his crowds, while Tom Binns' comedy creation Ian D Montfort is contacting dead celebrities. Over at the Gilded Balloon you will find (as well as a pair of time-travelling Victorian conjurers) a crazed Swede in a jumpsuit whose chaotic style and crazed manner are a million miles from the doves-and-dinner-jackets of twenty years ago. Go elsewhere, and find Rob James, Paul Wilson, Ian Kendal or Rob Bailey, each with a very different take on the magic show.

So if you were thinking to dismiss us as a cohort of strange men in ill-



fitting suits with rabbits bulging from our sleeves, why not go and see one of the 47 (or so) magic shows at the Fringe and see for yourself? You almost certainly won't like them all, but that's the point: just as in comedy, theatre or any other broad genre represented at the Fringe, there's something for everyone and a huge variety to choose from. And it's well worth a try.

Read more from Morgan & West on the magic at this year's Fringe in the full column at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2011MW](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2011MW)

#### SEE THE SHOWS:

Morgan & West: Clockwork Miracles, Gilded Balloon, 1-27 Aug (not 14), 4.30pm.

Morgan & West: Lying Cheating Scoundrels, Gilded Balloon, Wed - Sun to 26 Aug, 12am.

TW

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## TH REVIEWS

### The Letter Of Last Resort and Good With People

Traverse Theatre  
co-production with Tricycle Theatre and Datum Point / Paines Plough

What would you do if Radio 4 ceased to exist? Unless you are a particularly unhinged Archers fan, the answer probably wouldn't be "destroy twenty million people". But this is one option the new PM must consider in 'The Letter Of Last Resort': a sharp Westminster play in which she must leave instructions to a nuclear submarine captain in case an unlikely nuclear attack wiped out the UK - and its broadcasts. Darkly comic, this take on political destruction is reminiscent of Catch 22 in questioning rational and irrational action. 'Good With People' then examines personal destruction in Helensburgh, where two characters face a dark past. Slower, more menacing, this is a good foil for the 'Letter' - and together the plays form a powerfully gripping programme.

Traverse Theatre, 4-26 Aug (not 6, 13, 20), times vary.

tw rating 4/5 | [Sarah Richardson]

### Visiting Time

Unfit Productions UK Ltd

"Oh god, it's so bloody English! Here you are with a loaded gun and we're

talking about the weather!" Best friends, worst enemies, HIV positive. 'Visiting Time' portrays the struggles of two men with drastically different personalities who envy each other, and hash out their problems with the aid of a loaded gun. Touching on sensitive issues such as assisted suicide, murder, adultery and the third world, this play offers a realistic portrayal of the relationship of two friends who have some serious problems with each other. With yummy nurses, revelations about who gave who AIDS, and a mildly amusing running gag, it's worth it just to find out what happened to the rabbit that went into the butchers.

Giided Balloon 1-26 Aug 14.30pm.  
tw rating 3/5 | [Charlotte Mortimer-Talman]

### It's So Nice

Compagnie Oh My God

Barbara Sylvain and Lula Béry are polar opposites: little and large, blonde and brunette, cautious and crazy. In fact, they bear striking similarities to the clashing 16th Century cousins (Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots and Elizabeth I, Queen of England) that their show is supposedly about. Part-lecture, part-video screening and part-physical theatre, which could be classed as either factual history or comedy, it shouldn't be humanly possible to merge all these genres into an hour and ten minute performance. Therein lies the proof of Sylvain and Béry's weird brilliance, however, which has to be seen to be appreciated! Deliciously deadpan, even the costume changes

are thoroughly entertaining. A surreal but undeniably cool fringe experience from a very exciting new company.

Institut français d'Ecosse, 4-24 Aug (not 11, 12, 18, 19), 4.00pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Stephanie Taylor]

### Woza Albert!

Market Theatre and Assembly

From Sun City to Robben Island, 'Woza Albert!' takes us across apartheid South Africa in pursuit of Morena, the second coming of Jesus. This is a genuine Market Theatre revival brimming with new life and embellishment by the two actors; there's barely a single moment of silence as they blast through the play, soaking with sweat, working embarrassingly hard for the audience. Apartheid may be over, but what the production conveys well is that apartheid was often as economic as it was racial, and it's here that the play's continued relevance comes through. Though it's occasionally hard to follow, the virtuosic performances are not, and the whole production is a pleasure and an education.

Assembly Hall, 5-27 Aug, 4.00pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Thom May]

### NOLA Look Left Look Right / Escalator East To Edinburgh

'NOLA' takes statements from eye-witnesses to the Deep Water Horizon disaster and the ensuing oil slick and stitches them together into a documentary play. The talented cast bring multiple characters to life



### Winston On The Run Fol Espoir

There are echoes of a rogue Lord Byron in this interpretation of the life of the young Winston Churchill. Born into the aristocracy, well-lettered, and off on wild escapades abroad, this breed of inspirational thinkers provides rich material for theatre. In this production from Fol Espoir, a wiry Winston, war correspondent during the Boer War, troops boldly around South Africa, finding himself in increasingly dire straits and recounting his (mostly danger-filled) capers in the semi-darkness to an elusive 'Ratty'. Sharp, wild-eyed and - dare we say audacious - Freddie Machin's performance is first-rate, and a simple stage set is put to excellent use. A stiff upper lip and an incurable sense of adventure turn this gem of new writing into a terrific piece of theatre.

Pleasance Courtyard, 1-27 Aug (not 8, 15, 22), 2.45pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Colette M Talbot]

with real skill, infusing them with personality and emotional punch, aided by the authenticity of the verbatim transcripts. However, this verbatim nature of the play makes for a lack of narrative drive, resulting in a slightly dry tale of the disaster that would have been improved by a central

story. Two years on from the spill, this play tells a bog standard tale of human cost and corporate greed that could have applied to any disaster, which is a pity, as the performances deserved better.

Underbelly Cowgate, 2-26 (not 14), 3.30pm.  
tw rating 3/5 | [Andrew Bell]

GUY MASTERSON in

# THE HALF

a COMEDY by RICHARD DORMER directed by David Calvitto

TO ACT or not TO ACT...  
That is the question

WARNING! Contains strong language!

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- ★★★★★ THREE WEEKS
- ★★★★★ EDINBURGH SPOTLIGHT
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- ★★★★★ FRINGEREVIEW.COM
- ★★★★★ THREE WEEKS
- ★★★★★ THE TIMES (1998)

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Assembly Roxy Upstairs 17:05 (65 mins)  
Tickets: £12 - £14 [www.edfringe.com](http://www.edfringe.com)

## Oddie

CalArts Festival Theater

Oddie is a one-woman show which tells the tale of a silent girl living in a rubbish dump who just wants to be seen, and follows her journey to empowerment through poetry. Aleshea Harris is charismatic and captivating, switching between very different characters impressively and taking possession of the stage with confidence. She also sings the blues beautifully, and the show mixes song and spoken word to great effect. Oddie believes she has only one talent, which is digging, but what will she uncover? Some of the ideas about art are a little solemn; good art doesn't always come from a place of pain. However, this is powerful, heartfelt and gracefully performed.

Venue 13, 4-18 Aug (not 6, 13), 11.45am.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Roz Tuplin]

## Paul Dabek Presents

Thurston PBH's Free Fringe

This is a show with an identity crisis. A one-man performance about forgotten magician Howard Thurston, its mash-up of styles is incredibly jarring to watch. Is it a historical biography, a magic show, a soap box for pseudo-philosophical waffle? It tries to be all things, but never manages to be any, which is a shame, because Paul Dabek is clearly a talented magician. The illusions are the only endearing thing about the show, but Dabek wades through boring and chunky dialogue before we get to the impressive magic tricks, which are always too fleeting to save this mess of an act. Unfortunately for both Dabek and Thurston, this is a trick that has to disappear.

The Voodoo Rooms, 6-25 Aug, 4.15pm.  
tw rating 2/5 | [Patricia-Ann Young]

## The Ugly Sisters

RashDash with Not Now Bernard

Torches, drums, lights, costume changes, silly voices, dance, music: there is not a single gimmick that isn't used to grab the audience's attention in this spectacle but our performers have just the right amount of talent to pull it off. With the brilliant live band Not Now Bernard, beautiful voices and a great rapport between performers and audience, this is a thoroughly enjoyable show. Both actresses show off their multitude of talents as they dance, sing and even beatbox their way through the tragic tale of Cinderella's less cosmetically endowed sisters. Brilliantly funny also is the decision to cast members of the (male) band as Ruby and Cinderella. Ten times more fun than the Disney version!

Northern Stage at St Stephen's, 9-25 Aug (not 13, 21), 10.00pm  
tw rating 4/5 | [Charlotte Ryan]

# It's all Greek to me - the myths demythified

## TH INTERVIEW

**Temple Theatre's 'Unmythable' is "a whistle-stop tour through the greatest Greek myths ever told" says our reviewer. Well, we like the sound of that. And to get you in the mood, the show's Paul O'Mahony is on hand to offer a little mythy enlightenment.**

As we've been hearing a lot recently, the Greeks love having a good time and to hell with the cost. Perhaps we should blame the gods - after all, if you had Zeus as a role model what would you do? He's the ultimate instant gratification, buy-now-pay-later kind of guy. This is the man (well, god, but definitely male, definitely a being with a penis) who was so enraged that Danae's father locked her up in a tower to protect her from his advances that he visited her as a shower of gold - in the process inadvertently inventing a whole sub-genre of pornography. Patience was never one of his virtues (come to think of it, I'm not sure he had any virtues) and to get his wicked way with any beautiful Greek girl he fancied he disguised himself at various times as a bull, a swan, an ant, a goat, an eagle and a pigeon. Zeus was a one-man petting zoo, just significantly more dangerous.

He was the man/god at the top, and those beneath him tended to follow his lead. Women seem to exist in Greek mythology only so that they can be wronged, and for every hero sailing off merrily with a fluffy Golden Fleece, there tends to be a slighted female abandoned somewhere lonely. Heracles was possibly the worst culprit - a serial offender who managed to work his way through three wives. Whenever he got bored of one, he would 'go mad' and 'accidentally' kill them. Or at least that was his story. He was also the ultimate strange-animal-killing-machine who is responsible for exterminating more species than global warming, disease and hunting put together. Thanks to him, you're never going to see a multi-headed Hydra in the wild (or in a zoo for that matter).

Women had a tough time, and it was no easy ride for the female immortals either. Before we ever had Miss World there was Myth World, when Paris had to choose which goddess was the most beautiful. His decision not to select Hera was almost as controversial as Stuart Pearce's omission of David Beckham although hopefully the consequences won't be quite so severe (ten years of war, a city destroyed, lots of people dying) this time round. The prize for the winner of this beauty contest (Aphrodite, since you ask) was a golden apple (the Greeks took fruit very seriously) but the losers (Hera and Athene) didn't take it lying

down. The upshot was the Trojan War, when Helen's face launched a thousand ships. Her neck and arms launched a further 300 while her legs launched a new range of fashionable sportswear.

The Greeks and the Trojans fought for ten years with Hector leading the Trojans, while Achilles was the greatest Greek fighter. After Achilles killed Hector it seemed that nothing could stop him from leading the Greeks to victory: he seemed indestructible, invincible, immortal even. But Achilles had an Achilles' heel. Achilles' Achilles' heel was his heel. Paris discovered this by shooting Achilles in the heel and killing him. So with their best warrior dead, how could the Greeks possibly break into Troy? Well how else but by building a giant wooden horse, filling it with your soldiers and then leaving it whilst pretending to sail away but actually hiding your fleet behind the nearest island, in the hope that the people you've been besieging for ten years will think it's a leaving present and then bring it into their city thus allowing your men to exit under the



Photo: Graeme Braidwood

cover of darkness to let in your army which has returned from behind the nearest island and then massacring the inhabitants in their sleep? Simple. (And that's 'simple' without an 's' at the end because 'simple' should never have an 's' at the end.)

Greek mythology is about power, controlling women and war. By the way, that sentence also works if you replace 'Greek mythology' with 'The US Republican Party'. All the strongest human emotions are found there, and

whether you are making a Herculean effort or feeling a bit narcissistic you'll probably be able to find a classical allusion that will apply to you. Whatever you're going through, the Greeks got there first so it's well worth revisiting their stories now to get a few tips on how not to deal with your problem.

### SEE THE SHOW:

Unmythable, Zoo, 3-27 August, 1.45pm.

LINKS: [www.templetheatre.co.uk](http://www.templetheatre.co.uk)

TW

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4-18 Aug 14:30

Winner, Best of Fest - Frontera Fest 2006

**Gods**

3-18 Aug 16:00

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## TW RATINGS

- 1/5 Bad
- 2/5 Mediocre
- 3/5 Good
- 4/5 Very Good
- 5/5 Brilliant

# PHYSICAL

For more ThreeWeeks dance and physical theatre reviews, interviews and features  
Check out [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/physical](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/physical)

5/5



## Flash Mob

Corrie McGuire for Objective Talent by arrangement with World Dance Management

Be it Irish, Latin or contemporary, 'Flash Mob' has it all; it is a show of diversity which sees TV dance stars come into their own as they push the limits of their bodies, passionately complementing the innovative choreography and emotive music with their talent. The result is a spectacular hour of awe-inspiring dance. Standout performances come from Alleviate and Tommy Franzen, who makes it all look effortless. Rarely do you see such a variety of dance styles performed on one stage together, but this is what gives the ending of 'Flash mob' its power. For sheer professionalism, inspiring talent and obviously some great dancing go and see it.

Assembly Hall, 5-27 Aug (not 14), 6.00pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Bethanie Pochin]

## PH REVIEWS

### Time for Fun

#### Hand Made Theatre

Hailing from St Petersburg, Russia, Hand Made Theatre light up the dreariest of afternoons with their Fringe debut, 'Time for Fun'. This hour-long choreography of the hands, ten pairs to be exact, is nothing short of a creative marvel and you may well wonder how it is possible to sustain a show like this for that long, but it is. Hands aside (for now at least), the performers, alumni of Russia's State Theatre Arts Academy, show a great command of the body, in execution and timing as well as a sensitivity to themselves and each other. You've got to hand it to them, this no thrills production is inventive, ingenious and warms the heart of rain-soaked Edinburgh.

Assembly Roxy, 5-27 Aug, 2.30pm  
tw rating 4/5 | [Lucinda Al-Zoghbi]

### Hangman

#### Do-Theatre

An incessant tapping noise can be heard the minute you enter the Roxy - a spectacular old chapel - so has the performance begun? It would seem so. The tapping is coming from a typewriter as a pair of fingers frantically hit its keys; meanwhile, three figures in bowler hats and waistcoats are sprawled across a table. As the

title suggests, a game of hangman plays out before our very eyes and it's a gripping one at that. Dark humour and a hauntingly beautiful score, from Thomas Newman and the Pan Quartet, combine to make a piece of great poetic depth and visual magnificence. No words (well, almost), and a lot of nonsense, they Do Theatre oh so well.  
Assembly Roxy, 2-27 Aug (excluding 13 & 20), 4.00pm  
tw rating 4/5 | [Lucinda Al-Zoghbi]

### Mephisto Waltz

#### Derevo / Russian Season 2012

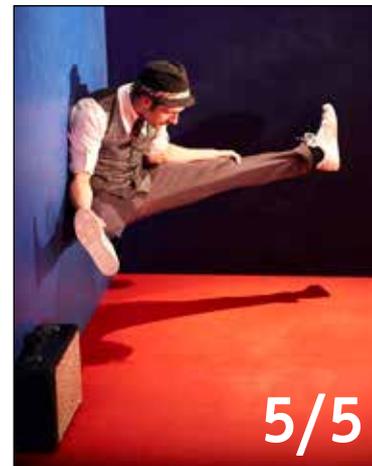
Physical theatre phenomenon Derevo succeeded in creating an emotional performance in 'Mephisto Waltz'. Lead Anton Adasinsky captured the audience's attention as he dominated a show which stretched the imaginations of both the spectators and performers. Showing moments of pain and suffering portrayed almost too intensely to bear, the performance flowed with a powerful professional ease that effectively prevented the audience's eyes from wandering from the dramatic images created in front of them. It perhaps felt a bit long - I believe this style of performance suits a slightly shorter duration given its intensity - but if you like physical theatre, then book your tickets, because this is physical theatre at its best.

Assembly Roxy, 5-27 Aug, 8.00pm  
tw rating 4/5 | [Bethanie Pochin]

### Leo Circle of Eleven

Ever wondered what happens when we are restricted to a singular room in solitude? In the case of 'Leo' a gravity defying spectacle occurs. Through the use of some clever camera work and impressive acrobatic skills - all complemented by an eye-catching set - 'Leo' takes the audience on a surreal journey where nothing is as it appears. This performance features a wonderfully played, extremely likeable character whose comedic discovery of changes in gravity is bound to raise many smiles. The piece never loses the sense of fun it sets out with, and to top it all off, 'Leo' has one of the most simple yet most joyful endings I have seen in a long time. This characterful piece of physical theatre is a delight for all ages.

Assembly Roxy, 4-27 Aug (not 8, 15, 22), 1.00 pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Beth Dawson]



5/5

VICTORIAN TALES FROM THE DARKNESS BEYOND

# FEMALE GOTHIC

Directed by  
**GUY MASTERSON**  
(Olivier Award winning *Morecambe*)

Adapted and Performed by  
**REBECCA VAUGHAN**  
(*Austen's Women, I, Elizabeth*)



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Performance time: 11:45 - 13:00  
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## Playing with memories...

### PH INTERVIEW

**Jackinabox Productions are staging two shows at this year's Fringe, though the one that first caught our eye was '99.9 Degrees', described by our reviewer as "wickedly stylish", and commended for its "superbly cast set of fiercely individual characters". We put some questions to the company's artistic directors, John Askew and Hayley Thompson, and guest director Beth Eustace.**

**TW: Tell us about the premise for '99.9 Degrees', and where the original idea came from.**

John: The idea originated from that feeling of tension before something happens. It's the feeling of being trapped, and inevitably heading for something. When something happens, you can respond; argue, hit someone back, deal with the situation, but until then you just have to sit tight. That is the basic feeling we worked from. We embodied that in a hostage situation

where people have no control over their fate.

**TW: You have quite a unique process for devising pieces like this, how does it work?**

Hayley: '99.9 Degrees' has allowed us to work more freely than ever before, and be as playful as possible in the rehearsal room. We started by workshoping the cast and talking about times in their pasts which have embodied that feeling of 'quiet before the storm'. So their memories actually make up the physical aspects of the show. We then did a session where we placed the cast in the rehearsal studio with no other instructions but to react to the strangers in the room. We then gave different scenarios (one person is missing, or there is a phone in the room, for example) and allowed the cast improvise around that. We found it fascinating to watch how strangers react with each other, and that, for an audience, is interesting to see develop. This was the best way to bring out natural reactions, which juxtaposed the physical aspects of the show, and the script was then formed around that.

**TW: Tell us about your other show, 'Don Juan', how have you developed this story for your new piece?**

Beth: I think most people now are,

to some extent, aware of infamous womaniser Don Juan. This Lothario's tales of seduction have been immortalised by so many different writers in the past: Mozart, Moliere, Byron, Tirso de Molina. Each writer captures a slightly different side to the character and tells very different stories, and so we aimed to discover who this rake really was, through reading what had gone before and our own character development workshops. Once we felt we knew who Don Juan was we selected and adapted different examples of him seducing girls. We allowed ourselves creative freedom with the different scenarios but tried to keep as faithful as possible to the feel and message of the original pieces.

**TW: How does adapting a classic story for the stage compare to working on a totally new piece?**

Beth: When adapting a classic tale you have to realise many people have a strong idea of what the piece should be. The difficulty is striking a balance between being faithful to the original concept while allowing yourself enough room to give a new insight into the piece. For 'Don Juan' we aimed for the comic new tales of his exploits while asking if the morals espoused by Moliere hold any relevance for today? When developing a new piece the



Photo: Stuart Armit

total creative freedom can be exciting but terrifying, it's essential you have a strong idea of the story before you begin, and be strict with editing. You need to keep in mind other work of a similar vein to ensure that you are really doing something different.

Find out more about the Jackinabox guys' approach and Fringe experiences in the full interview at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012JP](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012JP)

**SEE THE SHOWS:**

99.9 Degrees, C eca, 1-27 Aug (not 14), 5.30pm.

Don Juan, C eca, 1-27 Aug (not 14), 6.45pm

TW

**'Dean Friedman is entirely unique and utterly brilliant!' - ThreeWeeks** ★★★★★

# DEAN FRIEDMAN

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**The Voodoo Rooms Aug. 20 9pm**

**'Every Song a Classic' - London Theatre Guide** ★★★★★



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## CA REVIEWS

### It's Not Easy Being Yellow

Ria Lina

One day, a man in a coffee shop asked Ria Lina where she was from. Luckily for Festival-goers, the answer resulted in a fully formed show. The half-German, half-Filipino, British-born musical comedienne with an American accent explores what it's like to be torn between so many identities and whether this point in question is actually relevant to, well, anything. Refreshingly, unlike so many comedians who base shows on their nationalities, Lina does not rely on stereotype jokes. Of course, there are the odd references to German efficiency and ping pong balls, but these are only presented in order to be deconstructed later. Her charming songs are wittily constructed, if not entirely politically correct. But then again, isn't that the point?

The Voodoo Rooms, 3-26 August (not 6, 13, 20), 7.00pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Anna McDonald]

### Piff The Magic Dragon In... Jurassic Bark

Piff The Magic Dragon

In the wrong hands, a man doing fairly standard magic tricks, whilst being vaguely intimidating towards teenagers and telling you how much his props cost, shouldn't be funny. It's shouldn't even really be particularly comfortable to watch. But in the shiny claws of Piff the Magic Dragon, a show where things go wrong and adorable chihuahuas are violently threatened just about works. You might well be able to work out how some of the magic's done, but Piff's endearingly shabby, deadpan style - offset by the adorable canine presence of Mr Piffles - makes 'Jurassic Bark' an unusual, enjoyable way to spend an hour, particularly if you're finding the over-enthusiasm of some segments of the Fringe a bit wearying. Good fun.

Pleasance Dome, 1-26 Aug, 7.10pm.  
tw rating 3/5 | [Holly Close]

### PianoDivalicious!

Amy Abler

Recovering concert pianist Amy Abler sings and shimmies her way through her life story with a light-hearted and entertaining set. Pachelbel turns into Cyndi Lauper which morphs into the Beatles; Abler does for classical music what Axis of Awesome did for four chord pop songs. An adorable performer, she is pure Broadway, and her bubbly energy certainly infected the crowd. The burlesque elements were the only moment she went offkey, although there was a comically titillating moment as she attempted a rock 'n' roll number with her breasts. An all-round entertainer of the old-school variety, great if you fancy an ABBA sing-along.

Sweet Grassmarket, 4-17 August, 3.45pm  
tw rating 3/5 | [Joanna Gill]

### Sex 'n' Slugs 'n' Accordion

Jet Black Pearl / PBH's Free Fringe

If you thought the accordion was an instrument played solely by folksy buskers, then brace yourselves. Jet proves that anything goes by tackling pop hits, ballads, rap and sexy songs about slugs in this charmingly insane one-woman show, which will have your feet tapping and your eyes watering. She exhibits extraordinary musical mastery, layering flute, toy-piano, accordion and beat-boxing using a loop-station, one moment producing something haunting and beautiful, the next pulling faces whilst putting her own unique spin on Michael Jackson. The strength of her voice may not quite match her technical skill or comic presence, but she's a formidable force of music, and truly has to be seen to be believed.

The Voodoo Rooms, 4-13,15-25 Aug, 6.20pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Jessamine McHugh]

### Fascinating Aïda: Cheap Flights

Catch a ride on the cabaret train as Fascinating Aïda take you on a utterly unpredictable musical journey. From sacrilegiously praising Tesco, to a Bulgarian song cycle including a mention of Andy Murray's recent Olympic gold, this show overflows with a rare rhyming talent. Dillie, Adele and Liza's melodies will have you humming all the way home, and their deadpan expressions make audiences dizzy with laughter. By its finale, you'll be into shadow banking, contemplating having an orang-utan surrogate for your next child, believing you really are down with the kids...and you'll be so carried away tapping your toes in agreement that you'll almost miss what you're agreeing to. But beware, this show isn't for those of a sensitive disposition...

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 9-26 Aug (not 12, 21), 6.30pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Ciara Knowles]

### Briefs Underbelly Productions/ Faanana Republic

Some drool, some go green-eyed, but all clap and laugh as the Briefs boys storm the stage with astonishing joie de vivre. Fantastically athletic choreography opens the show, which then moves through various carnival and burlesque acts, from traditional strong man antics to techno hula hooping, all the while maintaining an incredible level of camp energy. There are sparkly costume changes to accentuate the already impressive performances, as the boys' desire to wear sequins seems to conflict with their desire to wear nothing at all. With surprises around every corner, or should I say in every pouch, there are few better ways to spend an evening than ogling this gorgeous troupe. So indulge yourself with this naughty treat, you won't regret it.

Underbelly, Bristo Square, 1-27 Aug, 11.15pm.  
tw rating 5/5 | [Jessamine McHugh]

## Ukulele chat with Tricity Vogue



Photo: Paul Collins

## CA INTERVIEW

**Tricity Vogue, especially with her ukulele hat on, cuts a striking figure, and has, in a very short time, made herself an essential part of the Fringe cabaret scene: we here at ThreeWeeks already can't imagine the Festival without her. So we caught up with the lady herself to talk about her shows, her workshops, why the ukulele is back with a vengeance, and of course, that hat.**

**TW: I think you must now be officially a Fringe institution! What brings you back each year?**

TV: The Fringe and I are still in the honeymoon phase; this is only my third year doing my own show. My love affair with the Festival started as infatuation - a mix of fascination, fear and obsession. Now it's blossomed into the sort of relationship where you know all your lover's quirks and foibles but decide that lover is worth staying with anyway. We've had our rough patches - the rain-soaked flying treks, the woefully empty collection buckets, the looks of bafflement on audience faces - but we've come through them all and we're still together.

**TW: What have you got planned for this year's cabaret show?**

TV: I start and end every show with a mass sing-along. Favourites are 'You Are My Sunshine', 'Hit The Road Jack' and 'Que Sera Sera'. I'll be handing out some ukuleles to the audience, so they can have a go. Then each night four acts will compete to win the unbelievably prestigious Uke Of Edinburgh Award every night, judged by a panel selected from the audience. This year I've set myself a new challenge: every winner gets to choose a subject for me to write a song about. I have one day to write

the song, and perform it for the first time at the start of the following night's show. So far this year I've written songs about bowler hats, goats, aubergines, mothballs, awards and pet deaths.

**TW: Where do you find the people who play at your Cabaret show?**

TV: I invite cabaret performers I already know and love to come on the show, whether they play ukulele or not - they don't actually have to play uke for their five minute spot, as long as they do something with it. Leela Bunce has re-enacted famous film plots using a ukulele as a miniature stage ('The Great Escape' and 'The Sound Of Music' so far this year), and Myra Dubois has incorporated the ukulele into an interpretive physical theatre piece. I also put a call out on the Fringe performance opportunities page and email all shows on the Laughing Horse Free Festival, inviting performers to come and do a spot. Word of mouth is important too; people put their friends in touch with me, and tell me about acts they've seen who would go down a storm.

**TW: Ukeleles have become very popular again in recent years, why do you think that is?**

TV: Ukuleles are easy. They're easy to carry, they're easy to get hold of (because they're cheap), and most importantly they're easy to learn. I think they're actually easier than a recorder and they certainly sound better in a beginner's hands. The way a ukulele is tuned, it's already a chord when you strum it with open strings, so you're halfway there even before you figure out where to put your fingers. But I don't think it's just about convenience. There's a bigger shift behind the rise of the ukulele; a return to live, shared, community music and entertainment. It's the same shift that is behind the rise of cabaret too. For years people have sat at home and watched the telly. Now they're starting to realise how much more fun you can have when people are making music in the same room

as you, and that it can be even more fun when you join in. The ukulele is a social instrument, and a democratic instrument: experienced and talented musicians enjoy it for its simplicity and adaptability, and so do complete beginners.

**TW: Really keen aspiring players can come to one of your workshops, what happens there?**

TV: Every Saturday afternoon I'm running a free ukulele workshop at Rae Macintosh Music on Queensferry Street. The shop are providing ukuleles for people to play during the workshop - with no obligation to buy. It's a very relaxed, informal affair, where I go at the pace of the people who turn up. All ages are welcome. I play a few tunes of my own as well - I do have one or two child-friendly songs in my repertoire despite my usual late-night cabaret haunts.

**TW: Tell us about the hat!**

TV: The golden ukulele I wear on my head is not an attention-seeking gimmick. Okay, it is an attention-seeking gimmick, but it's also more than that. It is the Uke Of Edinburgh. At the end of every Ukulele Cabaret the winner of that night's Uke Of Edinburgh Award is invited onto the stage to strum my head. It's a very exciting moment for me and almost as exciting for everyone else. The hat is a real ukulele, and was made for me by costume designer Emma Threadneedle for my first Edinburgh Ukulele Cabaret three years ago. It acts as a beacon on the streets of Edinburgh - people who are into ukuleles come up to me and ask for a flyer. A couple of gentlemen have asked if they can pluck me.

Read more Tricity with the full interview at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012TV](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012TV)

**SEE TRICITY'S SHOWS:**

Tricity Vogue's Ukulele Cabaret - Free, Laughing Horse @ The Counting House, 1-26 Aug, 9.30pm.

Free Paint and Play Ukulele Workshop with Tricity Vogue, Rae Macintosh Musicroom, 11, 18-25 Aug, 1.00pm.

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Photo: Kat Gollock

## Jonathan Prag and the secrets of classical guitar

### MU INTERVIEW

**Jonathan Prag has been delighting Fringe crowds with his classical guitar recitals for many years now, as well as earning wholehearted approval from a number of our reviewers. So we felt it was high time we found out more about his work, his shows, and what keeps him coming back to the Fringe.**

**TW: Welcome back for another year at the Fringe! What keeps bringing you back to the Edinburgh Festival?**

JP: One thing is the city itself - the atmosphere and the audiences being so varied and friendly. Then there is the opportunity the Fringe gives you to perform an extended run. That's pretty unique to here and, for me, that has helped me to develop as a performer because it gives you 'match practice' if you like - the real thing, and if the audience don't like it they won't come back. One-off performances don't give you that kind of experience. And an element in this is the relationship you develop with audience members who come back year after year. They come and speak to me after the performances and it's lovely to recognise them.

**TW: How do you select the pieces you play each year?**

JP: I go with my instincts and my interests. For the first few years I came, I was afraid to depart from the classical repertoire but now I'm a bit bolder so if I really like something I'll find a classical guitar arrangement and I'll play it. I try to find unusual things that will kind of surprise me. I've always loved Baroque music, Bach particularly, then I started exploring folk music - I had a big Turlough O'Carolan phase a while back - then South American, and these days I've got into things like Cole Porter and Gershwin.

**TW: Our reviewers say that your music creates a really special atmosphere, is your choice of venue important in helping make this happen?**

JP: Yes it is. Acoustically I need to find a venue that allows the guitar to be heard from the loud crashing bits of the flamenco down to the tiny harmonics in 'Spanish Dance No. 2' by Granados. C too - the church - is great for that. You can hear a pin drop. I think the audience appreciates that. I think when there are no noise distractions the music sometimes just takes on a kind of life of its own as everyone in the room focuses on it, and I've had people come up afterwards and say they had goose bumps. It's all down to the acoustic quality of the room.

**TW: I always think of music as the hidden secret of the Fringe - would you agree?**

JP: When I first started playing here I didn't feel that, but now it might be truer, what with the huge growth of the comedy side of things. By comparison, little is made of the music and yet there are some incredible musicians here.

**TW: What would you say to someone who has never been to a concert like yours?**

JP: That's a very good question - the classical guitar has a great range of sounds and colours and the effect surprises people who hear it for the first time. Some people think that maybe there is a backing track playing, or a second guitarist hidden behind a screen, because they don't see how one pair of hands could be doing all the different things they can hear. If people think of classical guitar as very specialised or difficult or unapproachable I'd say just give it a try. It's an instrument that can render folk music, the Blues, Flamenco and Cole Porter equally well. I'd say to them just come along - it's a very friendly atmosphere.

Read more in the full interview at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012JP](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012JP)

**SEE JONATHAN'S SHOW:**  
Classical Guitar - Jonathan Prag, C too, 9 - 27 Aug (not 14), 1.30pm.

TW

## Abacadabarets are back!

# The Fabulous Chopin Boys

Jim Drife and Walter Nimmo have been raising laughs on the fringe for four decades. Now they cross the generational divide to team up with virtuoso pianist Viktor Bijelovic and gorgeous singer Sophie Stoddart for a witty take on how Edinburgh went mad for the visit of musical superstar Frederick Chopin.



New songs, musical jokes and shocking revelations about how much Chopin's success on the 1848 Fringe was due to his talented manservant, Daniel.

**August 20, 21, 23 & 24 at 6.30pm (- 7.30pm)**

Viktor Bijelovic is a young London-based pianist who has played for Prince Charles in Buckingham Palace and has been a guest performer at the Chopin International Piano Competition in Malaysia. He made a highly successful Edinburgh debut two years ago, with a standing ovation at the Royal College of Surgeons.



On Thursday lunchtime Viktor will perform a piano recital including Chopin, Liszt, Despic and Handel. On Friday he and violinist Magdalena Filipczak play Wieniawski and Brahms.

**August 23 & 24 at 1.30pm (- 2.30pm)**

**St Cecilia's Hall, Cowgate (Fringe venue 31) - tickets [www.edfringe.com](http://www.edfringe.com) or at door**

## MU REVIEWS

### Hot Tin Roof

Two guys with two guitars, Edinburgh's Hot Tin Roof stay true to their title with this bare bones set of originals and a few standards. It's a formula which suits them. Even if their crunchy, up tempo cover of 'Nobody Knows You' is the highlight, they're more comfortable on their own compositions; heavier numbers which owe as much to Rock as they do to Blues, they allow guitarist Gavin Jack to take the lead, impressing with formidable slide skills and satisfying solos. Bandmate Andy McKay-Challen plays rhythm and sings with a faux Southern growl which suits the harder tunes but feels forced when they slow things down. Confident and competent, they're at their best when the music heats up.

The Jazz Bar, 6 - 8, 13 - 15, 20 - 22 Aug, 1.00pm.

tw rating 3/5 | [Dave Fargnoli]

### Malones Live Music

(Todd Cook) Malones Irish Bar / PBH's Free Fringe

Malones presents a mini-festival of live music for skint Fringe-goers, in association with PBH's Free Fringe. Monday's lunchtime offering is from Melbourne's singer-songwriter Todd Cook. An acoustic guitar/digeridoo combo opens the set in style, and Cook soon introduces his vocals into the mix, revealing gorgeous pure tones, finest in the top of his range. His songs are endearingly personal, like journal entries of his homeland experience, including an almost fatal bush fire. Cook's list of musical accomplishments increases throughout the set, as he adds a mouth organ to give a raw, Springsteen-esque edge to his acoustic melodies. Tip for promoters: give Cook a late performance slot; his talent warrants a packed-out bar of cheering spectators.

Malones Irish Bar, 3-27 August, 12.00pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Christy Brown]

### Out of the Blue

To sum up the awesomeness of Out of the Blue's performance: imagine a de-cheesified 'Glee' ensemble, combined with the rock ability of Sting, topped off with a musical expertise akin to that of Beethoven. This male a cappella group is absolutely phenomenal, not only for their clear-cut harmonies and perfectly choreographed dance moves, but also for their genuine humility and fun-loving attitudes on stage. These gentlemen are not afraid to cut loose with their comedic choreography and at times their performance is like watching fourteen men sing to themselves in the shower. Fearless, they each go all out like this performance is their very last, and that is what makes this show absolutely sensational.

Assembly George Square Theatre, 7-27 (not 15), 2.00pm.

tw rating 5/5 | [Ellie Willis]

## Somewhere between this world and the next

**'Beulah' - one of a number of shows The Flanagan Collective is presenting under the #littlefest banner at C nova this year - was outed as a "beautiful secret" by our reviewer. So we put some questions to the group's Alexander Wright, about the show, the ideas and music in it, the art of making new musicals, and the #littlefest venture at Fringe 2012.**

**TW: "Part story, part conversation, part musical" - tell us what we can expect from 'Beulah'.**

AW: 'Beulah' is just that, it's part way in between things. It's got a whole bunch of beautiful original songs; it's got one story about Lions, Kings and Queens and another about a couple and an island; it's got suitcases and puppets; and it asks questions about the way we measure our world. It's singing, talking, playing and storytelling.

**TW: Where did the idea for the show come from?**

AW: Beulah is a world which the poet William Blake thought was somewhere between this world and the next, a world of 'mild and pleasant rest'. It is essentially a place where we go when we sleep, with windows back into our world and on to the next. I have been fascinated for a long time with the idea of Beulah as a place. And also the absurd way in which we measure our world in minutes, seconds and hours when, actually, what we really measure our lives in is moments and memories and the little bits of poetry that take us by surprise. Both these things inspired the show.

**TW: You describe the songs as resembling "everything from folk ballads to Sigur Ros" - did you set out to be that eclectic, or did that emerge as the piece was written?**

AW: Ed and Jim [who wrote the songs and perform the show] both play a bunch of instruments, so it was nice to have that variety to compose with. The music seemed to come quite naturally, the narrative feels quite musical in a sense anyway. We all have different backgrounds in writing and listening to music, but all share a pretty big love of all things acoustic, soaring and fun.

**TW: What are the challenges of creating a brand new musical?**

AW: I don't really think of myself as someone who writes musicals, so that probably makes it easier. The idea of musical theatre comes with an amount of baggage, mainly from Andrew Lloyd Webber, so it's nice to be able to forget all that glitz and glam and just write songs that fit the story. A lot of conventions in musical theatre are a bit odd, so we ignored most of them and just put two guys on stage with lots of instruments to play. The songs from Beulah would make a great album on their own - I think that's quite a good thing.

**TW: You are presenting 'Beulah' as part of a thing called #LittleFest, what's that?**

AW: #LittleFest is place where some of the usual Fringe rules don't apply. We have a number of regular shows which run at the same time each day - lots of brilliant companies from around the country all in one space, which is superb - and then we have a rolling and shifting programme of guest events, happenings, bars nights, comedy, cabaret, music, scratches and whatever else works. This programme



Photo: Kat Gollock

will grow across the months with artists who want to try things out, test things, play with an idea and then chat with people about it. Hopefully #LittleFest is a place where artists and audience can spend time on an equal footing, a nice place to be at the middle of a frantic city in a busy month. To keep up to date with it all you can

follow us on Twitter - we're at [www.twitter.com/FlanCol](http://www.twitter.com/FlanCol).

Find out more about 'Beulah' and The Flanagan Collective in the full interview at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012TFC](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012TFC)

#### SEE THE SHOW:

Beulah, C nova, 1-27 Aug, 5.15pm

LINKS: [www.theflanagancollective.co.uk](http://www.theflanagancollective.co.uk)

TW

## MO REVIEWS

### Towards The Moon

One Academy Productions

The title 'Towards The Moon' might imply space travel, sci-fi and astronauts, but this couldn't be further from the truth. The musical is set in Glasgow, uses typical Glasgow humour and stereotypes, and is based on the tale of a boy finding his true purpose in life after an out-of-body experience; theme-wise it has similarities to plays like 'The Steamie'. The show tripped up a little by using East-coast words like 'bairn', instead of the West-coast 'wayne', and though the singing was good, it demonstrated that an accent can sometimes be an excuse for missing notes. This had the potential to be excellent, but, lacking attention to small details, it didn't hit the dizzy heights of the moon; it just came close. C, 8-26 Aug (even days only), 12.00pm  
tw rating 3/5 | [Rachel Campbell]

### Active Virgin

One Academy Productions

Set in a futuristic 24/7GYM, 'Active Virgin' explores the complexities of physical self-perception, gym culture, and what it means to be perfect. Featuring amazing singing and active, exciting choreography, the story explores gym culture in a humorous manner. The cast interacts physically with the crowd; actors sit on audience members and run through rows of seats. Of special note is the computer, MOTHER, around whom the play revolves and who binds the story together. It is a well-written story with an excellent moral regarding the imperfect definition of perfection, yet it leans towards a somewhat preaching tone. The dystopian ending is well-suited to the story's build-up, and this is an exciting, physically active play worth seeing.

C enues, 9-27 Aug, (odd dates only, not 13), 12.00pm.

tw rating 4/5 | [Ana-Claudia Magaña]

### Absolutely Agitated Acupuncturist Returns To Find It Diamond Wave

Olivia Rhee has returned to the Edinburgh Fringe to tell of second chances, following your dreams and how to fix your life when you suddenly find yourself 'going through the motions'. This is a third show at the Fringe for Rhee (otherwise known as The Big O), and features audience participatory acupuncture techniques, songs both novel and classic, and a full host of characters played by one talented person. This great performance could be done anywhere - there's no set or props because she simply doesn't need them - and creates a charming piece that manages to rise above the slightly off-key singing and bring the focus onto the themes of longing, shifting personal goals and self love.

Laughing Horse @ Meadow Bar, 2-26 Aug (not 6, 13, 20), 1.00pm.

tw rating 3/5 | [Charlotte Mortimer-Talman]

### Dr Quimpugh's Compendium Of Peculiar Afflictions

Petersham Playhouse  
A beautiful tale of an expert (retired and troubled) of rare maladies of the mind; follow Dr Quimpugh as he recalls some of the most bizarre cases of his career as a world-renowned psychologist and enjoy this musical feast: a brilliant chamber opera addressing some quite morbid themes as the doctor battles his feelings of a life misused because of the lack of treatments he has devised. Fortunately, he is bolstered by his two "angels", nurses who encourage him to remember his celebrated discoveries and ease his troubled mind. The relatively small cast performs very well together, changing characters as easily as putting on a hat. With wonderful live music to complement the singing, 'Quimpugh's Compendium' is curiously enthralling.

Summerhall, 3-26 Aug (not 7, 14, 21) 5.00pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Charlotte Mortimer-Talman]

TW

TW

# CHILDREN'S SHOWS

For ThreeWeeks' coverage of children's shows and events at the Festival  
Check out [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/childrens](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/childrens)

## Lucia and Scot on that flamenco bug

### CS INTERVIEW

**Last year one of our reviewers saw Lucia and Scot (sitting at the front of the picture there) do their thing at Alba Flamenca and came away impressed. Which made us think that, with the show back this year, we should speak to the folk at Alba Flamenca about the show. But then we thought, well, hang on; puppets are an oppressed minority. Isn't it time we allowed the stars of the show to speak for themselves?**

**TW: Hello Lucia, hello Scot - are you all set for another Fringe?**

Lucia: Hola! Yes, we are very excited! We love having a blether with all the children who come to see us during the Fringe and telling them all about flamenco! Everyone else in our show is a real human and not puppets like us, so we have been bossing them around for weeks to make sure they're ready for the Festival.

Scot: We sometimes visit children in

flamenco classes at Alba Flamenca with Pam, who is the storyteller in our show. Also, during the year we sometimes visit schools with her, but August is our favourite time to meet new people.

**TW: Lucia, the 'Big Flamenco Adventure' sees you taking Scot on a journey - why do you do that?**

Lucia: Well, Scot loves flamenco, but he doesn't really have very good rhythm... in fact, if I am honest, he looks a wee bit silly when he is trying to keep time with the music!  
Scot: At least I'm not covered in spots like you are, in your frilly flamenco dress - you look like you've got the measles!

**TW: And where do you go?**

Scot: We go to Spain, silly! Even I know that's where flamenco comes from! Although we have lots of flamenco in Edinburgh, Spain has soooooo much flamenco going on that I get really tired saying 'Ole!' all the time!  
Lucia: When people come to our show we get them to practice saying 'Ole!' a lot too!

**TW: How did you learn Flamenco?**

Lucia: Well, I am quite good because

my family come from Andalucia in Spain - did I mention that's how I got my name - Lucia?  
Also my dad plays the flamenco guitar, although he's not as good as Andrew who's the guitarist in our show - he's 'estupendo' (that's excellent!).  
Scot: I am still learning, but each time children come to our show I get better and better. It also helps having them there because Lucia can get really bossy with me! Oh and did I mention I am called Scot because I come from Scotland?

**TW: What's your favourite part of Flamenco?**

Lucia: I love the flamenco dancing! Marta and Aroa, who are dancers in our show, are really good and do super-fast 'taconeos' - that's when you tap your feet in special flamenco shoes to make a drumming sound! I love their costumes as well.

Scot: I like the singing. When I grow up I want to be a flamenco singer like Inma in our show... although I don't want to sound exactly the same - her having a girl's voice and all that!

**TW: And what do your audiences seem to enjoy most?**

Scot: Well, they seem to enjoy watching me, but apart from that I think they like coming up on stage and joining in all the flamenco fun!

Lucia: When you come to our show

you'll be expected to join in - so no lazy bones allowed! And daddies, don't think just because you're boys that you don't have to wear a flower in your hair!

**TW: If audience members young or old catch the Flamenco bug during your show, is there anyway we can learn more?**

Lucia: Oh we love it when people catch the flamenco bug! It's easy peasy to get more flamenco - just come back to Alba Flamenca in September when our classes start. We also have flamenco shows all year at Alba Flamenca, although Scot and I tend to have a rest then!

Scot: Millions of dance students come to Alba Flamenca. Well maybe, not millions, but lots! Pam told me that the youngest is 2 years old and the oldest is 72 years old!

**TW: And what if it puts us in a Spanish mood - where do you**

**go to eat a good Spanish meal in Edinburgh?**

Lucia: My dad says the bestest tapas in the whole of Edinburgh is in El Bar, which luckily is next door to Alba Flamenca! He says it reminds him of being back home in Spain! When he comes to collect me from my flamenco dance class, Raul and Ray from El Bar always let the flamenco children sneak a wee tortilla pincho when they come out of classes! Yum! Yum!

Scot: My mum comes to the flamenco classes at Alba Flamenca and she always tells me that when the class finishes that she has to stay at El Bar for some rioja and gambas with Saliha her teacher... I'm not sure but I think it must be new dance steps she needs to learn?!

Find out about Lucia and Scot's other Fringe plans in the full interview at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012LS](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2012LS)

**SEE THE SHOW:** Lucia and Scot and the Big Flamenco Adventure, Alba Flamenca, 1-22

TW

# Merlin's DRAGON

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### CS REVIEWS

**The Enormous Turnip**  
Spotlites Theatre Productions

Spotlites present 'The Enormous Turnip' as part of a varied programme of interactive children's theatre for tots to twelve, this show being one for the littlest of luvvies. Showing at times suitable for the age group (4.10pm for 45 minutes), this is a delightful introduction to performance. Seeds of fun planted here should blossom into an interest in drama. Participation is not essential, however; my usually shy six-year-old clung to my leg at the start, but by the end edged his way to the stage, ooh-ing to warn the farmer of the seed-thief's approach. Whatever I think doesn't matter; my son, staring at his turnip seeds on the way home, said "I loved that show".

Spotlites @ The Merchants' Hall, 4-18 Aug (even dates only), 4.10pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [L Clarkson]

**Hans Christian Andersen's The Snow Queen**  
Aireborne Theatre

Be prepared to be whisked away to a fairytale land in Aireborne Theatre's take on children's classic 'The Snow Queen'. A masterclass in what can be achieved on a small budget, this pretty little bohemian interpretation of the famous fairytale is beautifully put together. The script keeps the kids engaged, as well as having a few nudges and winks for older audience members. The energetic young cast put on a fantastic performance, seamlessly changing characters and expertly realising the choreography. The show is underlined by a lovely low-key musical performance which adds to its gypsy-chic feel. A sweet understated children's show; it doesn't have to be big and bolshy to capture the imagination of its audience.

Zoo Venues, The Monkey House, 7-27 Aug (odd dates only) 2.15pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Patricia-Ann Young]

**The Ballad Of Pondlife**  
McGurk Catherine Wheels in association with Brunton Theatre

The important life lessons learned in childhood friendship are ones you will always remember, and Catherine Wheel's production of 'The Ballad of Pondlife McGurk' is another lesson you won't want to forget. Martin shares the story of his friendship with Simon, and the audience feel comfortably involved as he weaves in and out of the unusual but creative carpeted seating arrangement of the venue. It is a joy as an audience member to watch this tale unfold, but even more of a joy to see emotion written all over the engaged faces of the youngest audience members. Make sure your children see this beautifully crafted story which moves in a profound way for adults and children alike.

Traverse @ Scottish Book Trust, 8-26 Aug (not 13, 20), times vary.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Ciara Knowles]

TW

Look out for more photos from the Festival  
Check out [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/photopage](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/photopage)

**From top left  
clockwise:**

Eleanor Conway at  
Underbelly Bristo Square  
Photo Kat Gollock

'Love In The Key Of Britpop'  
at Fingers Piano Bar  
and 'Rosie Wilby - How  
(Not) To Make It In Britpop'  
at The Bongo Club  
Photo Kat Gollock

'Festival Of The Spoken  
Nerd' at Venue150 @ EICC  
Photo Kat Gollock

'A Mass Of Life' opens the  
Edinburgh International  
Festival Photo Paul Collins

'Othello - The Remix' at  
Pleasance Courtyard  
Photo Paul Collins



# ART, WORDS & EVENTS

For ThreeWeeks' coverage of spoken word, talks and other events  
Check out [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/events](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/events)

## AE REVIEWS

### Other Voices: Alternative Spoken Word and Cabaret Other Voices / PBH's Free Fringe

With pint in one hand and (free!) sweets in the other, alternative bar-style entertainment is what's on offer in this festival event at 'The Banshee Labyrinth'. Feel the beat as prosaic pop-poetry meanders through the depths of this claustrophobic cavern; offering alternative perspectives on everything from feminism to fairy tales, it's not quite classic, but you won't be disappointed with the quirky and varied smorgasbord of sounds and styles. Furthermore, with this show's performers plugging their solo performances, it's a prime place to get an idea of what's on offer elsewhere. Don't expect this to be the most slickly rehearsed show in town, but if the line-up remains at this standard, then it's worth a visit to make your ears itch.

The Banshee Labyrinth, 4-25 Aug (not 8, 15, 22), 2.50pm. tw rating 3/5 | [Ciara Knowles]

## TW RATINGS

- 1/5 Bad
- 2/5 Mediocre
- 3/5 Good
- 4/5 Very Good
- 5/5 Brilliant

### Harry Baker: Proper Pop-Up Purple Paper People

Harry Baker / PBH's Free Fringe

Harry Baker is the World Poetry Slam champ and it's plain to see why; this is not poetry as you know it. In an hour of theatrical stage play, hip-hop hands and seamless costume changes, he specialises in "forcing poetry where it shouldn't be". His poems, inspired by autobiographical events from pole dancing to German rap, are primed for comic value, littered with blistering word play and rife with inventive puns. But they are also poignant narrative pieces full of reflection and ideas of self-discovery, glued together in this show with charismatic interludes and charming quips. Harry's contemporary brand of poetry is quirky, inventive, accessible and above-all very funny; this stand-out show is definitely worth seeing.

The Royal Oak, 6-24 Aug (not 12, 19), 12.00pm  
tw rating 5/5 | [Nathaniel Meyers]

### Age of the Geek

Hayden Cohen

As a self-confessed geek, and fan of spoken-word shows, I ought to have been Hayden Cohen's ideal demographic. Indeed, by his scale, I am at least a level 15 geek. However much I wanted to enjoy it - and I did - I was left cold by the majority of this inconsistent show. The biggest problem was one of focus; it wasn't clear whether this was for geeks, or

about them. Obscure 80s video-game references sat uncomfortably next to outdated, clichéd "geek" gurning and socially awkward stereotypes. Though billed as spoken word, there was not enough of Cohen's impressively rhythmic monologues, and these were punctuated with overly long songs and misjudged asides, which all served to disrupt Cohen's rhythm.

theSpace @ Surgeon's Hall, 10-25 Aug (not 12, 19), 3.05pm.  
tw rating 2/5 | [Andrew Leask]

### 7x7th Street

Jean Pierre Muller

This exhibition is a wonderfully ambitious artistic collaboration between neo-pop artist Jean Pierre Muller and musicians Robert Wyatt, Archie Shepp, Sean O'Hagan, Mulatu Astatke, Kassin, Nile Rodgers and Terry Riley, who work to entwine a colour, a musical note, a chakra, a day and a location based on the numbers one to seven. The result of this outstandingly complicated brief, housed in a row of seven sheds, is as baffling as it sounds. The music and lush, busy screen-prints are beautiful and interesting, but the vast amount of references Muller attempts to cover - foreign cities, explorations of colour, popular iconography, poetry - means each message gets muddled. Muller may just be trying to be a bit too clever for his own and his viewers' good.

Summerhall, 3-26 Aug (not 17,18,19), 11.00am - 7.00pm. tw rating 3/5 | [Sarah Macartney]

TW

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# SHOWS GUIDE



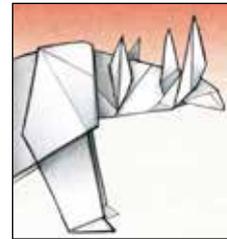
## THEATRE

**SUPERHEROES** Comic and Physical Theatre. The link between CHILDHOOD emotional TRAUMA and ADULT LOVE life explored by means of a comic analysis of superheroes' lives. (With the support of the Italian Institute of Culture Edinburgh). [www.superheroes.org.uk](http://www.superheroes.org.uk) theSpaceUK @ North Bridge (V36)



## THEATRE

**ALL TURN! - FREE** Birmingham bred Actor Emily Summers brings her Grandfather and his memories to life in an original One Woman Show. Wit, warmth and remarkable optimism: Mr Albert North, born 1926, Oldham. 'The Stardust of Yesterday' Laughing Horse @ Free Sisters fpp255



## THEATRE

**RHINOCEROS** Nice Lecoq-trained Paris-based Theatraverse present a bilingual (FR/EN) tragic farce: An epidemic has struck. "Rhinocerotitis" has afflicted the inhabitants of an entire town, gradually transforming them all into rhinoceroses. All except Bérenger... Venue 13



## MUSIC

**COLOURS OF TANGO** Travel back to the Buenos Aires of a century ago! Experience the passion of tango, its music and dance, with Oscar Ovejero and an international group of artistes honoured by the Argentinian National Academy of Tango. [www.facebook.com/coloursotango](http://www.facebook.com/coloursotango) The Royal Scots Club fpp209



## THEATRE

**DRACULA SEX SUCKING & STARDOM** Last Chance Saloon stage an irresistible revamp of Stoker's classic with liberal interpretations of pop songs, outrageous humour & a Lloyd Webber loving Count. 'Positively drips in knowing humour' (WhatsOnStage.com) 6th-27th Aug 8.40pm Paradise In The Vault fpp273



## COMEDY

**EAT A QUEER FETUS 4 JESUS - FREE** Some people are born again...Richard Coughlan was miscarried TWICE! "Lord of Filth 5 STARS" 3 Weeks "The man is a killer" Reg D Hunter 1 of Stewart Lee's EDINBLUR tips 21:45pm - 22:45pm 2-26 August The Counting House (Lounge) 38 West Nicolson Street fpp72



## THEATRE

**HOUSE OF SHADOWS** is a new interpretation of Hans Christian Andersen's tale "The Shadow." The Man, a storyteller, longs to join the mysterious Cult of Beauty, but when his Shadow breaks free it sparks a rivalry that threatens to destroy them both. theSpace @ Surgeons Hall fpp285



## MUSIC

**JANE BOM-BANE - FREE** Jane returns to Edinburgh with original songs and poems to the accompaniment of harmonium & a mechanical hat or two, joined on harmony by honey-voiced Rosi Lalor. "Utterly refreshing - unlike anything I've ever seen or heard before!" Dave Gorman. Laughing Horse @ Finnegan's Wake fpp215



## MUSIC

**JOHN MCNAMARA SOUL & BLUES SINGER** Australian Soul singer - Taking cues from soul greats such as Otis Redding & Sam Cooke mixed with fiery blues & slick guitar playing. Daily intimate Acoustic shows at noon. Don't miss this powerful & emotive voice Live! [www.johnmcnamarablues.com](http://www.johnmcnamarablues.com) fpp215



## COMEDY

**MEN OF CHARACTER - FREE** The Confused Moose bring their pan-American accents and broken dreams from Chicago to Edinburgh with their new two-man solo-sketch show. It's free and it's in a bar. So... it's got that going for it. 112 Hanover St. Daily @ 15:05 [theconfusedmoose.com](http://theconfusedmoose.com) Laughing Horse @ Jekyll & Hyde fpp125



## THEATRE

**MR CARMEN** 2-27 Aug. Cult vanguard group from St.-Petersburg ENGINEERING THEATRE AKHE is back to Fringe with powerful new version of their famous show "Mr.Carmen". "The extraordinary becomes believable" LA REPUBBLICA Tickets: 01316233047, [assemblyfestival.com](http://assemblyfestival.com) Assembly Roxy fpp302



## THEATRE

**THE HARMONETTES GO INTO ORBIT** This fun comedy musical, full of fantastic, live, close-harmony 1950's songs, plunges you into the post-war, end-of-rationing world of winkle-picker shoes and bootlace ties; bobby socks and sticky-out skirts; beautiful ballads, and rock n' roll. Gryphon Venues at the Point Hotel fpp283



## MUSIC

**OUT OF ABINGDON** From Brisbane, Australia, Out of Abingdon travel 10,000 miles to make their much anticipated return to Edinburgh. 'soft vocals, laid-back bass and cool grooves' D. Fagnoli - ED2011 August 10th-19th at The JazzBar' booking details on [www.edfringe.com](http://www.edfringe.com), The Jazz Bar fpp224



## THEATRE

**PHOTOGRAPHING THE DEAD** A city in ruins. A man in mourning. A woman, waiting for a train. A haunting and evocative journey through memory, set in a world recovering from tragedy. This is a poetic storytelling, a reminder of what it is to hope, to care and to be truly alive. Paradise In The Vault fpp308



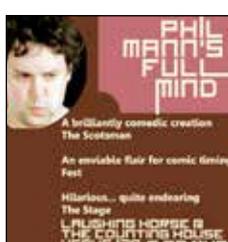
## THEATRE

**YOU OBVIOUSLY KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT** A joyous theatrical experience about those days when if anything can go wrong it will and inevitably at the worst possible moment. Funny. Poignant. Visually stunning. 'Highlights the frustrations of modern life wonderfully' (View From The Gods) Underbelly Cowgate fpp337



## COMEDY

**THE INTIMATE STRANGERS** Silly and surreal sketch comedy. Featuring Anne Frank, a tiger and a musical that's definitely not about Scientology. There will be dancing. 3.15pm (1hr) \*\*\*\* 'Stark comic quality' (RemoteGoat) \*\*\*\* 'You simply have to see it' (OffScript) Just The Tonic at The Caves fpp98



## COMEDY

**PHIL MANN'S FULL MIND** Phil Mann honed his ability as an instant expert. Attend - get answers. 'A brilliantly comedic creation' (Scotsman) 'Delight & scruffy charm' (ThreeWeeks) 'Untamed mischief, rampantly chaotic' (Culture Wars) 'Hilarious - quite endearing' (The Stage) Laughing Horse @ The Counting House



## THEATRE

**CAPTAIN FERGUSON'S SCHOOL FOR BALLOON WARFARE** Enlist with the Captain! Inspired by true events surrounding WWI, this solo performance chronicles the dauntless patriotism and misguided genius of US Army Capt. Thomas Ferguson. Funny, heartwarming: "at once triumphant and tragic" New York Post. Assembly Roxy



## MUSIC

**CHANSONS FRANÇAISES** The Phoenix/ Basement Bar. Edith Piaf, Jacques Brel, Charles Aznavour, Mireille Mathieu... and many other great names of La Chanson Française will be interpreted by Dr2 (AKA Zahida). August 20 to 25, 2012 at the Phoenix/Basement Bar, 12:00pm to 12:55pm FREE!



## COMEDY

**THE SOMENEWS LIVE SHOW - FREE** Captain Taylor's Coffee House. Would you shoot a burglar? Which of Jedward would you eat first in a celebrity version of the film Alive? Find out the answers at the SomeNews Live Show. The lighter side of news addiction. See it for FREE. \*\*\*\*\* (LoveFringe) 5:30pm, Aug 4-26.



## THREEWEEKS

A cost effective and simple way to get your show in the ThreeWeeks Weekly Edition for just £30. Get your show listed in this section in our Week 3 issue, complete with photo and blurb. An entry in this section costs just £30 per edition (including VAT). Book at [www.threeweeks.co.uk/classifiedbookings/](http://www.threeweeks.co.uk/classifiedbookings/)

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# THE EARLY EDITION

"You won't get a more topical show"  
*The Guardian*

**2.00pm**  
2-25 Aug (not 13)



# BENNY BOOT

## DEF-CON 4

"Brilliant gags"  
*The Guardian*

"Charming, disarming and proper fucking funny"  
*Tim Minchin*

**5.30pm**  
1-27 Aug (not 13)



SAMMY J. & RANDY IN

# The Inheritance

"One of the funniest shows you're likely to see this year"  
★★★★★  
*Edinburgh Evening News*

**6.05pm**  
1-27 Aug (not 13)



TIM FITZHUGHAM

# STOP THE PIGEON

★★★★★  
CHORTLE

★★★★★  
THREE WEEKS

★★★★★  
BRITISH COMEDY GUIDE

**7.30pm**  
1-27 Aug (not 15)

33  
PLEASANCE COURT/148

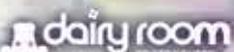
pete johansson

# utopian crack pipe

★★★★★  
"The funniest first hour I have ever seen"  
*THE SCOTSMAN*

★★★★★  
"One of the funniest hours of my life"  
SPOONFED

**8.40pm**  
1-27 Aug (not 13)



# JIM JEFFERIES

## FULLY FUNCTIONAL

"Stand-up comedy's most irresistible force"  
★★★★★  
*The Herald*

"Comedy brilliance"  
★★★★★  
*Time Out*

**9.00pm**  
2-26 Aug (not 13)



# ANDREW MAXWELL

## THAT'S THE SPIRIT

"Frankly hilarious, he weaves utter magic from his observations"  
★★★★★  
THE LIST

**9.05pm**  
1-27 Aug (not 13)



# MICHAEL WINSLOW

star of POLICE ACADEMY

## NOTZEL MAN

**9.40pm**  
1-27 Aug (not 14)



# FELICITY WARD

## THE HEDGEHOG DILEMMA

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SYDNEY COMEDY FESTIVAL 2011

WINNER  
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PERTH COMEDY FESTIVAL 2012

NOMINEE  
EARLY AWARD  
WARRINGAH COMEDY FESTIVAL 2010

NOMINEE  
BEST COMEDY 2011  
ROCKS COMEDY FESTIVAL 2011

**10.00pm**  
1-27 Aug (not 13)



# DANA ALEXANDER

## BREAKING THROUGH

★★★★  
"Like a gift from the comedy gods"  
*The Herald*

**10.35pm**  
1-27 Aug (not 13)

