

# ThreeWeeks

## EDINBURGH



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### EDINBURGH FESTIVAL PREVIEW GUIDE

featuring Bridget Christie | Patrick Monahan | Dan Cook | Adam Kay | Lior | Scroobius Pip | Mrs Moneypenny  
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★★★★★  
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among  
charmers'

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## Welcome to the Edinburgh Festival 2013

**OK people, here it is, Edinburgh Festival 2013, the biggest cultural event to have ever taken place in the known history of humanity.**

### It's actually 'festivals'

The Edinburgh Festival is actually a number of different festivals all taking place in the city at the same time. The **Edinburgh Fringe** (2-26 Aug, with previews from 31 Jul) possibly stands out the most, because it's so darn big - it alone is the world's biggest cultural event, and it's where you will find most of the shows and performers recommended in this guide.

But don't forget, technically speaking Edinburgh's cultural month actually revolves around the **International Festival** (9 Aug-1 Sep), while you should also check out the **Edinburgh International Book Festival** (10-26 Aug), the **Edinburgh Art Festival** (1 Aug-1 Sep), the **Festival Of Politics** (23-25 Sep), the **Military Tattoo** (2-24 Aug), and as a big finale at the end of it all, the **Mela** (31 Aug - 1 Sep).

### Biggest Fringe ever

But as we say, it's the Edinburgh Fringe that has the real scale, and once again this will be the biggest Fringe ever. **2871 shows** were registered with the Fringe Society when it published its programme earlier this year, with (approximately) **24,107 performers** from **41 countries** appearing on stages at **273 venues**. Which we checked with a maths expert who confirmed it: that's a very big festival. As always, almost

all the cultural genres you can think of are



covered, though the Fringe Programme structures things around the following strands: cabaret, children's shows, comedy, dance & physical theatre, events, exhibitions, music, musicals & opera and theatre. Comedy is the biggest strand, exhibitions the smallest, though all feature some great things to see.

### Build it and they will come

The wider Edinburgh Festival takes over most of the city's theatres, galleries and concert halls, and many of its pubs, cafes and churches too. Though the Fringe also turns many buildings and rooms usually used for other more mundane purposes into pop-up performance spaces. All the big Fringe venue operators return this year, including **Assembly, C, Gilded Balloon, Just The Tonic, Space, Pleasance, Underbelly** and **Zoo**, while the team from Edinburgh's year-round comedy base **The Stand** will once again also run **The Assembly Rooms** on George Street (not to be confused with all the other Assembly-branded venues!). Talking of year-round theatres, the **Bedlam, Dancebase, Scottish Storytelling Centre, Summerhall** and **Traverse** all have great programmes once again this August.

Alas, **The Bongo Club**, one of ThreeWeeks' very favourite venues, isn't operating this August, having recently moved to a new year-round home in the vaults used by **Underbelly** over the summer. But at least Edinburgh still has as **Bongo Club** the rest of the year (which for a time looked uncertain). The space previously occupied by all things **Bongo**, on Holyrood Road, this Festival becomes **Paterson's Land**, presenting work by some of Scotland's finest theatre groups.

Universal Arts also have great theatre programmes for you at both **Hill Street Theatre**, which has a solo-show theme this year, and in partnership with **Quidem Productions** at the **New Town Theatre**. And the **American High School Theatre Festival** is back again this summer, with shows at both **Churchill Theatre** and **Pilrig Studio**. And finally, please remember you haven't really **DONE** the Fringe until you've taken in shows at **Greenside, Gryphon Venues, the Quaker Meeting House, Spotlites, Sweet, Valvona & Crolla**, and **Venues 13** and **150**. Visit them all and you won't



get a free coffee, but you will have a smug feeling for having experienced the Fringe as God intended.

Many venues have their own pages on the ThreeWeeks website, so why not spend an afternoon at one place and picks some shows based on our recommendations and reviews. Start off at [www.threeweeks.co.uk/venues](http://www.threeweeks.co.uk/venues)

### Music without the mud

Edinburgh isn't much thought of as a music festival, but boy is there a lot of music on offer at the world's greatest cultural bash. First the International Festival's music programme is extensive, with a classical bias, though quite a few surprises inside. Meanwhile music is actually the third biggest strand of the Fringe too. In there you'll discover a plethora of one-off gigs, mini-residencies and other musical treats. The **Acoustic Music Centre** at **St Brides** is one of the Fringe's finest musical hubs, while **The Queens Hall** hosts concerts for both EIF and the Fringe. Meanwhile Edinburgh-based music festival **Haddowfest** is hosting a programme of great gigs during this Fringe, boasting the likes of **Alabama 3, Broken Records** and **The Cribbs**.

### Get your tickets now!

Once you've read our preview guide, you'll want to book some tickets. For the Fringe, you can buy these via the **Fringe Society**, either at [edfringe.com](http://edfringe.com) or on 0131 226 0000, or at their physical box office at 180 High Street or, if you're in Glasgow, at the Fringe box office at Queen Street Station.

Most Fringe venues also operate their own box offices, in the venue and, in some cases, by phone and online. For Free Fringe and Free Festival shows, you just show up - it's first come, first served.

Each of the other summer festivals sell tickets direct from their websites, or in person as follows: for EIF at **The Hub** at the top of the Royal Mile; for the **Book Festival** at **The Hub** until 9 Aug, and then from the festival's base at **Charlotte Square Gardens**; and for the **Military Tattoo** at its box office on **Market Street**.

### Edinburgh on a budget

Everyone's looking for a bargain, and there are lots of ways to save money at the Festival. There are a plethora of free shows - most notably in **PBH's Free Fringe** and the **Laughing Horse Free Festival** - and while it's customary to throw some money in the hat if you enjoy a show, you can pay according to your means. Discounted tickets are also available in a variety of places, with the Fringe Society operating a **Half Price Hut** on **The Mound**, and the International Festival offering some great discount tickets for the under 26s on the day of performance. And of course, if the sun shines, great entertainment abounds on the streets. 'Superscrimpers' Mrs Moneypenny has more tips on doing the Fringe on a budget on page 33.

### Where ThreeWeeks fits in

Navigating the world's biggest festival can be a challenge. **That's why ThreeWeeks exists**. We have one of the biggest review teams at the Festival, and review hundreds and hundreds of shows (just under 1600 last year). On top of that, our editors having been doing this for **eighteen festivals**, so bring nearly two decades of knowledge to the table - informing our show tips, and choice of interviewees and guest columnists.

There are four editions of our **free magazine** published during August - one a week - of which this is the first; you can pick us up at all the key venues across the city. On top of that look out for our **daily reviews sheet** in cafes and bars around central Edinburgh; check out [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk) daily for the latest news, reviews and features (much more than you'll see in print); follow us on Facebook ([facebook.com/ThreeWeeks](https://www.facebook.com/ThreeWeeks)) and Twitter (@ThreeWeeks) for regular updates; follow our **Twittique** service for regular show recommendations (@twittique); and sign up to our **email updates** for alerts in your inbox ([ThreeWeeks.co.uk/subscribe](http://ThreeWeeks.co.uk/subscribe)).

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# ThreeWeeks EDINBURGH

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

PICK US UP OR GO ONLINE [WWW.THREEWEEKS.CO.UK](http://WWW.THREEWEEKS.CO.UK)

news, reviews and features from the world's biggest festival

free weekly magazine, daily reviews sheet and website

journalism training programme delivers vibrant review team

led by editors who have covered the Festival every year since 1996

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## CARO WRITES>

I know, I know, I know that I say this every year, but where oh where oh where did the last twelve months go? It feels as though the next Edinburgh Festival creeps up on me with insane regularity. I've only just recovered from the physical and mental exhaustion of one by the time the next zooms into sight. Not that I mind so very much, I do, after all, love the Edinburgh Festival. I wouldn't have been applying myself to the terrifyingly vast task of covering it each August for the best part of two decades (we're eighteen!) if I didn't.

And so, we are back. With a magazine that, in our opinion, gets better every year; which is certainly read and absorbed by more people every year; and which seems to have an even bigger impact each summer, on Festival-goers, performers and backstage staff alike. We're proud of our coverage, our team, and the training programme that underpins what we do - about which you can read more on page 35.

This is our preview edition, and in it we offer you our all important **3 To See** choices. These, as you may have gathered from the name, are sets of three shows held together by a common element, all of which are recommended. Some of the themes are serious, some are light hearted and some might make you scratch your head and wonder why. But these recommendations draw on our eighteen years of covering this Festival: it can be hard navigating something this big, but we call on our knowledge of Festivals past to help.

The preview guide also contains interviews with and guest columns from some of our favourite Festival performers. And we start by questioning past winners of our ThreeWeeks Editors' Awards, namely comedian **Patrick Monahan**, Fine Chisel founder **Tom Spencer**, and former Delete The Banjax-er **Dan Cook**.

In our comedy pages you'll find us chatting to the super **Bridget Christie**, while **Adam Kay** muses on why so many doctors leave medicine

for comedy. In the theatre section there's an interview with **Brian Mitchell** and **Joseph Nixon**, the brains behind retro wrestling play 'Big Daddy Vs Giant Haystacks', plus we've also put some questions to dance company **Altered Skin**, Australian singer songwriter **Lior**, spoken word supremo **Scroobius Pip**, and to **Scary Little Girls**, creators of 'The Full Brontë Literary Cabaret'. And to top that off we have a column from **Mrs Money Penny**. You know, from the Financial Times and off of the telly.

This preview edition is, of course, just the tip of the iceberg, the first element of our 2013 Festival coverage. Three weekly issues filled with news, reviews and features will follow, complemented by our daily print review sheet. You will find both in our distribution boxes in central Edinburgh venues. Additionally, you can find us publishing even more content via the net: sign up for our frequent e-newsletters, view our vast and constantly updating website, and follow our Twitter feeds.

I hope you enjoy the ride!

## Art absorbs technological shifts in Mills' penultimate International Festival programme

**While it's easy to get lost in the Fringe programme alone, the Edinburgh International Festival boasts another impressive line up of theatre, music, dance, opera and visual art again this August, taking place in some of the city's finest theatres and concert halls from 9 Aug-1 Sep. Unlike the Fringe - which is famously unprogrammed - the EIF is put together by one man, Jonathan Mills, who recently announced he will depart the role of Artistic Director at the festival next year, making this his penultimate season.**

Mills likes to approach each year with a loose theme, and this time he has considered the relationship between art and technology, and the way creators over the centuries have responded to the technological developments of their age. Or in Mills' words: "This year we invite our audience to embark upon a journey inspired by the way technology seizes and shifts our perceptions of the world, translated by such visionaries as Beethoven, Beckett and Burton, John Cage and Jean Cocteau, François Couperin and Frank Zappa, to name just a few".

He continues: "Great artists absorb the circumstances of their surroundings, and the prevailing shifts and shapes of our world, in weird and wonderful ways. The pounding chords of Beethoven's 'Hammerklavier' Sonata" - a work created for and requiring the metal-framed pianoforte, and performed at EIF this year by Swiss pianist Andreas Haefliger - "are the result of a collaboration of genius. Between the ingenuity of piano makers like John Broadwood, and their fascination with materials and machinery, and the ways the technological processes of the Industrial Revolution could be utilised in the design of musical instruments, and the rebellious zeal of a composer who grabbed such change with an

immense passion, to reveal new ways of thinking about sound and music".

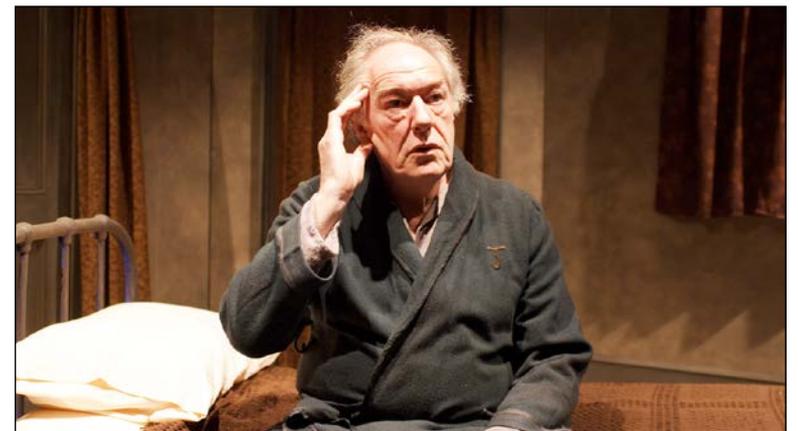
"Or what about?" he adds, "The 'wireless' imagination of a poet-cum-playwright who was intrigued by the disembodied challenges of a compact electronic invention called radio, where conventions of characterisation and narrative are turned on their heads. For a writer like Samuel Beckett, this created an opportunity to invent a new language of dreams and drama". With that in mind, this year's International Festival includes stage adaptations of a series of Beckett works originally created for radio and television, the stand out production of which is possibly the theatrical version of 'Eh Joe', the playwright's first script for TV, brought to life on stage by a certain Michael Gambon (pictured below).

It is worth noting though, that while Mills' thought processes are always fascinating to know when scanning through his EIF programme for the first time, such insight isn't actually required to enjoy the constituent concerts and shows; ie it's not necessary to know how Beethoven's metal-framed piano worked to appreciate what a mighty piece of work his 'Hammerklavier' really is.

And while the International Festival boasts some of the priciest tickets at the wider Edinburgh Festival, it also has some of the cheapest. Mills concludes: "Our tickets start from just £6, and young people are entitled to a 50% discount and can also buy the best tickets still available on the day for just £8, so price shouldn't get in the way too much of being able to try out a few different artists or companies in our programme. And remember, we've selected all the artists and productions in the festival, so they come with our hallmark of quality, and we think they're really interesting. So while you'll probably want to see those productions in our programme that are creating a lot of buzz, why not also take a chance on something a little less familiar and feel like a Festival pioneer?"

Check ThreeWeeks coverage of EIF at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/eif](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/eif)

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



More festival news: [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/news](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/news)

**RAPID GAMBIT**  
Ace Theatre

**FAILEONTOLOGY**  
*We all want to escape something*  
"Kept the audience laughing well past the close of the show"  
Concrete magazine

Aug 2-3: 16:45 (1h) £5.00 • Aug 4-8,11,13-15,18-22,25-26: 16:45 (1h) £9.00 (£7.00)  
Aug 9-10,16-17,23-24: 16:45 (1h) £10.00 (£8.00)  
Venue 124, Zoo, 140 the Pleasance, EH8 9RR  
Box office 0131 662 6892

Part sci-fi, part clown-show, and all ridiculous, this surreal comedy is a tale of hope, fear, friendship, and gravity.

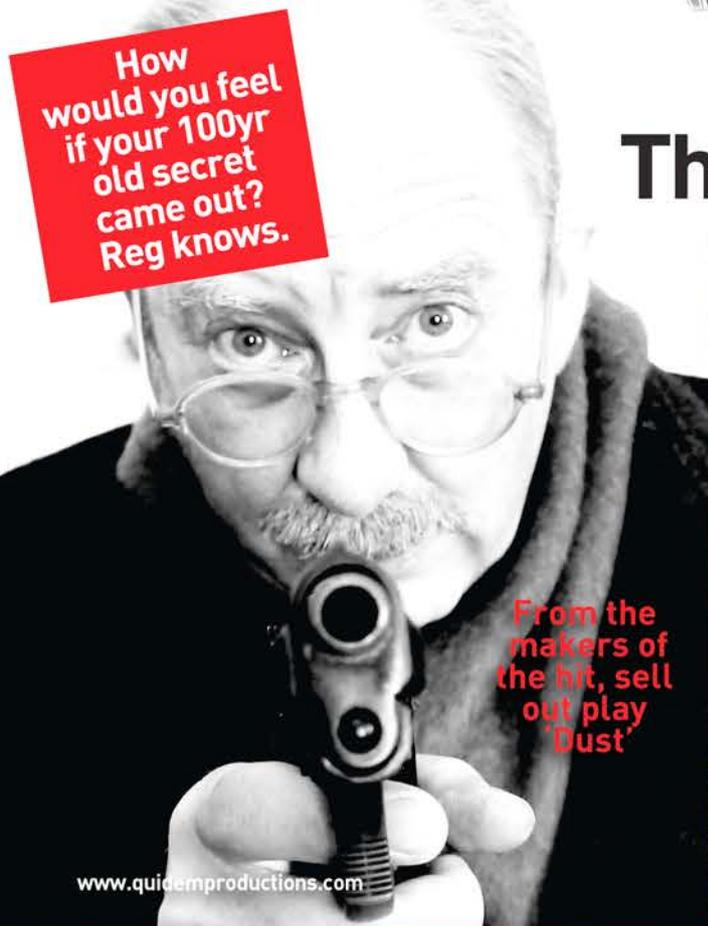
**ZOO**

[www.rapidgambit.co.uk](http://www.rapidgambit.co.uk)  
facebook.com/RapidGambit @Rapid\_Gambit

# NEW TOWN THEATRE

## The cutting edge of the Edinburgh Fringe

How would you feel if your 100yr old secret came out? Reg knows.



From the makers of the hit, sell out play 'Dust'

www.quidemproductions.com

### The Oldest Man in Catford

Reg Thorn, 106, the oldest man in Catford, has strange and terrible secrets. Reg depends on his great granddaughter Julie for cake, conversation and sympathy. But when Julie walks out on her cheating boyfriend she needs somewhere else to live, and turns to old Reg for help. The two embark on an uneasy, gently comic partnership and a touching adventure into Reg's murky past. As the mismatched pair confront the prospect of accidental fame, longevity, and mutual heartache, Julie learns more than she ever thought possible, about Reg, herself, and about still being alive.

Preview Aug 1 14:30 (1hr 10mins) £11.00(£9.00)  
 Aug 2-8, 12-15, 19-22 14:30 (1hr 10mins) £13.00(£11.00)  
 Aug 9-11, 16-18, 23-25 14:30 (1hr 10mins) £15.00(£13.00)

### The Boadicea of Britannia Street



### 'CALENDAR GIRLS MEETS DEAD POETS SOCIETY'

From the makers of the hit, sell out play 'Dust'

A NEW GUEST EVERY NIGHT OF THE FRINGE

A Universal Quidem Production

### Johnnie Walker's Guest Night

Revealing, thought provoking and at times hilarious, BBC Radio 2 legend Johnnie Walker discovers the real person behind the celebrity. Famous for his years on pirate Radio Caroline and Radio's 1 and 2, Johnnie is regarded as one of the finest radio interviewers today. Now Johnnie escapes the studio for the Edinburgh stage to engage each night with a star guest from the worlds of music, arts, sports and politics in this revealing, intimate and entertaining daily 60 minute live show. Check latest guest schedule at www.newtownedfringe.com

Aug 1-25 18:15 (1hr) £14.00(£12.00)

The original pirate radio DJ meets....

- Reginald D Hunter
- Kate Adie
- Steven Berkoff
- Esther Rantzen
- Elizabeth Mc Govern
- Francis Rossi
- Billy Ocean
- KT Tunstall
- Tony Benn

...and many more.



'This show is simply sensational'

High heels, fishnets, dazzling dancers and cabaret

### Ballesque

Sexy and en pointe

Lose yourself in an evening of daring dance and cabaret mixed with a heavy dose of wit. Classically trained dancers combine jazz, exciting dance skills and drama to entertain and amuse. Think high heels, husky cabaret singers, gaggles of male cygnets, a fan dance ménage à trois - all delivered with humour and fun. Don't miss this extraordinary company of brilliant young dancers, singers and actors in a revue show created by Fait Accompli exclusively for Edinburgh.

Fait Accompli were commissioned to provide entertainment in some of the key venues for the 2012 Olympics.

Preview Aug 1 £10.00 22.20 (1hr) Aug 2- 25 £14.00 22.20 (1hr)

Fran Lamb is a journalist on the local rag, close to retirement, eccentric, recently bereaved, she starts a creative writing group - trying to do something challenging for a change. Joining the group are Annie, a put-upon housewife, Penny a PE teacher and Janet the local librarian. They decide, perhaps disastrously, to devise a performance about Queen Boadicea. A touching, hilarious and feisty look at life, death and love through the eyes of the four women. From the team behind the Edinburgh hit sell-out play 'Dust'.

www.quidemproductions.com @quidempro

Preview Aug 1 £9.00 (£7.00) Aug 2-8, 12-15, 19-22 £13.00 (£11.00)  
 Aug 9-11, 16-18, 23-25 £14.00 (£12.00) 17:35 (1hr 10mins)

'Ade Morris's writing is sublime' Fringe Review

# INTERVIEWS

Every August ThreeWeeks chats to numerous performers, directors and writers appearing at the Festival  
Read them all online at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/interviews](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/interviews)

## Meet some award winners

Every August ThreeWeeks presents ten Editors' Awards to the shows, performers, companies and venues that we think made that year's Festival particularly special. Many former winners return to the Fringe again this year, and we caught up with three of them.

### Patrick Monahan

**We gave this man one of our awards just last year, in simple recognition of him being so damned good, something numerous ThreeWeeks reviewers have testified to over the years. So needless to say, the sight of Edinburgh veteran Patrick Monahan heading Fringe-wards once more makes us very happy indeed. Especially when he's standing in the centre of a large cake.**

**TW: You've been coming to Edinburgh for years. Most people (not us, obv, we've been here for eighteen years) might think it would get boring. What keeps you coming back?**

PM: I love it. I wouldn't miss Edinburgh for the world (well, maybe just the once, if they had a cake eating festival in Glasgow at the same time). Once you're at the Festival, and in amongst the buzz doing your show, it becomes a part of you; you're living and breathing it every day. And while, when the month is over, you're somewhat relieved, after eleven months away from it you're craving to be back - it's an addiction, really!

**TW: For the three or so people who haven't seen one of your shows yet, can you describe the style of comedy you do?**

PM: Ha ha - it's hard really, cos I don't really know what I do, apart from talk, tell stories and give out hugs before the show, during the show, and after the show. Oh, and there's also a bit of dancing too.

**TW: What made you want to become a comedian, and what has made you stick at it?**

PM: The fact that I can get paid for talking. I always wanted to do a job that involved talking, and I always wanted a job that involved people,

and if possible one that involved not having to get up too early. It was either become a comedian or work in a 24-hour petrol station.

**TW: You were born in Iran with an Irish dad, but grew up in Teeside, which sounds like it might make for an interesting childhood. Has your upbringing given you fuel for comedy?**

PM: I didn't really get a choice, did I, with a background like that? My dad's Irish, my mum's Iranian, and I was born in Ahwaz in Iran and grew up in Teeside in the Northeast of England, speaking Farsi and English. People always told me that with that background I could only be a comedian or a secret agent. I chose stand-up cos I couldn't keep a secret.

**TW: And talking of the telly, you won the TV talent contest 'Show Me The Funny' back in 2011. Did it have a significant impact on your career?**

PM: It was fun doing it, though it was definitely more a reality show than a stand-up show, which to be honest I didn't mind at all. I enjoy messing about, seeing people on the streets and chatting to them. The show was trying to be 'X-Factor' for comics, which is impossible, really, because comics aren't like singers. You can't take someone who's only been doing stand-up for six months and, if they win, expect them to perform hour and a half shows on tour and then release an hour-long DVD. It's lucky that I had been doing stand up for ten years before doing that series. I would have had a heart attack if they asked me to record an hour-long DVD a decade ago, whereas now I could record three separate one hour DVDs and not lose a night's sleep!

**TW: So your show's called 'Cake Charmer' this year. What is your favourite cake? And what drink would you choose to accompany it?**

PM: I love cherry bakewells, but I also love lemon slices, Victoria sponge cake, coconut cake, carrot cake, fudge cake and chocolate cake with ice cream. It's probably easier to list the cakes I don't like. There is no cake I don't like. Except for maybe cake with loads of raisins in. Or mouldy cake. I don't drink alcohol, so I'd probably have to have a glass of milk or a cup of tea with the cake, depending on what time of day it is.

**TW: If you wanted a cake during the Festival, which patisserie would you most likely visit?**

PM: It would probably have to be the closest one, cos when you want cake, you want cake, there's no time to waste in these situations.

'Patrick Monahan Cake Charmer' is on at Gilded Balloon Teviot from 31 Jul-25 Aug (not 7) at 8.45pm.

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

Read the full interview at [ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013PM](http://ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013PM)



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### Fine Chisel Theatre



**Fine Chisel are a multi-talented bunch with an eclectic mix of shows in their oeuvre. Last year they staged no less than three shows at the Fringe, each very different to the other, except all were linked by one common element: our reviewers loved them all. Enough for us to hand them an Editors' Award. Back this year with new play 'Dumbstruck', Artistic Director Tom Spencer talks to ThreeWeeks.**

**TW: How did Fine Chisel first come into being?**

TS: Holly [Beasley-Garrigan] and Robin [McLoughlin] answered a call I put out for performers for 'Firing Blanks' back in 2010. They never really left and we're still performing that show. George [Williams] came in the following year, bringing his brilliant songwriting with him, and we haven't looked back. We enjoy bringing in visiting artists to work with the core four in the devising room. And we're just in the process of setting up a permanent home in Bristol.

**TW: On your website you write "we're a theatre company and we're a band" - how does that work?**

TS: A couple of years ago we began busking as a way to lure people in to see our shows. After a while, passers-by started throwing a few coins in to our hat as well as taking a flyer; then they started asking whether we're available for weddings. Now we try to do it all. Though it's most fun for us when theatre and live music collide totally.

**TW: You staged three new shows at the Fringe last year, which was**

**ambitious! Did you deliberately set yourself a challenge?**

TS: We wanted to offer the full Fine Chisel menu: a studio piece of new writing ('Firing Blanks'), our Shakespearean knees-up ('Midnight At The Boar's Head') and a brand new live music-based bar show ('Unplugged'). Audiences seemed to relish the variation, and it set us up well for approaching venues around the UK about how we might fit in with their programmes.

**TW: They were all brilliant. Presumably you had a good festival?**

TS: Thanks! Winning a Three Weeks Editors' Award was a very nice cherry on top. We had an amazing time. But we didn't eat a meal sitting down for a month.

**TW: You have since toured some of last year's shows. Have they evolved over time?**

TS: Come and find out. 'The Boar's Head' is coming back to life this year for three nights only: every Tuesday during the festival at 11pm in the Zoo Venues Cabaret Bar, with our pick of acts from across the Fringe joining us before and after. As your own fine reviewer said, it's "Shakespearean cabaret... Bawdy, raucous, immersive".

**TW: But you're really here to perform new show 'Dumbstruck'. Tell us about that.**

TS: It's about a scientist alone on an island off the coast of Alaska, who is losing his ability to speak. He looks back in his extraordinary life, and he chases a very lonely whale. There are great catchy songs. There's dance and puppetry and storytelling. There are lots of blackboards.

cont on page 08>

BOUND & GAGGED COMEDY by arrangement with ELAINE MURPHY ASSOCIATES present

WINNIE McGOOGAN FROM MRS BROWN'S BOYS

# EILISH O'CARROLL

Love

"Eilish's mantra of 'Live Love Laugh' not only highlights her attitude to life but describes the spirit of the show itself"

*The Corkman*

"Heart-warming, funny and thought provoking. Eilish O'Carroll is a tour de force"

*Cork Echo*

Live

Laugh

2.45 PM



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www.edfringe.com

31 July - 24 Aug  
(except 14)

Previews:  
31 July, 1 & 2 Aug

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# INTERVIEWS

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TS: We don't always. I don't think anyone does. We've had some nights playing to 'intimate' crowds, but we've also had (an increasing number of) brilliant sell-out shows. The busking is a big bonus. And last year we told people we would give them a free beer - we can't afford to do that again.

## More Fine Chisel's Tom Spencer >

### TW: How do you go about devising and developing your new shows?

TS: There's no magic formula. Or if there is, we haven't found it yet. We try to bring a lot of different skills into the room, and trust that something magical will happen. For 'Dumbstruck', that's meant the four of us, another actor-musician, a designer and a dramaturg. We live together and share the writing, music, dancing, cooking, bath water, depression and euphoria.

**TW: Despite being the world's biggest cultural festival, it can be a challenge finding an audience at the Fringe, because of the sheer number of shows. How do you tackle this?**

**TW: All that said, presumably the Fringe is a great place to perform and premiere your work?**

TS: There's nowhere like it.

**TW: Other than performing, what else are you looking forward to about this year's festival?**

TS: Having time to see some shows. The Zoo programme looks really exciting this year, and there are stacks of great artists performing further afield. The Mosque Kitchen, as ever, and cheese boards at the Outsider. And, fingers crossed, a summer without ruining our instruments busking in the Edinburgh rain.

'Dumbstruck' is on at Zoo from 2-26 Aug (not 14) at 5:15pm.

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

TW

## Dan Cook

**We first came across Dan Cook as one quarter of the rather fine sketch comedy group Delete The Banjax, who we followed for a number of festivals, from their free shows into the bigger venues, before we plonked an Editors' Award into their laps at Fringe 2010. Three years on Cook is returning to the festival with an almost solo show, 'Community Service'. We spoke to him about working alone, and his plans for Festival 2013.**

**TW: Obviously we've seen you in the past as part of Delete The Banjax, what made you decide to go solo?**

DC: The decision to go solo came from Banjax finishing. It wasn't a pre-planned thing, but I wanted to carry on doing comedy once Banjax ended, so I did! We all felt that the Banjax thing had run its course, and had gone as far as it could go, basically it was time for a change for everybody.

**TW: What's the premise of 'Community Service'?**

DC: The premise is that I've committed a minor crime and was given a community service order. I had to choose between either litter picking in Peckham Rye Park for half an hour or doing a comedy show in Edinburgh for the whole of August. I chose the show. Lucky Edinburgh.

**TW: How has writing a solo show compared to working as part of a sketch team?**

DC: It's been a much slower process, because I don't have the others making sure writing deadlines are kept to. I love a bit of procrastination, and 'Homes Under The Hammer', neither of which help the writing process. Plus bouncing half-formed ideas around with the other guys is obviously no longer possible, and that's something that I've really missed this year. Luckily my director, Ben Wilson (yes, he of Idiots of Ants) has been a good springboard for some of my half-arsed nonsense.

**TW: You're not on the stage all on your own, though, are you?**

DC: No, I'm not getting on stage on my own, I'm not an idiot. In my show, I'm joined by Sandra, my community support advisor, who makes sure I complete my order, helps me out in the sketches, and tries to prepare me as best as she can for the real world. Actress / comedian / artist / glasses-wearer Jessie Cave is playing Sandra, and she is excellent at it. She really gets into character. Unlike me.

**TW: How does the show compare to what we have previously seen with Delete The Banjax?**

DC: It's got a proper narrative running through the show, with a nice conclusion at the end, which is something Banjax shows never had, so it's more rounded in that sense. Also, I'm in it a lot more. I wrote it. Those are the rules. It's still got sketches, a few songs and stuff like that, but I've tried to make it different from a Banjax show, because I didn't want to just be repeating myself.

**TW: You're no newcomer to the Edinburgh Fringe, but does it feel different bringing a solo show?**

DC: It does feel different, because of the gang mentality of being in a sketch group and all being in it together, and at first I didn't particularly

enjoy being on my own, I definitely missed being in a group. But the more I've worked on the show, and the more it's come together to actually resemble something that I'm quite pleased with, the pleasure of creating a solo show has grown. I have the final say in everything now! It's nerve-wracking that whether it works is all down to me, but it's exciting as well.

**TW: Is it important to showcase a new show in Edinburgh?**

DC: Don't bring a new show to Edinburgh if your heart isn't in it and you've just done it for the sake of going to Edinburgh, because you're just wasting time and (a lot of) money. I wanted to try something different, and I love writing and performing comedy so it's important to me. Comics are also getting noticed for their work on YouTube etc now, so bringing a show to Edinburgh isn't the only way to showcase what you do.

**TW: What's the worst thing about doing an Edinburgh show - is there anything that makes it feel like you really are doing community service by performing at the Fringe?**

DC: I LIKE THIS QUESTION. I love a whinge (just ask Banjax).  
1: Carrying props about. Stupid oversize things that you can't believe you made an integral part of a sketch. Hate them.  
2: Teching the show. Getting all the lights and sound cues ready is THE MOST BORING THING IN THE WORLD.  
3: Flying. Luckily I now have people who flyer for me, but when Banjax first started we did it ourselves. I say "we", I mean Sam and Gareth. Caz and I would stand and smoke. "Hey, wanna see my show?" "No, go and die in a hole" "Okay bye" x 1000.

**TW: As you're not performing in a sketch comedy group this year, are there any other sketch comedy groups you'd recommend?**

DC: These are the shows I'm gonna watch, not all are sketch, but deal with it: Birthday Girls, Sad Faces, Max and Ivan, Colin Hoult, Pat Cahill and a special mention to John Kearns who will have the BEST SHOW IN EDINBURGH 2013 (John, you can use that quote of you like). I have impeccable taste by the way.

'Dan Cook: Community Service' is on at Pleasance Courtyard from 31 Jul - 26 Aug (not 13) at 4.30pm.

Read the full interview at [ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013DC](http://ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013DC)

TW

## Who's Afraid of Rachel Roberts?

1 - 26 August, 3pm

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## TW 3 TO SEE

**ThreeWeeks Co-Editor Caro Moses scours the Fringe's comedy programme to recommend top shows, great acts, quirky concepts and must-see events at this year's Festival.**

## 3 deadly comedy

### Bulletproof Jest: The Dead Secrets



Edinburgh newcomers The Dead Secrets seem full of promise. Secret promise. Deadly promise.

The troupe, about whom someone actually used the phrase "ones to watch", have received plaudits for their sketches (available to view online), which were praised for their intelligent scripting. And with a puntastic title like 'Bulletproof Jest', how could you possibly resist?

theSpace @ Surgeon's Hall, 5-17 Aug (not 11), 7.20pm.

### Jon Bennett: My Dad's Deaths



From the man who brought you the critically well received 'Pretending Things Are A Cock' (yes, it sounds like an unlikely title to gain a good critical reception, but this is true), comes a new show about John Bennett's relationship with his father, a man who has apparently died more than once... Bennett has been described as refreshing, charismatic, hilarious, a wonderful storyteller; so he's going on my list.

Underbelly, Cowgate, 1-25 Aug (not 13), 7.40pm.

### Richard Herring: We're all Going To Die



Do I really need to introduce Edinburgh stalwart Richard Herring? We officially awarded him the title King

Of Edinburgh a couple of years back. Well, okay, strictly, he did it himself, being our Guest Editor at the time; but he must surely be a contender for the title, because I can barely remember a time when I didn't see his face staring out at me, from hoardings all over Edinburgh, throughout August. This year that face is going to be all grim and dead looking. But I am sure the show will still be all kinds of lively.

Pleasance Courtyard, 31 Jul-25 Aug, 8.00pm.

## 3 Christian comedy

### Christian O'Connell: This Is 13



It sounds like a promising premise for a show; Christian O'Connell is in a race against time to complete a list of

dreams he put together when he was thirteen years old. Which includes dating his eighties heartthrob and challenging a pensioner BMX champion to a competition. Of course, O'Connell is an award winning breakfast show DJ, so chances are you've already heard of him. You might even already have your tickets. My job here is done.

Underbelly Bristo Square, 31 Jul-20 Aug, 8.40pm.

### Christian Reilly: Songs Of Praise



We gave Christian Reilly a 4/5 review for his 2012 show 'This Is Not A Love Song', so I'd expect good things from

his latest set. And that's not the only reason why. A former backing band member for Rich Hall's Otis Lee Crenshaw and podcast colleague of Richard Herring, his hysterical musical stylings have won the acclaim of lots of different critics, and fellow comedians alike.

The Dram House, 3-24 Aug, 6.00pm.

### Christian Schulz-Loh: Attack Of The 50 Foot German Comedian



Make no mistake, Christian Schulz-Loh is a German Comedian. It's stamped across his publicity photo.

Though I should say I'm more sceptical about him actually being 50 feet high. There seem to be quite a lot of acclaimed German comedians at the Fringe these days, so I guess I should see at least one this Festival (time is tight for us ThreeWeeks editors remember), and the word-of-mouth on this one is pretty compelling.

Base Nightclub, 3-24 Aug (not 13, 20), 5.00pm.

## 3 psychic comedy

### Peter Antoniou: Comedium



"Whether or not Antoniou is mind reading his awestruck audience by exposing their first flings or

controlling them as a ventriloquist, this is very stylistically executed and optimised for comedic effect". Is what we said about Peter Antoniou's 2012 offering 'Psychic Circus'. That alone seems like a good enough reason to turn up and see his latest work.

Sweet Grassmarket, 1-25 Aug, 4.10pm.

### Tom Binns is Ian D Montfort: Psychic Fayre



Tom Binns, aka Comedy Award nominated hospital DJ Ivan Brackenbury, is back with his psychic

character creation, medium and former ThreeWeeks columnist Ian D Montfort. Binns has an impressive comic pedigree; as well as creating numerous acclaimed live shows, he's appeared on the likes of 'The IT Crowd' and 'Knowing Me, Knowing You... With Alan Partridge', as well as causing trouble with antics on his radio show on Xfm. In fact, if you haven't already heard of him, why not? "Howlingly Funny", says us.

Pleasance Courtyard, 31 Jul-25 Aug, 6.30pm.

### Paul Gannon Aint Afraid Of No Ghosts



Okay, well, 'psychic' is probably stretching it a bit here. But you know, it's got a ghostly theme, which sort

of fits. Anyway, like many of us who watched and absorbed the film 'Ghostbusters' during our childhoods, Paul Gannon harboured the dream of becoming an actual Ghostbuster; as an adult, he revisits that dream, and this show is the result.

Just The Tonic At The Caves, 1-25 Aug (not 13), 5.20pm.

TW



# PETE HEAT MIRACLES ETC

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Cream of the Fringe

(All reviews/ratings are from Pete's 2012 show)

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## MORE ONLINE>

“When I started at the Fringe the average audience attendance was just three people. As the saying goes: you learn more about yourself as a performer in front of three than you do in front of three hundred. As a seasoned performer I can honestly say some of my most rewarding experiences were in front of single figures... but if it happens this year I’m going to kill myself and everyone in my venue - because this is mostly a lie to put new comics at ease”

Fringe guru Brendon Burns has five tips for new performers at the Festival - read them at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013BB](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013BB)



## Just what the doctor ordered: a Fringe show

So, why exactly would you give up a career in medicine to try your hand at comedy full time? Amateur Transplants man Adam Kay is one of a number of former medics to now be found in the comedy biz. Though this Fringe he plans to rebalance things a little by using his comedy show to turn you into a doctor. Well, a Bogus Doctor, but that counts right? Adam explains more...

### TW COLUMN

I’ve made my mother cry four times in my life. Explaining that I’d been sick inside her grand piano (age 16), telling her I was gay (age 19), admitting I’d run over her brand new kitten (age 24), and telling her I was giving up my career in medicine to be a full-time comedian (age 29).

I’m one of a number of former doctors in the world of comedy - and that’s why I’m discussing this phenomenon here in ThreeWeeks (next week I’m writing a feature on how to best drive over cats). Some people are puzzled as to why a doctor might want to jack it all in; the job’s fairly well paid, you sometimes get upgraded to Business Class, and you have plentiful access to morphine. But those perks are quite monumentally overshadowed by the 80-hour weeks, the regular splatterings with the body fluids of strangers, and the constant phone calls from friends and relatives wanting on-tap medical advice. So it’s no real surprise that vast numbers of doctors realise they’ve made a terrible mistake and look for a Plan B.

In fact, from my year at med school, fifteen people have left the profession, with Plan Bs including flying commercial planes, working for the Prime Minister’s office and serving a twelve-year prison sentence. As my skill-set doesn’t include flying, lying or criminality, I decided to turn my part-time existence as a comedian into a full-time job. Other former doctors in the world of comedy include the late Python Graham Chapman, the currently alive Goodie Graeme Garden, Harry Hill, Paul Sinha, Mike Wozniak, Simon Brodtkin (Lee Nelson) and Phil Hammond. Although I know Phil still

works part-time in a sexual health clinic because he likes to keep his hand in.

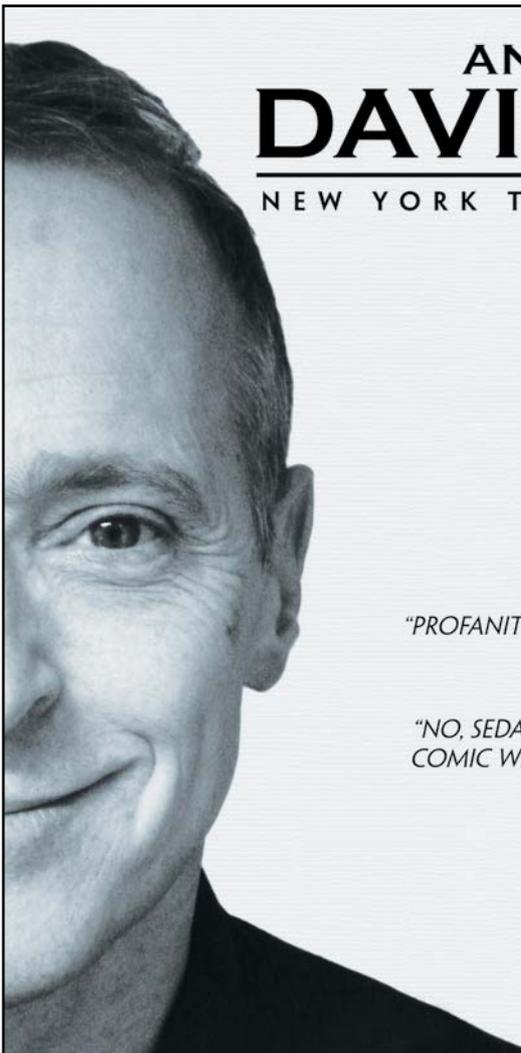
A question we each get asked fairly often is whether we’d ever go back to working in medicine. Personally, I don’t think I would. I feel like I’ve drawn a line under that chapter of my life. In fact, I’ve barely ever talked in my shows about my old life as a doctor - it felt like looking backwards rather than forwards. But that all changed a few months ago when I came up with a brilliant money-making scheme - I could charge people to teach them how to be doctors themselves. My new show, ‘How To Be a Bogus Doctor’ tells you absolutely everything you need to set up in private practice, for the price of admission to Pleasance Beside.

I’ll teach you how to fob off, rip off and strip off members of the public in just sixty minutes of half-remembered semi-facts. You’ll learn everything from how to perform a colonoscopy using a Polaroid camera and a Slinky, to how to defibrillate a patient using a toaster and a set of jump leads. Plus of course I’ll run through the diagnosis and management of every ailment known to man. Much like Gillian McKeith, you too can be an unqualified success.

And if only eight people who come to my show decide to set up fraudulent medical clinics as a result, then I’ll have made up for the eight doctors who left medicine for comedy. And then maybe my mother will be proud of me. And if you were wondering, it’s seventeen years on, and the piano still smells faintly of vomit.

Adam Kay appears at Pleasance Courtyard from 31 Jul - 26 Aug in ‘How To Be A Bogus Doctor’ at 5pm and ‘Amateur Transplants - Adam Kay Is Going For A Number One’ at 8.30pm.

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



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## TW 3 TO SEE

### 3 dark comedy

#### Gary Lynch: Dark Charisma



Gary Lynch's appearances in the ThreeWeeks review archives seem limited to appraisals of his compering skills; but therein he's described as a "fantastic MC" and an "excellent compere", which makes me feel that there's much reason to hope that this solo show will be a success. Also, he claims to be last year's busiest festival comedian (89 shows in 24 days) and goodness knows, we like a hard worker here at TW HQ.

Laughing Horse @ The Three Sisters, 2-25 Aug (not 12), 9.00pm.

#### John Robertson: The Dark Room



If you're the type of comedy-goer who enjoys a newfangled interactive multimedia experience, or even if you're not, this might be the kind of show you are looking for. John Robertson's 'Dark Room' began life as one of those YouTube sensations, and this is the staged adaptation, in which the audience is trapped in a dark room, and must escape...

Underbelly Cowgate, 1-25 Aug (not 14), 8.40pm.

#### Going Dark!

And talking of the modern and the newfangled, here's another multimedia piece for you, this time courtesy of actress and comedian



Beth Vyse. Last year our reviewer praised Vyse's surreal and absurdist material, and a style reminiscent of The Mighty Boosh. Though be warned - said review also contained the words "not for the fainthearted"!

The Banshee Labyrinth, 3-24 Aug, 4.45pm.

### 3 musical comedy

#### Cecilia Delatori: Quick, Quick, Slough!



Well, you may already have noticed that I'm a sucker for a punny show title so it's no surprise that I went for this.

But, you know, there are other reasons to go to Cecilia Delatori's show too. She's a purveyor of "inventive comic songs", according to one of our very own reviewers, and "hugely talented" according to one of someone else's.

Laughing Horse @ Espionage, 1-25 Aug (not 11, 20), 1.30pm.

#### Rachel Parris: The Commission



Someone from the Londonist described Rachel Parris as 'Tim Minchin in a Frock', which I presume is a reference to

the songs she sings, not the fact that she physically resembles him. Not that it matters either way; it's a high recommendation, given that Mr Minchin is a bit famous these days. In any case, she comes offering a show that's "darkly twisted". Which makes her sound like my kind of person entirely. Hurrah.

Laughing Horse @ The Counting House, 1-25 Aug (not 13), 4.00pm.

#### A Danish Bagpipe Comedian



Who could resist it? As someone with bagpipers in the family (it's okay, I'm not deaf just yet, they don't live in the same house as me), I'll be keen to check this out. I'm not honestly sure quite how much I like bagpipes, but there does seem to me to be something inherently funny about a comedian who totes them. Plus, according to edfringe.com, this "is the only man in the world who has done a parachute jump while playing the bagpipe - in a kilt". Which means he **DESERVES YOUR ATTENTION**.

Laughing Horse @ Jekyll & Hyde, 1-15 Aug, 5.30pm.

### 3 hairy comedy

#### Beardyman: One Album Per Hour

Beatboxer extraordinaire Beardyman (pictured top left) is super successful and cultishly famous these days, and never has much time to spare in August, so don't miss the opportunity to check him out during his seven night run - an award winning musician and comedian who has won more critical acclaim than I'm able to do justice to by selectively quoting here.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 15-25 Aug, 9.00pm.

#### Stupid Hair and Skinny Jeans: Ryan McDonnell



Yes, I think it might be stretching things, somewhat, to call this 'Hairy Comedy' but I've slightly randomly picked this theme and now I'm sticking to it. What this show does have in its favour is Northern Irish comedian Ryan McDonnell, who was described by a ThreeWeeks reviewer as a "witty and incredibly brave comic". So he sounds good, doesn't he?

Laughing Horse @ The Free Sisters, 1-26 Aug, 11.30pm.

#### Gerardine Coyne: Venus in Fuzz

You might also want to argue with me as to whether 'fuzz' constitutes 'hairy' or not.



What I won't let you argue with me about is how lovely the very lovely Gerardine Coyne is (she's very lovely). As one half of Fringe double act The Aspidistras, in previous shows, she's truly charmed our reviewers with her stylish character comedy, and I'm expecting good things from her in 2013.

Bannermans, 4-23 Aug, 4.15pm.

### 3 comedy kates

#### Good Breeding



Kate Fox's show this year focuses on the subject of not wanting children, and how she's always being told that she will change her mind. Which is interesting subject matter; but what it's also important to note is the fact that she is a wonderful, enthralling storyteller, and comes approval-stamped by that Sarah Millican. A number of ThreeWeeks reviewers have loved her, and I can't help feeling you will too.

Dragonfly, 3-24 Aug, (not 5, 12, 19), 6.40pm.

#### The News At Kate 2013



The utterly venerable Kate Smurthwaite is a veteran of all things Fringe and makes frequent appearances all over your TV and radio; for intelligent comedy and incisive political comment, you really can't go wrong. Bitingly humorous, and all-over wonderful.

The Canon's Gait/Ciao Roma, 3-25 Aug (not 13), 3.40pm/8.20pm.

#### Katie Mulgrew: Your Dad's Not Funny

According to the blurb, Katie Mulgrew (pictured just there below this blurb) never wanted to be a stand up comedian, but I think we can all safely say that we're glad that's what's happened. Well, I can safely say it, because I've heard that she's a very promising performer who has supported the likes of The Boy With The Tape On His Face and Puppetry of The Penis, and is a much sought MC who specialises in oddball, anecdotal humour. Sounds good to me.

The Stand Comedy Club, 31 Jul-25 Aug, 1.10pm.



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# COMEDY

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## No bic for Bridget

The super-talented Bridget Christie has been coming to the Festival for quite some time now, notching up a grand total of seven solo Fringe shows to date, in which she mostly appeared outfitted in a range of eccentric and elaborate costumes. In this year's set, however, she makes something of a departure from the style to which we have become accustomed (well, the sartorial one at least). By which we mean she's left the costumes behind, for now, and will this year appear as herself, a feminist, in her own clothes. Of course we like Christie in any guise, and here she is, tackling our queries about being a feminist comedian, about the new show 'A Bic For Her', and a few other bits and bobs besides.



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## TW INTERVIEW

**TW: I can guess a little from the title, but what's your show about this year?**

BC: That title - 'A Bic for Her' - comes from a five minute routine about the fact that Bic launched a biro pen called A Bic for Her, that's designed specifically to fit a woman's hand. But I also have a long routine about how I'm glad that the former British racing driver Sir Stirling Moss fell down a lift and seriously injured himself. It's also about feminist icons like Malala Yousafzai; the Pakistani schoolgirl shot by the Taliban for believing in girls education; and Margaret Thatcher and Beyonce, who weren't shot in the head by the Taliban, but who are also deemed feminist icons. And lastly, there's a bit about inappropriately displayed lads mags, and what I do with them.

**TW: You're very much considered a 'feminist comedian' - does that sum up all that you do, though? Are you happy with that label?**

BC: I'm happy to be considered any type of comedian to be honest. It doesn't sum up all that I do, no, but it sums up what I'm doing right now. I tend to talk about things that interest me, and at the moment I'm interested in women. Not only am I interested in them, I'm very passionate about them. Not like that! Cheeky. So yes. Feminist comedian is good. And if that puts anyone off, then don't come. It's not for you.

**TW: One of the first things people often do if they are attempting to silence feminists is to accuse them of having no sense of humour. Do you think it's important for feminism to have a funny side, to help make a nonsense of those tactics?**

BC: No. I don't think it's important for feminism to have a funny side at all. The mere suggestion is preposterous. Feminism has a few other things to sort out before it has the luxury of worrying about whether it's funny or not. Having said that, female oppression is a subject ripe for satire because it's so stupid, and so I'm happy to oblige. But I'm not trying to make feminism funny in order to persuade idiots to change their minds about women having basic human rights. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I don't remember people saying, "That Martin Luther King chap, he's got some great ideas. But he's just not funny enough. I think I'll carry on being a racist". Who cares?

**TW: Some of the abuses that feminism tries to fight are pretty disturbing, do you ever struggle to find a funny angle yourself?**

BC: I think really carefully about what I say, especially now that I'm dealing with important stuff. If I'm ever struggling with a particular routine, that's often a good indicator that it's simply not good enough and should be dropped. I had an idea the other day about how I could crowbar some of the really awful stuff in, and it seems to be working, but if it starts to not work, then I'll just take it back out again. I have to remember that I'm a comedian, and therefore am supposed to be making people laugh. Not depressing them. If I can't find a good angle, then I just don't do it.

**TW: You clearly don't see Margaret Thatcher as a feminist icon or role model. Which women do you look up to?**

BC: No, I don't see her as a feminist icon. She was an icon of politics, capitalism, individualism, whatever, but not feminism.

She hated feminists, so how can she be their icon? It's insulting to everyone involved, and it's not Maggie's fault either. She didn't hail herself a feminist icon. Geri Haliwell did. So it's all Ginger Spice's fault, for not finding out what Thatcher's own views on feminism were before she hailed her as a feminist icon. My own personal hero is Malala Yousafzai. Other great feminists are Mary Astell, Mary Wollstonecraft, Julia Long, Naomi Wolf, Emily Wilding Davison, Susan Faludi, all the women at Refuge, my mother and sisters and my friends. Actually there are just far too many to mention.

**TW: Have your performances always been politically focused?**

BC: No they haven't, but have become so over the last few years. I realised one night that my babysitter was earning more than I was, so it didn't seem worth me carrying on unless I was going to say something of interest, both to me and the audience. What I was doing suddenly seemed completely pointless. Both creatively and financially.

**TW: You've been known in previous shows for sporting some rather interesting costumes, but this year you've put those aside. Is it good to divest yourself of that element? Or just different?**

BC: It's extremely liberating for me to be able to turn up to gigs with just some notes, rather than lugging around an enormous suitcase filled with seven kinds of shit in it. Plus, not having to worry about visuals and costumes and props has focused my mind on the material, which is never a bad thing. I'm not ruling out dressing up as a virus again, but at the moment, I'm just interested in speaking about feminism, as myself, in normal clothes. Plus, it's much easier to tour.

**TW: You've recently had a series on Radio 4. Did you enjoy making it, and are there plans for more in the future?**

BC: I enjoyed making my Radio 4 series more than any other job I've ever done. Firstly, it was an enormous privilege and honour to be able to talk about a subject so important to me. Secondly, my producers Alison Vernon Smith and Alexandra Smith were incredible. Without them, the series would've been a right old mess. And Fred Macaulay, who played 'man' in the series, was an absolute joy to behold. It would be a dream come true to do it all again, but it's up to Radio 4. I have everything crossed for a second series. We'll just have to wait and see.

**TW: You're obviously a very seasoned Edinburgh veteran. What makes you keep coming back? Do you return with a sense of joy or vague dread?**

BC: Edinburgh is the highlight of my professional year, and has been since 2005 when I first went up. You learn so much as a writer and performer, and it's such a brilliant discipline to turn over a new hour of material every year. If I missed a year I think I'd feel that I was a year behind in development terms. Having said all that, it is becoming incredibly expensive with rents and advertising and so on. If Tommy at The Stand didn't give me a room every year, I'd have to seriously think about whether I could justify the expense. Also, I have two very small children and they will have to have a proper holiday at some point.

'Bridget Christie - A Bic For Her' is on at The Stand from 3-25 Aug (not 12) at 11.10am.

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

TW

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33

PLEASANCE COURT YARD

## Quick Quiz

# What's your top tip for getting the most out of the Fringe?



**Gyles Brandreth:** "Book a max of two shows a day: people you know you really want to see. Then leave yourself energy time and a bit of cash for shows you haven't planned. Go see the unexpected. Take a lucky dip and surprise yourself"

Pleasance Courtyard, 31 Jul-26 Aug (not 7, 14).



**Carey Marx:** "Don't walk out of any show, no matter how bad. 'It was rubbish, so I left' isn't a good story. What you stayed through might be. I once watched two men writhing around on the stage absolutely pointlessly for an hour. It was awful, but I'm glad I stayed. I can join in with awful-show-experience stories. If I had left, I would only have a story about two men writhing for a few minutes, which nobody wants to hear. Anyway, the last ten minutes might be worth it! Basically, I think the Festival is about enjoying

great stuff and horribly bad stuff and enjoying the spirit of the Fringe. On the other hand, the last ten minutes of that show just involved more writhing. I wish I had left. Ignore this answer"

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 31 Jul-25 Aug (not 12).



**Alistair Green:** "Take a punt on the free shows. Like Alistair Green at the Meadow Bar to pick a random example"

Alistair Green Is Jack Spencer: Sex Addict, Just The Tonic at The Tron, 1-25 Aug (not 13); Alistair Green: Ping Pong, Laughing Horse @ Meadow Bar, 2-25 Aug (not 13).



**EastEnd Cabaret - Bernadette Byrne:** "Bring waterproof shoes! There is nothing worse than dragging your wet feet from show to show getting progressively more depressed as you get ill and die of flu!"

Victor Victoria: "And don't try to fit in TOO many

shows, or you'll end up stumbling confusedly along the Royal Mile trying to remember what you saw between the men reciting Shakespeare nude and the bizarre tree-based performance poetry"

Underbelly, Cowgate, 1-25 Aug (not 13).



**Carly Smallman:** "The second most important piece of advice would be to go and check out some of the free shows on at this year's Fringe, and take a punt on someone you've never heard of. **The MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF ADVICE I'd give to anyone visiting the Fringe this year is this: Go and see 'The Appalling Carly Smallman'. You will love it. She is well cool"**

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 31 Jul-25 Aug (not 13).



**Barry Castagnola aka Donny Donkins:** "Don't believe the hype! A lot of people make very spurious claims on their posters and flyers with exaggerated quotes, or they talk about being winners or nominees of this award or that. I mean, I won the new act competition at The Goose And Gander in Chorley two weeks running a few years ago but I never mention it"

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 31 Jul-25 Aug (not 12).



**Bobby Mair:** "My advice to any first timers in Edinburgh would be to go out of your comfort zone. See shows that have great reviews that you would never otherwise go see. It's called a Fringe festival for a reason, and once you're here you might as well experience the fringes of it"

Just The Tonic at The Tron, 1-25 Aug (not 13).



**The team from Festival Of The Spoken Nerd:** "There are more shows than you could possibly see in the time available, even if you're there for the entirety of August. We recommend that you spend at least the first three days creating a colour coded spreadsheet, complete with show times, travel times and toilet breaks and periods of scheduled spontaneity. That's how we make it through the Fringe"

Assembly George Square, 31 Jul-25 Aug (not 14).



**David Quirk:** "Have faith in shows and acts you might not know, and in some cases, have mercy on them"

Pleasance Courtyard, 31 Jul-26 Aug (not 12).



**Gary Delaney:** "5am isn't really that late. A battered pizza contains your five portion of fruit and veg per day. All student drama is brilliant. And if you climb to the top of Arthur's Seat with a hangover you get a free bacon sandwich. Honest"

Pleasance Courtyard, 31 Jul-25 Aug (not 12).



**Katie Mulgrew:** "Turn up at any Fringe venue and pick a show at random. My first Edinburgh trip I did just that and I saw Terry Saunders show 'PulpBoy'. It was wonderful"

The Stand Comedy Club, 31 Jul-25 Aug (not 1, 12).



**Dan Nightingale:** "For every ticket you buy where you already know the name of the act, buy another ticket for an act that you don't. The whole point of the festival is new and undiscovered comedy. Don't just play it safe. Live a little, see something that could be shit. It's exciting"

Pleasance Dome, 31 Jul-25 Aug (not 12).



**Gareth Richards:** "Wear layers. Outside, it might be cold and rainy, but inside the venue can be as hot as the sun"

Pleasance Courtyard, 31 Jul-25 Aug.



**Felicity Ward:** "Everyone on stage is trying as hard as they can, so it would be great if you did too. Don't check your phone-unless you're expecting a call from the hospital, it can wait an hour. Don't cross your arms. Laugh as loudly as you can. The more you give, the more we give, and vice-versa"

Underbelly, Bristo Square, 31 Jul-26 Aug (not 12).



**Mark Thomas:** "Always be prepared to take risks when seeing shows, this way you will see something good, bad and memorable, rather than a bunch of OK shows. Go to Summerhall and the Traverse and the Free

Fringe. Be polite when refusing leaflets, this is the biggest arts festival around so the level of rejection and failure is phenomenal. Be nice. And finally, chips are not one of your five a day"

The Stand Comedy Club, 3-25 Aug (not 12).



**Lucy Porter:** "It's important to try at least one show that you know nothing about. My husband and I always pick random shows for each other to see. When we started doing it, early in our courtship, we considered each other's tastes and chose something we thought the other one would like. Now we've been married a few years I go out of my way to pick things my husband will hate. It's a brilliant way to avenge any domestic grievances"

The Stand Comedy Club, 31 Jul-25 Aug (not 1, 12, 19).



**Mark Dolan:** "Have a wee before you go in. Good bladder management is key to your enjoyment of a show"

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 31 Jul-25 Aug (not 12).

Read all the Quick Quiz answers these and more performers gave at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/quickquiz](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/quickquiz)

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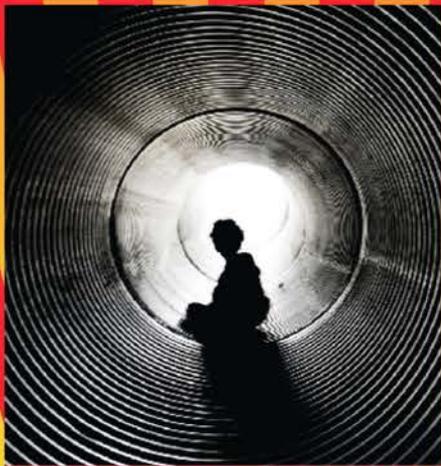
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TKD Productions  
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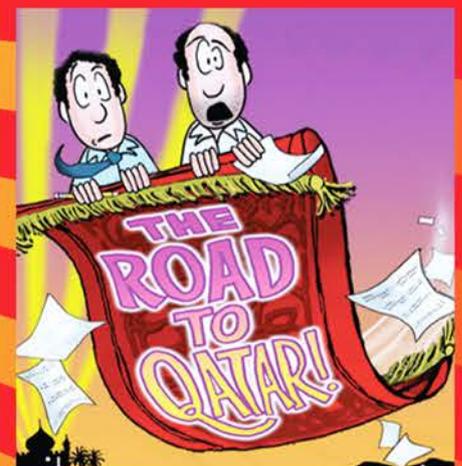
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## Brian Mitchell & Joseph N

For anyone who grew up in the UK in the 1970s or 1980s, Big Daddy and Giant Haystacks, probably the most famous characters in Professional British Wrestling, were big celebrities. Bigger even than the stars of the much more glitzy American wrestling shows that have dominated in subsequent decades. To younger generations, or non-Brits, the fame these ageing weighty men enjoyed will likely seem very odd indeed. The phenomenon of British Wrestling in the mid-part of the Twentieth Century, and in particular the relationship between these two wrestling men, is the focus of the Fringe play 'Big Daddy vs Giant Haystacks', which comes to Edinburgh this August. The show stars Ross Gurney and Dave Mounfield (pictured in character), though we spoke to the men behind the play, Brian Mitchell and Joseph Nixon, to find out what motivated them to revisit this very British 'sporting' phenomenon through a two-hander play.

**TW:** So, what inspired you to write a play about Big Daddy and Giant Haystacks?

**BM:** We wanted to write a play for two very good actors we know (both big men) and fancied doing something colourful and fun. And, having written a play about the first Trans-Atlantic flight (called 'Those Magnificent Men') we felt we should do something equally epic.

**TW:** Were you a fan of British wrestling already, or did the play require lots of research?

**JN:** To be honest, as a child my heart used to sink when 'Tiswas' ended and I knew we were in for six hours of sport, but I have more affection for pretend sports like wrestling, stock car racing and darts than real sports like cricket or football.

**BM:** I saw Mick McManus when I was a kid at Butlins and he was fantastic. We did have to do a lot of research though, not least because there's very little written about it all - so we had to look in some very odd places.

**TW:** Does the play focus on the personal lives of the two wrestlers, or the story of the rise and fall of British Professional Wrestling?

**BM:** Both. The two are very much intertwined as you will discover when you watch the play.



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## ixon: Pitching Daddy and Haystacks at the Fringe

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**TW: Was the highly public feud between the two men any more real than the fighting in the ring?**

JN: There wasn't really a relationship between them in real life, they were just two professionals who worked together. But they were very different men and I suppose they rubbed each other up the wrong way.

**TW: Both wrestlers started out as 'bad guys' of the ring, but Big Daddy became one of the 'good guys'. Why do you think that happened?**

BM: Big Daddy was a bit of a softy really, and didn't like being a 'heel' - he craved adulation. It was his brother, and manager, Max who moulded him into a good guy, or 'blue eye' as they say in the trade.

JN: Let's not forget that old ladies would jab knitting needles into Haystacks as he walked up to the ring, so Big Daddy can't be blamed for wanting to be a blue eye!

**TW: Why do you think these two wrestlers in particular became such big celebrities in the UK in the 1970s and 1980s?**

BM: I think it was because they symbolised - probably subconsciously - two major and opposing strains of the British character in the 70s and 80s. But it might just have been because there

was nothing else good on the telly back then.

**TW: For those born after British wrestling disappeared from the mainstream TV screens, do you think it will seem odd that these two large ageing men who pretended to fight each other were such big household names?**

JN: Yeah - it is odd. We watched some of the bouts on YouTube and it was pitiful really; Big Daddy can hardly move and Haystacks isn't much better.

BM: Occasionally you see Big Daddy do a body slam, which is impressive, but it takes him half an hour to recover.

**TW: It was Greg Dyke who famously axed British wrestling from the ITV schedules. Do you blame him for the slide in the sport's popularity, or did promoter politics and the rise of American wrestling on UK TV play it's part?**

BM: Well Dyke was responsible for the rise of American wrestling on UK TV, so he was doubly to blame. A lot of factors did make it easy for him to kill it off though.

JN: Yes, it's debatable how long it would have gone on even without Dyke.



**TW: The play was first performed at the Brighton Fringe a couple of years back. How has it developed since then?**

BM: It's tighter, but oddly enough it's become more of a family show. When we were touring it round the country it was meant to be adults only, but children kept turning up and sitting on the front row, so we had to tone down the swearing somewhat.

JN: But it works better like that, strangely.

**TW: How will Ross and David be preparing to play such legendary, popular and large characters?!**

JN: Eating.

BM: They've spent a lifetime in training and preparation.

'Big Daddy vs Giant Haystacks' will be performed at Assembly George Square from 1 - 26 Aug (not 13, 20) at 12.15pm.

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

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## TW 3 TO SEE

**ThreeWeeks Co-Editor Caro Moses recommends some of the theatrical treats worth your attention at this year's Festival**

### 3 Hollywood types

#### Longing For Grace

Grace Kelly is a bit of a legend, really, isn't she? The Hollywood actress and Hitchcock darling who won an Oscar and married a prince. This award winning show, written and performed by Grace Kiley (pictured above) is a look at the actress's personal life, and a cautionary tale about abandoning one's dreams.

Hill Street Theatre, 1-25 Aug, 2.30pm.

#### Who's Afraid Of Rachel Roberts



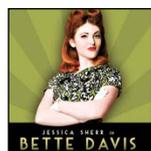
The name Rachel Roberts is possibly a little less recognisable than Grace Kelly, but you'll know her

from her face; you probably saw her in films such as 'Saturday Night And Sunday Morning', 'Picnic at Hanging Rock', 'Murder On The Orient Express' and 'This Sporting Life', for which she won an Academy Award nomination.

The Wales-born actress married fellow thesp Rex Harrison, and died tragically early from an overdose of barbiturates; Bafta-winning actress Helen Griffin depicts how it all went so badly wrong.

Assembly Roxy, 1-26 Aug, 3.00pm.

#### Bette Davis Aint For Sissies



I'd be surprised if you hadn't heard of Bette Davis, a performer who, as the blurb rightly points out, "wouldn't

fit into the Hollywood mould". This one woman show performed by Jessica Sherr takes place on the eve of the 1939 Academy Awards, when Davis discovers that she is going to lose out in the Best Actress race to Vivien Leigh. How will she deal with losing?

The Fiddlers Elbow, 3-24 Aug, 12.45pm.

### 3 film adaptations

#### Birdhouse



'Birdhouse' is kind of based on Hitchcock's 'The Birds', and tells the story of four twitchers on holiday, extras in the film, caught up in the movie's terrible events. It's a devised piece, performed by the Lecoq-trained members of producing company Jammy Voo, who have won oodles of acclaim for their previous work. So all in all, I think this will probably be pretty good.

Assembly George Square, 1-25 Aug (not 12, 19), 5.30pm.

#### The Boss Of It All



This is a staged adaptation of the film of the same name by avant garde auteur Lars Von Trier. It's the story of an out of work actor, hired to perform the 'role' of the boss of a failing company, and the resulting tale is, according to the blurb, "a brilliant, edgy comedy that blows apart the notion of what it means to be a leader in the world today."

Assembly Roxy, 1-26 Aug (not 12, 19), 4.15pm.

#### A Matter Of Life And Death



I totally loved 'A Matter Of Life And Death' when I first saw it, many many years ago, when I was but a child, off sick from school, in the days when the only thing on TV in the afternoon was old films. When I saw that a version was headed to the Fringe, I wondered, quite frankly, if anyone could do it justice... but, it sounds like this company are going to take a fun and physical approach to the subject matter, and I think that will probably work quite nicely.

C, 11-17 Aug, 3.45pm.

### 3 devils and demons

#### Devil In The Deck



This show is from Unusual Productions, the ThreeWeeks Editors' Award winners behind one of our favourite children's shows of recent years. Star of the show Paul Nathan weaves a "timeless fairy tale of love, magic and adventure", set in the world of stings, scams and cons, accompanied by live music. It sounds great, and I'd like to see it.

Pleasance Dome, 31 Jul - 25 Aug, 4.10pm.

#### His Majesty, The Devil - A Play With Music



This all seems a little bit elusive and mysterious, and I'm not quite sure what it's all about; but this Dostoevsky inspired show depicts the Prince of Darkness as a playful, lighthearted, trendy gourmet, and questions injustice and violence, exploring a "war of ideas" between the old and the new. Certainly sounds intriguing.

Quaker Meeting House, 5-17 Aug, 6.20pm.

#### Diablo



Northern Irish producing company Spanner In The Works point out in their blurb that human trafficking is a fast-growing criminal enterprise

because of its low risk levels and potential for large profits. This no doubt disturbing five hander by Patricia Downey focuses on the human exploitation that goes on on our very doorstep, and has already won acclaim for its hard-hitting approach.

C aquila, 1-13 Aug, 3.40pm.

### 3 reviewer recommended

#### Fade



This is a new play, and so I can't claim that it's this show that comes reviewer recommended, but this company have won plaudits from our review team, and that's why I'm telling you about it. And come to think of it, that applies to all the other shows selected in this section. Anyway, 'Fade' is from DugOut Theatre, who've garnered a fistful of four and five star reviews from our writers in recent years, so I can't help thinking that this new piece is one to watch out for.

Bedlam Theatre, 2-24 Aug, 9.00pm.

#### Lexi Heart, The Singing Magician



Last year. We praised Haberdashery Productions' show 'The Indescribable Phenomenon' for its informative script and superb delivery, and gave it a resoundingly resounding 5/5 score. So it won't come as any surprise to discover that we're looking forward to their Fringe 2013 production, which promises a piece which is "sometimes sad, sometimes silly, always magical".

Cafe Camino, 3-24 Aug, 3.45pm.

#### The Morning After Season (The Pink Bedroom/Wuthering Heights)



Another company our reviewers have a habit of liking is 3Bugs Fringe Theatre; from a shocking and evocative production of 'Company Of Wolves' to their watery staging of 'Ophelia Drowning', and many other shows in-between, we've been more than impressed. The Morning After Season comprises two separate

pieces, performed on alternate dates, and we've every reason to believe it's worth making time to see both.

theSpace on The Mile, 2-24 Aug, 10.15am.

### 3 because I felt like it

#### The Oldest Man In Catford



Yes, I know what you're thinking. And you know, you may be just a little bit right about that.

Yes, I was attracted to this play because I used to live in Catford. But then I read the blurb and it sounded very interesting, so I'm not being quite as whimsical as you thought; a 106 year old man - with strange and terrible secrets - and his great great granddaughter, embark on a gently comic journey into the centenarian's past. What's more, it's from Quidem Productions, who last year brought you the critically acclaimed 'Dust'.

New Town Theatre, 1-25 Aug, 2.30pm.

#### Banksy: The Room In The Elephant

I suspect theatre-goers will be attracted to this show (pictured below) in droves, because it sounds fascinating. It's based on true events: to make a point about homelessness, Banksy drew an Elephant on a disused water tank in Los Angeles that a man had been living in for years; and of course the tank, having been transformed into a work of art, was taken away, thus leaving the man homeless. This show is about that. It sounds very interesting. And, celeb seekers, it stars EastEnders type Gary Beadle, aka Paul Trueman.

Pleasance Courtyard, 31 Jul - 26 Aug (not 13, 19), 1.00pm.

#### Sh!t Theatre's JSA (Job Seekers Anonymous 2013)



Louise Mothersole and Rebecca Biscuit have won acclaim for their quirky performances and WhatsOnStage have

ear-marked this show as a "cracking showcase" for the duo's considerable talent. For physical theatre combined with topical satire, look no further.

Gryphon Venues at The Point Hotel, 2-25 Aug (not 6, 7, 8, 9), 1.30pm.





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SCOTSMAN



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# THEATRE

Every August ThreeWeeks chats to numerous performers, directors and writers appearing at the Festival  
Read them all online at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/interviews](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/interviews)

## Quick Quiz

**Time is limited at the Fringe, so get to know three theatre shows super quick as the people behind them tackle the ThreeWeeks Quick Quiz**

### Rob Wilson from Impromptu Shakespeare

**TW: Tell us about your show in no more than sixty words.**

RW: An entirely new and unique Shakespeare play is made up on the spot irreverently using the themes, characters and language of the Bard.

**TW: Tell us about one other show you are planning to see this year.**

RW: I really have to see 'Shitfaced Shakespeare'. One actor in 'Midsummer Night's Dream' gets inebriated and the others have to help them continue to deliver the show.

**TW: What made you decide to come to the Edinburgh Fringe?**

RW: It's my first time in Edinburgh and over the years, like a virgin, I have been looking at people coming back



from Edinburgh happy and tired, with a kind of irritating glow and peacefulness to them, looking slightly dishevelled, speaking about shows I have never heard of in a patronising and arrogant way. I can't take that any longer and the time has come for me to make a beautiful union with the Fringe. Luckily it will be four weeks long rather than four minutes. I intend to be a huge culture vulture for the four weeks and experience all the kinks and wild nights that it has to offer.

**TW: What have you done to prepare for your Edinburgh show?**

RW: We have been rehearsing hard. It's a funny one rehearsing improvised

shows, it's mostly about not getting stuck in patterns so that every time we do a show it has a unique flavour. For example, we realised that our default choices did not involve any scenes in Rome, so we started to involve the world of Julius Caesar and loads of tortuous scenes. It's just about adding more colours to your pallet, flavours to your soup or bangers to your setlist.

**TW: Scotland's got an important referendum coming up, if you could instigate your own referendum, what would it be on?**

RW: Re-Nationalising all energy suppliers to make them affordable and green.

Impromptu Shakespeare, Underbelly Cowgate, 1-25 Aug (not 14), 2.10pm.

### The team from Jammy Voo

**TW: Tell us about your show in no more than sixty words**

JV: 'Birdhouse' is the untold story of four minor characters from Hitchcock's infamous film 'The Birds'. The women, sole remaining survivors of the bird attack that devastated the town, took refuge in the Coronet Cinema and have been stuck there ever since, living in a state of post-traumatic shock. Surreal comedy



horror, with songs and gorgeous live music by Greg Hall.

**TW: Tell us about one other show you are planning to see this year.**

JV: There is always such a wonderful mix of shows at the Fringe, but sometimes you can get a bit jaded from seeing so much stuff. That's when a show with lots of heart is a great antidote - Idiot Child's work always manages to be poignant, funny and moving and we'll definitely be seeing 'I Could've Been Better' by them at the Pleasance Courtyard.

**TW: What's your best piece of advice for Edinburgh first-time fringe-goers?**

JV: OK, don't book up to see more than four shows a day otherwise you'll start to forget your own name, let alone any of the shows you've seen. Climb something high to get a view of Edinburgh, it's such a beautiful city and it helps give some perspective when all the wonderful crazy buzz of the Festival gets overwhelming.

**TW: What have you done to prepare for your Edinburgh show?**

JV: We recently did a seaside tour of Edinburgh preview shows to some lovely places like Margate, Bridport and the North Devon Fringe festival, which was great fun, combining work with eating ice creams on the beach. 'Birdhouse' went down really well with audiences there, so we hope it will be the same in Edinburgh. At the seaside, you also see a lot of worrying seagull behaviour, such as them attacking people for their food, which is all good research for our show!

**TW: Scotland's got an important referendum coming up, if you could instigate your own referendum, what would it be on?**

JV: I think we should have a referendum on how much value people put on arts in this country. There are cuts happening now that are going to devastate the vibrant landscape of arts and culture we have in the UK, and I don't think a lot of people necessarily realise what they stand to lose (which is what the

government are counting on). If there was a debate about it, I'm certain the public would agree there is great value to the arts in their communities and that it should be protected. And then arts funding should be ring-fenced as a result.

Birdhouse, Assembly George Square, 1-25 Aug (not 12, 19), 5.30pm.

### Rachael Canning and Hannah Mulder from The Wrong Crowd

**TW: Tell us about your show in no more than sixty words**

TWC: We've re-imagined one of Slavic folklore's most extraordinary characters, the child-eating hag-witch, Baba Yaga, in a fierce story about what it takes to become yourself. It'll be a fusion of live action, puppetry, dark humour and singing skulls. If you saw our last show, 'The Girl With The Iron Claws', you'll love this, but don't bring anyone under ten!

**TW: Tell us about one other show you are planning to see this year.**

TWC: We're really looking forward to seeing Theatre Ad Infinitum's new show, 'Ballad Of The Burning Star', after their beautiful tear-jerker 'Translunar Paradise', which we saw at the Fringe in 2011.

**TW: What's your best piece of advice for Edinburgh first-time fringe-goers?**

TWC: Take a punt on watching some things you'd never usually go to - some comedy circus opera fusion - and ask people in the long queues what they're going to see.

**TW: What have you done to prepare for your Edinburgh show?**

TWC: We've been brewing this show for eighteen months, so lots of imagining, followed by lots of making!

**TW: Scotland's got an important referendum coming up, if you could instigate your own referendum, what would it be on?**

TWC: Should witchcraft be taught in primary schools?

Hag, Underbelly Cowgate, 1-25 Aug (not 13), 3.30pm.



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## TW 3 TO SEE

**Yes, ThreeWeeks Co-Editor Caro Moses is back with show tips from the dance & physical theatre Fringe**

### 3 dance shows

#### Duet



It's often hard to know what to say about dance shows, especially if the themes are a bit vague - but this one has a very tangible story to tell; on the verge of a breakup after 13 years together, Hanna and Heidi decide to take up couple therapy and the result is a brutally honest look at a confused and disillusioned relationship. Will they still be together by the end of the run? Interesting.

Zoo, 19-24 Aug, 11.00am & 11.45am.

#### XD



Do I need to tell you what 'XD' means? Or is everyone so completely computer literate and internet savvy these days

that I don't actually need to explain it? Well, I'd better, anyway, just in case you are holding out against technology, you Luddite, you. Well, the letters XD are shorthand for a laughing face. I'm honestly not quite sure why the piece has this title, but it probably reflects the modernity of the show's content, apparently filled with references to the likes of manga, advertising, porn and fashion.

Dance Base - National Centre For Dance, 2-17 Aug, times vary.

#### Booking Dance Festival Showcase



I suspect that this is one of those shows that's brilliant for aficionados of the genre, but also for those who are new to the genre; Booking Dance offer up a selection of performances from seven different US companies. Last year's show scored a 4/5 review from us, and was praised for its diverse programme; one for your diaries, newcomer to dance or not.

Venue 150 @ EICC, 14-18 Aug, 215pm.

### 3 physical shows

#### HeLa

I've been meaning to read a book called 'The Immortal Life Of Henrietta Lacks' for quite some time now, but it's never managed to make it to the top of the pile (probably because my 'to-read'



pile is about as high as my house). And that's probably why this show, a solo piece by Adura Onashile, jumped out at me; it's inspired by the story of the above named Henrietta Lacks, whose cancer cells have been used in research and led to medical breakthroughs that have saved countless lives.

Summerhall, 2-25 Aug (not 20), 6.45pm.

#### Company Man



This one falls into the category of circus, and promises to be fun for all the family. This award-winning piece from Japan

tackles the subject of the salary-men who devote themselves to work and fail to handle their personal lives, via the medium of mime, juggling, trapeze, aerials and acrobatics. Sounds cool.

C, 31 Jul-26 Aug (not 13), 4.45pm.

#### A Romance (pictured right)

This is another international piece, this time from Korea, and featuring traditional music and beautiful costume. It's about women meeting in secret to share stories and ideas, and focuses on the tale of a family preparing for their daughter's wedding; closeted away, the bride reads aloud to the illiterate servants to thank them for their work, and as they continue on late into the night, they eventually share their own personal love stories.

C, 1-26 Aug, 4.05pm.



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## Cultures combine for these reality power games



Shane Shambu (performing on the right above) may have first discovered dance, as a child, on the orders of his mother, but it was his love for the genre that turned it into a career. Following a time performing with theatre group Complicité, Shambu formed his own company Altered Skin, and it is through that enterprise that he brings his piece 'Power Games' to the Fringe this August. We spoke to him about his passions, his plans and his show.

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### TW INTERVIEW

**TW: How did you first become enthused by dance?**

SS: I was a fat kid, and one day my mum said I could do with losing some weight. She also said I needed to learn to be Indian, which was a funny thing to say, because I definitely looked Indian! But I ended up being sent to Indian dance classes. Once there I fell in love with it, mainly because it allowed me to be so free and uninhibited.

**TW: Having turned your dance into a career, you then worked for a number of years with theatre company Complicité. How did that change your perceptions of performance?**

SS: Working with Complicité expanded my understanding of the body and the numerous ways in which it can be used to tell stories and communicate. Working with Artistic Director Simon McBurney, meanwhile, gave me a sense of the depth of exploration that is involved in creating work, and how to constantly challenge yourself as a creator, which is something I have kept hold of and continue within my own creative journey.

**TW: You've now launched your own company Altered Skin. Tell us about that.**

SS: Altered Skin is a dynamic new physical theatre company that blends theatre and contemporary and South Asian dance to tell modern day stories. We aim to give audiences a fresh experience that we hope will resonate with them powerfully. I set the company up to pursue projects that wouldn't be limited by narrowly defined artistic styles, enabling me to use whatever medium is necessary to bring a scene and story to life.

**TW: Altered Skin is bringing 'Power Games' to the Fringe. What's it about?**

SS: 'Power Games' follows the life of Deepak Mahendra, a stock-trading banker. His life unravels before us through a reality TV show, where the audience will decide what happens to him via a series of 50/50 decisions at crucial stages of his narrative. The show includes original music blending eastern and western sounds, visual projections over two screens, and a set that includes a bar, a flat in Canary Wharf, and a strip club!

**TW: What styles of dance feature?**

SS: The show uses a number of different dance performance techniques. There is both the traditional Indian dance form of Bharatanatyam and contemporary dance, mainly release-based, plus a hybrid language of the two. As we use a lot of mime and gesture in Bharatanatyam you can expect to see mime aspects too, but not in a Marcel Marceau kind of way! More a different

and new perspective to gesture and mime, but all highly physical.

**TW: A lot of shows in the Dance & Physical Theatre section of the Fringe are either dance or physical theatre, but it sounds like this piece combines both. Would you agree?**

SS: We use dance as a medium in which to create theatre. So in essence it's a piece of theatre that uses dance to enter the characters' mindsets and emotional thoughts. But this is not represented in an abstract way, which a lot of dance does, but is more carefully considered through discovering gesticular mime built into sophisticated fluid movement. This allows freedom of interpretation without losing the sense of narrative.

**TW: You co-wrote the piece with Jonathan Grieve, how did that partnership come about and work?**

SS: I had worked with Jon and his company Para-Active back in 2000. When I was playing around with ideas of power and money for this work, I knew that he would be able to help with this, because his interest lies in audience performer connections. He also has a very good understanding of Indian Dance and the avenues I was exploring, which allowed freedom in shifting structures.

**TW: When conceiving a piece like this, what generally comes first, story, movement or music?**

SS: With 'Power Games', a basic structure based on the key themes, was developed first. I knew that the audience had to make choices at various points in a narrative. From this structure we played with movement, text and devised scenes, and together the pace slowly shaped itself. I don't think any particular aspect takes dominance, it was about finding the way in which we could communicate the themes emotionally, powerfully and beautifully.

**TW: Why did you decide to premiere the production at the Fringe?**

SS: As a newly formed company that is challenging the perceptions of forms and straddling dance, theatre, physical theatre, mime, political theatre and music, it felt the perfect place to premiere. The Fringe is a place where the performance ideas and quality of delivery takes precedence over form.

**TW: Other than performing, what else are you looking forward to about this year's festival?**

SS: I cannot help but look forward to some great comedy! But I'm also looking forward to some of the other works that are offering something new and, of course, the endless pints over the course of the festival!

'Power Games' is on at Zoo from 12-24 Aug (not 18) at 6.45pm.

LINKS: [www.alteredskin.net](http://www.alteredskin.net)

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## Checking into the Fringe flow

### TW INTERVIEW

Amidst all that comedy and theatre, some people miss the excellent music programme at the Fringe each year, and those who find it are sometimes put off by the fact a lot of the musicians who visit the festival are only around for one night. But there is a community of musicians who, like their theatrical and comedy brethren, set up for a residency at the Festival. And one such artist to look out for this year is Australian (via Israel) singer-songwriter Lior, who has enjoyed considerable success back home with his three self-released albums. Having, in recent years, also built up a loyal fanbase in Europe, this August he will set up residence for two weeks at Assembly's new venue Checkpoint. We spoke to Lior to find out more.



**TW: For the uninitiated, let's start at the start - when did you start making and performing music?**  
L: Well that depends how you define

"making and performing music". I was an air guitar prodigy by the age of six. As far as playing a real guitar, I started when I was about ten years old and by the time I was fourteen my main interest was songwriting. As far as really making and performing music, I hope to be able to do that by the time I get to Edinburgh in a few weeks time!

**TW: Other than telling them to go and listen to some tracks on your website, how would you describe your music to someone coming across you for the first time?**

L: Ah the dreaded "describe your music" question! Why is it easy to describe everyone else's music but your own? I suppose at the heart of it, the songs are very much about the lyric. While there are many musical influences that go into my vocal delivery, particularly Middle Eastern stylings that reflect my heritage, I would say that the music has a strong connection to the songwriting era of the late 60s and early 70s where it was all about a song standing up on the lyric and melody alone.

**TW: You self-released your debut album 'Autumn Flow' in 2005. Why did you decide to go that route, and what challenges did making that first solo record pose?**

L: It was during my early 20s, after having played in bands for many years, that I finally built up the courage to step out on to a stage on my own. I always knew that my identity was that of a singer/songwriter and that I wouldn't be much good in an environment where I had to compromise on the writing

of the song. I compare the main challenges of being a solo artist to that of an author, long periods of necessary isolation, and having to ride the creative lows mostly on your own. There is definitely a sense of camaraderie in a band environment that is special and often missed.

**TW: For an album you released yourself, 'Autumn Flow' was hugely successful in Australia. Did the success come as a surprise, given that simply having a great record never guarantees success?**

L: Yes, it was a real surprise. One of those beautiful and rare moments in life where expectations are hugely exceeded. I self funded and released the album entirely independently and had little to no expectations of commercial success for the album. It was purely something I knew I had to do to retain my sanity. I was pinching myself a lot that year.

**TW: An increasing number of musicians - both new and established - have started considering releasing their own records in recent years, mainly because of the rise of online promotional and pre-order platforms. But it's a challenge, especially for new artists. What tips would you have for anyone considering going that route?**

L: I don't see myself as someone who can give tips on this. When I released 'Autumn Flow' independently back in 2005, it was a completely different landscape. There was still no iTunes in Australia. Instead people went out to shops and bought these funny

little discs that they now use as coasters. But social media has meant communication is easy, so rather than the communication channels being exclusively decided by record companies, we now have a much more open environment where those with the most creative ideas can thrive, which is a wonderful thing. Ultimately, creativity is the challenge.

**TW: You played the Edinburgh Fringe once before a few years back. What has persuaded you to come back for a sixteen date run?**

L: I only performed a couple of shows the last time I was at the Fringe, and I loved the festival and the city itself. Even judging from the difference between the first and second night I performed, I could see that the festival was all about word of mouth and having a chance to build and connect with an audience. I felt a strong urge to return and camp out at the festival and not only enjoy the momentum it has to offer, but be inspired by the endless talent floating about.

**TW: What can we expect from the Edinburgh shows this August?**

L: These will be solo intimate shows where it's really all about delivering the songs at their core. If successful I will be magically transporting you into my lounge room. If not, I hear the venue is still really nice.

Lior will play Assembly Checkpoint from 3 - 18 Aug (not 7, 12) at 6.15pm.

LINKS: [www.lior.com.au](http://www.lior.com.au)

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# MUSIC & MUSICALS

Follow the musical Fringe online...  
Check out at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/musicals](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/musicals)

## TW 3 TO SEE

**Another fine helping of show tips from ThreeWeeks Co-Editor Caro Moses; this time from the music, musical and cabaret programmes**

### 3 classical

#### Fauré Requiem

I'm not going to lie. I chose this because I was once in a choral society that performed Fauré's Requiem and I really enjoyed doing it. It's a super piece of music, and on this occasion it will be performed by the renowned Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the National Youth Choir of Scotland, with soloists Sir Thomas Allen and Isaac Waddington.



Usher Hall, 17 Aug, 8.00pm.

#### Pierre Laurent Aimard / Marco Stroppa / Samuel Favre



French pianist Pierre Laurent Aimard is widely regarded as one of the world's greats when it comes to keyboards, and he's appearing more than once at this year's

International Festival. The event I'm most interested in, however, is his recital with Marco Stroppa on electronics and Samuel Favre on percussion, at which they'll be performing Messaien's *La Rousserolle Effarvatte* and Stockhausen's *'Kontakte'*.

The Hub, 21 Aug, 10.00pm.

#### Daniel's Beard



It's an interesting name for a classical outfit, isn't it? One of Scotland's foremost chamber ensembles, they're known for performing less well known works (alongside the well known ones) from all eras, from Baroque to the present day. And they're called Daniel's Beard. What could possibly go wrong?

St Andrew's and St George's West, 21 Aug, 2.30pm.

### 3 world & folk

#### Antonio Forcione Group



With good reason, ThreeWeeks reviewers love Antonio Forcione. And I mean, really, really like. One of our writers said this: "There are no words to describe the greatness of this show". And another said this: "is a superb dose of world-class talent". So, what are you waiting for?

Assembly George Square, 16-26 Aug, 9.00pm.

#### Brassed On



I'm a sucker for a brass band - perhaps it's my Northern heritage - which explains why I might have fallen for this listing in the Fringe Programme. Brassed On are apparently Scotland's foremost brass band, renowned for their exciting and diverse repertoire, and this is their Fringe debut. What a shame they're not here for a full run...

The Assembly Rooms, 2 Aug, 8.00pm.

#### Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers



Europe's leading Taiko group head to Edinburgh for a full run of thundering drums, brilliant timing, and - blurb says - post apocalyptic imagery and belly laugh humour. This type of traditional performance has taken the Festival by storm before, and I wouldn't be surprised if it did so again.

Assembly George Square, 1-26 Aug (not 12, 19), 12.30pm.

### 3 contemporary

#### Ensemble MusikFabrik



This tribute to Frank Zappa promises a concert of blazing energy and infectious rhythms from this Cologne based contemporary music group, who will explore the connections between Zappa's eclectic compositions and the classical music he admired. They'll perform work by Zappa, but also by John Cage and Varese.

Usher Hall, 28 Aug, 8.00pm.

#### The Les Clochards



This lot garnered a 5/5 from our discerning reviewer last year, and she wasn't the only one that fell for them; charismatic, side splittingly hilarious, and verging on the insane, this hobo band play popular classics with a comic twist, and do it very, very, well.

Assembly Checkpoint, 6-25 Aug, 9.10pm.

#### Airnadette



If you look closely into the name, then you'll see it... are you there? Yes, you have it. Airnadette are an air guitar band... and with names like Scotch Brit, Moche Pitt and Gunther Love, you can be sure that this is one musical act that's not taking itself at all seriously, and offers a show stuffed with pop culture references and popstastic songs.

Underbelly Bristo Square, 31 July-26 Aug (not 7, 13, 19), 8.50pm.

## TW 3 TO SEE

### 3 operas

#### Fidelio



The acclaimed Opéra de Lyon return to the International Festival with their production of *Fidelio*, by everyone's favourite composer, Beethoven. Well, all right, he might not be absolutely everyone's favourite, but most people would admit that his works are pretty good. Anyway, this sounds like a cracking show, featuring renowned Japanese conductor Kazushi Ono, and direction and video design from contemporary media artist Gary Hill.

Festival Theatre, 10, 12 Aug, 7.15pm.

#### American Lulu



This sounds very interesting indeed; a radical re-working by composer Olga Neuwirth of fellow Austrian Alban Berg's unfinished 1934 opera *'Lulu'*. The new adaptation is set against the backdrop of the American civil rights struggles of the fifties and sixties, evoking the smoky jazz clubs of the deep south.

King's Theatre, 30, 31 Aug, 7.15pm.

#### The Okavango Macbeth



Well, the Fringe wouldn't be the Fringe without a bit of Shakespeare in it somewhere (though to be honest, I've noticed a bit of a decline in such traditional productions in recent years) and this gives The Scottish Play really quite an interesting twist. This is a revival, by Edinburgh Studio Opera, of a chamber opera version of the play in which the protagonists are a group of baboons, located in the Okavango Delta in Botswana. See, I told you it was interesting.

Spotlites @ The Merchants' Hall, 12-17 Aug, 9.30pm.

### 3 new musicals

#### Timeless The Musical



It's always a bit difficult to recommend completely new stuff, but when the companies producing that new stuff have proved themselves with their previous offerings, it makes things a little bit easier. It's a few years now, since we saw it, but we were very taken with Pumphouse's 2009 offering *'Scrimshaw'*, so we expect their new show to be good. Plus, it appears to be about time travel. And I cannot resist things about time travel.

Paradise in Augustine's, 20-25 Aug, 3.55pm.

#### Blood Ties



It's had a good critical response on the other side of the pond, but I suppose I should warn you from the off that this one contains adult themes and strong language - not so surprising, given it's about a bachelorette weekend gone wrong - so it's probably not your average family musical. Though you probably wouldn't take your kids to a show that's on at five past nine in the evening anyway, would you?

theSpace @ Venue45, 12-24 Aug, 9.05pm.

TW

# TERENCE BLACKER

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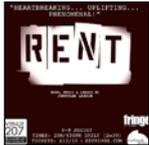
## Forest Boy

Shows from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland always do well at this Festival, so I can't help thinking that this joint effort with Noisemaker productions will also be a success. It's about the boy who, in September 2011, turned up in Berlin claiming to have lived in the forest with his father for five years; interesting subject matter and an award-winning team of creatives behind it.

Assembly George Square, 1-25 Aug (alternate dates), 3.20pm.

## 3 classics

### Rent



'Rent' is a show that's been done at the Fringe a thousand times (or maybe not - perhaps it's only a few, and I'm imagining it) and it's not something I'd often think to add to my critical picks. But this production is from a youth theatre company you can trust to do things well. We saw two of their shows at Ed 2012, and they both got very good reviews.

Broughton High School, 8-9 Aug, 2.00pm & 6.30pm.

### Little Shop Of Horrors



Stage by Stage are another young theatre group that you can trust to make a good fist of your classic musicals, and they've been doing just that for quite some time. And who could resist 'Little Shop Of Horrors'? Go on, feed me, Seymour.

Sweet Grassmarket, 20-25 Aug (not 22), 3.05pm.

### Beulah



Okay, Okay. This isn't really what you'd call a classic, because it was a new musical at the Fringe last year. But it's an honorary classic, because it's extremely good, and it's back for a second go this year. This folk musical inspired by William Blake, Sigur Ros and Bellowhead impressed our reviewer so much she gave it a five star review and called it a "beautiful secret". Go and find out what's so beautiful for yourself.

C, 14-26 Aug, 1.40pm.

## TW 3 TO SEE

### 3 wonderful women

#### Synagogue Slut



Last year our reviewer called Emily Rose "utterly adorable" and "instantly likeable", and praised her musical ability and interesting vocals. And the fact that she's chosen an interestingly sibilant title for this year's show made it even easier for me to select her for our Fringe picks.

Fingers Piano Bar, 3-24 Aug, 7.50pm.

#### Amy Abler: Pianodivulicious



Amy Abler is a seasoned performer whose repertoire features stuff as diverse as Beethoven, Broadway, Ragtime and Rock. A brilliant singer and pianist who is, as our reviewer observed, an "all round entertainer of the old school variety", she's only doing five shows, so if this is the kind of thing you're into, make sure you don't miss it.

The Jazz Bar, 11, 14, 18, 19, and 21 Aug, 4.00pm.

#### Damsel In Shining Armour

Self-deprecating story-telling (we like self-deprecating), music (we like music) and audience collaboration (we like audience collaboration).



'Damsel In Shining Armour' claims to be witty, moving and elevating; given the plaudits Sophie has won, we don't have

any trouble believing that claim, so we'll be keen to check this show out.

Underbelly Cowgate, 1-25 Aug (not 12), 10.15pm.

### 3 marvellous men

#### Doug Segal



If you are a regular reader of ThreeWeeks then Doug Segal probably needs little introduction, for

we interviewed him for the preview edition last year, and also gave him a ThreeWeeks Editors' Award. Yes. He is really that good. Anyway, it's only his third year, and we have already given him the status of Fringe legend. And yes, of course we're allowed to do that.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 31 Jul-26 Aug (not 13), 6.30pm.

#### Daniel Cainer:



#### Schtick and Spiel

Daniel Cainer has become a very regular fixture at the Fringe in recent years, and that is a very good thing indeed. With songs and story-telling that succeed in

veering between hilarity and heart-breaking poignancy, Cainer has wooed many of our reviewers, who have praised his artistic brilliance and light hearted genius.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 31 Jul-26 Aug, 12.45pm.

#### Dusty Limits: Psycho - Free

We've long been fans of Dusty Limits, and we're not alone. "In a realm of his own", say we. "One of the foremost practitioners of the art of cabaret", says The Scotsman. "Consummate wit", says Time Out. If you have the opportunity to take in his show, don't miss him, his biting sense of humour, his luscious singing voice, his wickedly funny musical morsels. Totally super.

Laughing Horse @ The Counting House, 1-13 Aug, 10.15pm.



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## Delivering the full Fringe Brontë: Scary Little Girls on the Free Fringe



### TW INTERVIEW

**Scary Little Girls are a prolific company, with their output encompassing literary celebrations, storytelling gatherings, school workshops and some very fine cabaret. It's in the latter domain that you will find them at Fringe 2013, though in something of a literary fashion with the 'The Full Brontë! Literary Cabaret', a show that promises silly banter, daft games, funny stories, and as many Brontë references as it's safe to include in one show. ThreeWeeks caught up with the group's Rebecca Mordan - Monika on stage - to find out more**

**TW: Let's start with the obvious question: what exactly does a literary cabaret involve?**

RM: Our literary cabaret is a mixture of songs, games and Brontë literary references. I hold it all together as the compere, aka Monika, supported by my trusty sidekick - Sharon Andrew - who we usually call Nom de Plume, though in this show she'll be known as Nom Brannie, after the Brontë mother's maiden-name Branwell. This is a Cornish name and we make a point of trying to reclaim the Brontës for Cornwall at every opportunity!

We use storytelling and daft games to share as much as we can about the Brontës, and our views on how ace they were. Some parts of the show highlight their talent in a very

moving way. For example, we put the Emily Brontë poem 'Remembrance' to music, which never fails to bring a tear to the eye. But most of the show is us being very, very silly, with lots of banter and interaction between us and the punters.

**TW: Will Brontë fans get more out of the show than non-Brontë fans, or is there going to be something for everyone?**

RM: This show is definitely something everyone can enjoy. If you're a die-hard Brontëophile, or if you've never even picked up one of their books, we think we can delight, amuse and surprise you. At the heart of it all, we're a double act who combine improv and physical humour with a somewhat irreverent love of the classics. And that means it seems to work well with all sorts of audiences.

**TW: What brings you back to the Edinburgh Fringe? And have you got any plans beyond the festival?**

RM: It's hugely exciting to be part of the arty whirl that is the Edinburgh Festival. And we were particularly keen this year to support the Free Fringe; it's such an important part of the wider Fringe ethos, but it's the first time we felt we had a show that was suitable for it. Once they offered us The Fingers Piano Bar we couldn't resist! My character, Monika, is a somewhat pompous character, so we're looking forward to her

snobby reaction to the venue and it's suggestive name! We're hoping to get lots of people in to see the show in Edinburgh, and then to get it on the road next year. We always have a great time touring.

**TW: Scary Little Girls does more than just cabaret shows, doesn't it?**

RM: We are a production hub, so our work is very diverse and supports a lot of different kinds of artists. We are probably best known for our storytelling events, 'Storysmiths', which can go anywhere and adapt to any themes. Or, equally, for our site-specific 'Living Literature Walks', which take place in towns, gardens and festivals all over the country and cover an assortment of topics, from local literature to suffrage. We've been asked back by The Theatre Chipping Norton to do one of these walks about the Mitford sisters in October after it sold out last year and we had to turn people away. It takes place in the house and grounds they grew up in, so it's a really lovely, immersive look into their letters and diaries.

We also won three national awards this year, including one from the BBC, for a project we run in Cornwall for survivors of domestic abuse, enabling them to make their own radio show once a month called 'Wild Woman's Hour'. And next September we're doing our first season at Cornwall's stunning Minack Theatre with a specially adapted all-female version

of 'Dracula' called 'The Kisses', so it's all go!

**TW: And finally, the all important question: which is your favourite Brontë?**

RM: Oh, that question is just too hard! We adore the radical feminist Anne and her 'Tenant Of Wildfell Hall'. Charlotte would surely be the ultimate big sister and her books are gifts that keep on giving, read after read. And Emily not only created Cathy and Heathcliff and gave us some of the most stunning poetry, but she also painted herself facing backwards in every family portrait! You've got to love the uncompromising weirdo!

We love them all and their literary contributions, but we can tell you that Monika has spent many happy hours delving around in her Villette. On this subject, though, one thing we do and are planning to do in Edinburgh, is our own street survey designed to decide "Which Brontë Are You?". We ask people in the street a series of questions and from their answers we work out which Brontë best matches their personality. We can then add up the figures and work out whether Edinburgh is more of a Charlotte, Emily or Anne city!

'The Full Brontë! Literary Cabaret' takes place at Fingers Piano Bar from 3-24 Aug (not 5, 12, 19) at 4.20pm.

Read the full interview with Rebecca at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013SLG](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013SLG)

TW

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## Delivering words from every angle: Scroobius Pip at the Fringe

Probably best known for his hip-hop output with collaborator Dan Le Sac, Scroobius Pip has been an active player in the spoken word community for years, being equally at home sharing his words and rhymes with or without an accompanying soundtrack. Though the full-set spoken word solo show he toured last year, and is now bringing to the Fringe for a full run this summer, did begin as a one-off venture. We found out more...

### TW INTERVIEW

**TW: We're really excited that you will be joining us at the Fringe this year. But this show all began as a single set at Latitude, I think. How did it become a fully fledged show in itself?**

SP: Firstly, your excitement, I promise you, is surpassed by my own! I really can't wait to get up there. And, yes, basically, I prepared an hour long show for a headline slot at the Latitude Festival in 2012. I was stunned to get a turn out of 4000 or so people who all stood there, in this field, somewhere around midnight... and paid attention. That experience almost instantly made me decide I needed to take this on the road. So in December I developed it into more of a set/show and did a sold-out 14 gigs in 14 days around the UK.

**TW: So what motivated you to bring it to the Edinburgh Fringe, and for a full run?**

SP: Well, first of all, I was once again stunned by the reaction the show got once we were on that December

tour. Though I had initially decided I was going to leave it there and go out on a high with it (and return to my day job of touring with music and writing records). But when both Tim Key and Brett Goldstein - who caught the show in December and who I am a huge fan of - suggested that I should take it to Edinburgh I just couldn't resist. Though I must concede that part of my excitement is getting the opportunity to catch as much of the always overflowing line up of acts whilst I'm up there.

**TW: What can people expect from the show?**

SP: Hopefully they can expect a good night out. The reason behind the tour was that I wanted to show people that spoken word isn't some stuffy, boring thing to be confined to coffee shops and dusty book clubs. When looking at venues for the Edinburgh show I intentionally chose one with a bar! I want people to have a drink and enjoy their evening. Yes, I will be doing poems about some pretty dark subjects (self harm, domestic violence... sounds fun, right?) but these are all part of life and, hopefully,

I can manage to weave them into an evening that doesn't leave you feeling glum.

**TW: How does it compare to the show you toured? Has it changed over time?**

SP: Over the length of the tour it developed, yes. It became tighter and I started to learn how to really take control of the journey the audience goes on in this show. I can't wait to jump back into that driving seat.

**TW: You're listed in the spoken word section of the Fringe programme, which is a pretty new section motivated by the rise of the genre at the Festival. Do you feel the enthusiasm for spoken word has risen in general in recent years?**

SP: I really do, yes. I have run the spoken word line-up at Camp Bestival and Bestival for four or five years now, and the crowds just keep growing and growing. And when I recently started doing my hip hop and spoken word show on Xfm I was a little shocked to see that, every week, the bit that was getting the biggest reaction was the spoken word section. I think people are finally realising what a huge genre it is. Saying "Do you like spoken word?" is like saying "Do you like music?". Each has such a wide range of styles and approaches within it.

**TW: You've mentioned the comedy side of the Fringe making it an appealing place for you to perform. Do you see yourself as being part of the comedy community in anyway?**

**Or do you feel more closely affiliated with the poetry, spoken word or rap fraternities?**

SP: As a performer, I am definitely in the spoken word and rap fraternities. I try to inject some humour into my sets, but I have too much love and respect for the art of stand up to even attempt to place myself within that camp just yet. As a fan though, I sit in all sections. My love for comedy is as strong as my love for spoken word and for rap.

**TW: How does performing a straight spoken word show compare to performing a gig with Dan Le Sac or a live band?**

SP: I feel so lucky to get to experience the variation of these kinds of shows. The spoken word tour was one of the best experiences of my gigging life. The intimacy and engagement with every individual in the room was amazing to feel. Although I did miss the circle pits and stage diving.

**TW: Are you looking forward to doing the same show in the same venue for 19 nights with just one night off? How are you preparing?**

SP: I genuinely am! As odd as that possibly sounds. I am used to touring hard... but not used to being in the same place every night. To know the venue and the crew, to go home to the same bed rather than a different hotel each night, to know how to get to the gig ... all of these things genuinely excite me! And then to see how the crowds will vary, and what will work and what won't work. I can't wait. As

for preparation... five to six years of pretty much constantly touring has been the main prep. After that it's just drilling the set and making sure everything flows and is tight.

**TW: You mentioned the new rap and spoken word show you're doing for Xfm. What motivated that, and how is it going?**

SP: They kind of just asked me and the opportunity to put out stuff that isn't getting any coverage anywhere else on the airwaves was irresistible. And I have been stunned by how well it has been going down! The reaction each week is genuinely overwhelming!

**TW: After releasing a solo record, you've been working on a new album with Dan Le Sac. How has that been going? Did it feel any different with both of you having done a solo record in between?**

SP: It's great to get back writing with Dan. It feels the same in many ways, but I think we have both grown and gained experience from our respective solo ventures. It really feels like we are reuniting to make our best record to date.

**TW: And finally... what's your favourite rhyme?**

SP: "New York City gritty committee pity the fool; That act shitty in the midst of the calm, they witty".

'Scroobius Pip - Words' is on at Pleasance from 7-26 Aug (not 19) at 9.40pm.

More at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013SP](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013SP)

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

## TW 3 TO SEE

### It's Caro's tips from the Festival's arty, literary and wordy strands

#### 3 book festival

##### Jane Gardam



I'd like to go to this event because I am a big fan of Whitbread winner and Booker nominee Jane Gardam; I began reading her children's books many years ago, before making my way through some of her adult novels, and I am keen to read her latest, 'Last Friends', the final book in her 'Old Filth' trilogy. Enough about me though. She was in her late thirties before she published her first novel, so that should be inspiring for all those who feel they've got a few books in them waiting to come out. Like, er, me.

Charlotte Square Gardens, 14 Aug, 11.30am.

##### Andrew Wilson



Here's another one that's all about me. But also all about him. And Sylvia Plath. I recently, finally, got around to actually reading 'The Bell Jar' after avoiding it a bit, if I'm honest (I was scared). Poet and biographer Andrew Wilson is doing two events, one of which is a reading workshop about Plath's seminal work; that's the one I'm most keen to go to, but I'd really like to go to the other one, 'Plath before Hughes', too.

Charlotte Square Gardens, 16 Aug, 1.00pm.

##### Simon Garfield

Simon Garfield is the author of 'Just My Type', that critically acclaimed book about Fonts. But last year he published 'On The Map: Why The World Looks The Way It Does', and it's this topic that

he'd dealing with at this particular Book Festival event. "Google Maps may still be based on the Mercator projection of 1569" says the programme blurb, "but, Garfield argues, we are currently living through the biggest mapping revolution since the 15th century." Sounds fascinating.

Charlotte Square Gardens, 18 Aug, 10.30am.

#### 3 politics festival

##### The Power Of Social Media

Social media is increasingly relevant to practically anyone with a pulse. Even if you're not on it so much, you're probably aware of its power. This session asks whether that power is enough to increase the influence of small independent nations on world affairs. Panellists include Professor Rachel Gibson of the University of Manchester, and Gregor Poynton of Blue State Digital, the company that drove the Obama social media campaign.

The Scottish Parliament, 25 Aug, 5.30pm.

##### The Kennedys

The Kennedys are a family that polarise opinion; if you've got strong views on the matter, this event might be of interest to you. Award winning biographer and historian David Nasaw will discuss his recent work on the Kennedy dynasty and introduce and discuss his new biography 'The Patriarch: The Remarkable Life and Turbulent Times of Joseph P Kennedy.'

The Scottish Parliament, 25 Aug, 2.00pm.

##### Politics and Art

So, people who are interested by art AND politics, and those of you who think that they are inextricably interlinked, here's something that might interest you; a discussions about how artists create art in a social and political context, and what happens when art challenges the political status quo. Chair Linda Fabiani MSP, an Honorary Fellow of the Royal is joined by artists Matthew Dalziel and Louise Scullion.

The Scottish Parliament, 24 Aug, 6.00pm.



#### 3 talks

##### Conversations With Artists: Grid Iron



The International Festival's Conversations series is probably especially interesting to arts practitioners,

given that it's a series of talks in which successful artists discuss their work. I think all of these events have their merits, but I've chosen this one because ThreeWeeks have been fans of Grid Iron since the company's earliest days. At this event, they'll be talking about their Int Fest show, 'Leaving Planet Earth'.

The Hub, 14 Aug, 12.00pm.

##### At The Fringe Of Reason



The Fringe is full of art and artsy stuff, and you know, it's an arts festival, so that's what you'd expect.

But I do like things that offer something a bit non-artsy, to complement the creative stuff. This series of events from the Edinburgh Skeptics Society features different speakers every night, who'll offer science, controversy, myth-busting, debunking and debate. Free, and very popular; follow @edskeptics on Twitter.

The Banshee Labyrinth, 3-24 Aug, 7.50pm.

##### Menagerie Of Creepy Crawlies And Vegetable Animals



Okay, you got me, I selected this one because I liked its amusing title. I'm not sure it actually qualifies as a talk.

Part of Hendrick's Gin's Carnival Of Knowledge series, this event promises "an array of activities to stimulate the senses, including a menagerie of creepy crawlies and a most unusual vegetable animals workshop". Hee hee.

Hendrick's Carnival Of Knowledge, 10 Aug, 12.00pm.

#### 3 exhibitions

##### The World Of Palms



I nearly always recommend an exhibition down at Edinburgh's Royal Botanic Gardens because I'm a big fan of Edinburgh's Royal Botanic Gardens not least because (and I always say this) it won't be quite as insanely busy down there as it is in the centre of town come Festival time. But this journey through the discovery, collection, study, display and uses of palms looks incredibly interesting, whatever the venue.

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh - John Hope Gateway, until 20 Oct.

##### From Death To Death And Other Small Tales

Another place I always encourage Festival-goers to visit when they've an urge to get out of central Edinburgh is the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, I love having a wander around its sculpture garden. This exhibition - a part of which is shown in the picture above - allows you to explore works from the DD Daskalopoulos Collection, an important private collection featuring many world-class pieces that have never been seen in Scotland before.

Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, until 8 Sep.

##### Kenny Watson - The Days and Fascia



Watson mixes fine art techniques with the material and idiom of street art and advertising to "create startling images on temporary hoardings", which sounds intriguing and is on show at 169 Rose Street; and this is just one of the exhibitions featured in the programme for the Edinburgh Art Festival, many of these shows you won't find listed on the Fringe website, so I'd urge you to seek out a copy of the Art Festival programme, especially if exhibitions are your thing. You can also look on their website [www.edinburghartfestival.com](http://www.edinburghartfestival.com).

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## 3 spoken word

### Jem Rolls



Jem Rolls has been around for quite a long time, and I know this because the first time I saw him perform I was quite a lot younger than I am now. This may be his first solo show at the Fringe, but it's not his first appearance; he hosted Big Word Performance poetry back in the days when it was the only spoken word event in the programme. It's all got a lot more fashionable since then, of course, but Rolls has always been good. Check out all those words of praise in his Fringe blurb.

The Banshee Labyrinth, 3-24 Aug (not 20), 8.40pm.

### Tongue Fu



Tongue Fu is one of London's best established spoken word nights, with a list of past participants that

includes the likes of Scroobius Pip, Kate Tempest, John Hegley, Lemn Sissay, and Laura Dockrill. Host Chris Redmond brings the show north for a full Edinburgh run, and that can only be a good thing.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, 2-25 Aug (not 17, 22), 11.59pm.

### Utter! Presents Identity mix-up



I don't think I've got much to say about this show other than its subject matter attracted my attention; Keith

Jarrett explores the obsessions of our label-driven society, going on an interactive, tragi-comic tour of mistaken identity. Of course, the other thing that persuaded me that this was one for my diary was that it's a show presented by spoken word collective Utter!, which is co-ordinated by the ThreeWeeks Award-winning Richard Tyrone Jones. So it will surely be good.

La Tasca, 18-24 Aug (not 22), 4.00pm.

# SuperScrimping at the Fringe with Mrs Moneypenny

## TW COLUMN

**Despite Edinburgh's reputation as a great student city, Fringe visitors can often be heard complaining about the prices of most things during the festival month. Ticket and beer prices seem to get mentioned the most, though the cost of accommodation is what can really break the bank. On my TV show 'SuperScrimpers' we research ways to live life more cheaply, so as I get ready to bring my shows to Edinburgh this year, I thought I would look at how to do the Fringe on a budget. My conclusion? It is easier to do than you might think.**

First of all, there are all the free shows. There are some great productions on in the Free Fringe this year, and while originally founded by Peter Buckley Hill with comedians in mind, it now offers everything from children's shows to drama. Meanwhile its competitor, Laughing Horse's Free Festival (and there is nothing like a bit of competition to keep the prices down - or to put the focus on value), this year offers 350 shows free of charge in over 20 venues. I should note performers do like contributions at the end, so if you enjoy the performance it's not entirely free. But these strands reduce the risk, and when you find a great show, you can pay according to your means.

These aren't the only free options available during the Festival of course, for example the visual art strand also offers many free treats. For starters there are the National Galleries Of Scotland, the name given to Edinburgh's three world-class art museums, and which all offer free exhibitions. This year Rodin's Kiss is

on loan to the National Gallery at the bottom of the Mound, the Portrait Gallery has an exhibition of paintings of Scottish comedy greats (very apt for Fringe time), and the Modern has a plethora of works from the Daskalopoulos Collection. Plus if you take a look at the Edinburgh Art Festival website, you'll actually find a whole host of other free exhibitions. And aside from what you can see on the walls, many of these galleries are also very pleasant places to roam; which is especially handy if the weather is inclement.

Though if this heatwave we are in the midst of (as I write) continues, then you'll want to soak up the atmosphere of the festival's open-air hubs - George Square, George Street and, of course, the Royal Mile, where Fringe performers and street theatre stars battle for your attention. Here you'll meet a sea of flyerers - amongst them my three Cost Centres (sorry, my three children) - who will be telling the world about my two shows. Lots of

people moan about the Fringe's flood of flyers, but take time to talk to the people on the other end of the piece of paper and you'll find the experience a whole lot more enjoyable. Plus this is your opportunity to really find out what a show is like - interrogate that flyerer! Again, it reduces the risk of paying for a ticket for the wrong kind of show.

Talking of trying before you buy, don't forget all the 'clips' shows that take place during the Festival, with acts offering snippets of their performances. Many of these will require you buying a ticket to get inside, though some are free. I know the ThreeWeeks team recommend the 'Ukulele Cabaret' in the Free Festival, and while browsing the free strand websites

I noticed that Fringe institution the Ladyboys Of Bangkok are doing some free taster shows in the Free Festival as well this year.

Beyond the freebies, Fringe SuperScrimpers should also keep their eye out for the bargains. This is where the Virgin Money Fringe Half

Price Hut on the Mound comes in very handy, with different ticket offers each day. Can't be bothered walking to the Mound on the off chance there's a show you like on offer? Well, the Fringe Society's app, which is free of course, will tell you what shows are available on any one day. On-the-day discounts are also available for the under 26s on selected shows at the Edinburgh International Festival. And while we are talking of Edinburgh's other summer events, if the sun does shine, it's hard to beat the Book Festival's Charlotte Square Gardens base, where entry is free. And each night from 9pm until 11pm there's a strand called Unbound at which, the organisers say, you can expect a mix of literature, music, a bar and 'a few surprises'.

So while cheap accommodation remains scarce, and the beer prices are likely to always remain a discussion point (superscrimp? buy your own cans?), there are plenty of opportunities to enjoy the world's biggest cultural festival without spending too much money. Welcome to the Fringe!

**IS IT POSSIBLE TO DO THE FRINGE ON A BUDGET? How have you managed it? Mrs Moneypenny has shared her ideas, but how do you get the most out of the Fringe without going broke? Email or tweet us your suggestions for doing the Festival on a budget ([twreaders@unlimitedmedia.co.uk](mailto:twreaders@unlimitedmedia.co.uk) or [@threeweeks](https://twitter.com/threeweeks)). Mrs Moneypenny will pick her favourites, and give the budget conscious Fringe superscrimpers a free pair of tickets to her show 'Mrs Moneypenny's Money Clinic Live' at The Assembly Rooms on George Street on 10, 17 and 24 Aug at 12.30pm.**

'Mrs Moneypenny Returns' is on at the AGA Showroom from 2-25 Aug (not 5, 12, 19); Mrs Moneypenny's Money Clinic Live is on at The Assembly Rooms on 10, 17 and 24 Aug.



**Moonshine, Medicine and the Mob**  
*Whiskey Theatre by the Whiskey Anorak*

Prohibition; brought together by extraordinary characters, historical artifacts and the liquor of the era. You wouldn't believe the stories if they weren't true. A lighthearted whiskey tasting - The Whiskey Anorak way

**Aug 6-10, 13, 17-20, 22-24** **17:45 £15 (£13) (1hr 30mins)**

**Aug 14, 21** **14:30 £15 (£13) (1hr 30mins)**

**VALVONA & CROLLA** Foodhall & Scottish Gifts  
Jenners, 48 Princes Street

Tickets available at the venue above, online at [www.valvonacrolla.co.uk](http://www.valvonacrolla.co.uk) or Tel: 0131 260 2242

Newbury Youth Theatre presents

**The Curious Case of the Uggie Wump**  
and other mysterious monsters

Written and directed by Amy and Tony Trigwell-Jones and devised by the Company with original music by The Bookkeeper

Mon 5 - Sat 10 August 2.30pm  
Quaker Meeting House  
0131 226 0000  
[www.edfringe.com](http://www.edfringe.com)

"Riotous good fun" ★★★★★ (★) *BroadwayBaby Bobby Award 2012*

"An exciting and dynamic young company" ★★★★★ *Herald 2011*

*Independent Critic's Choice 2010*

"Thought provoking, entertaining and moving" ★★★★★ *Three Weeks Editors' Choice Award 2009*

*Stage Must See Show 2009 & 2010*

**"A Night Wi' Burns"**

Edinburgh Masonic Club  
1 Shrub Place Lane  
Edinburgh  
EH7 4PB

23rd & 30th August 2013  
Starts @ 7:30pm

Tickets: £10  
Available From:  
Box Offices

Tickets Scotland  
127 Rose Street  
Tel: 0131 220 3234

Edinburgh Fringe  
180 High Street  
Tel: 0131 226 0000

**"POLISHED PERFORMERS \*\*\*\*\*" WL Herald & Post**  
Presented By Members of Local Burns Clubs  
Box Office Ticket Scotland: [www.tickets-scotland.com](http://www.tickets-scotland.com)  
Box Office Edinburgh Fringe:  
[www.edfringe.com/contact-us/box-office](http://www.edfringe.com/contact-us/box-office)

# CHILDREN'S SHOWS

For plenty of reviews of children's shows at the Fringe  
Check out [www.threeweeks.co.uk/childrens](http://www.threeweeks.co.uk/childrens)

## TW 3 TO SEE

**In a final batch of 3 To See tips for the ThreeWeeks Preview Edition at Festival 2013, Co-Editor Caro Moses picks some shows for the kids**

### 3 tried and tested

#### The Showstoppers' Family Hour



The Showstoppers are past masters in the art of the improvised musical, widely acclaimed and "jaw-droppingly excellent", according to us. They do a late night show for grown ups, but this afternoon version, which runs for the first half of the Fringe, is family and child friendly. So, adults in the audience, don't go misbehaving and making inappropriate suggestions. Gilded Balloon Teviot, 2-13 Aug, 2.00pm.

#### The Curious Case Of The Uggie Wump And Other Mysterious Monsters



The title of this alone proved attractive, but then I saw who it was by, and I had to recommend it. The company behind this, Newbury Youth Theatre, have never done a bad show in all their years at the Fringe, and have earned such a plethora of four and five star reviews from ThreeWeeks that a few years ago we were moved to respond with an Editors' Award. You can safely bet that this will be a good show.

Quaker Meeting House, 5-10 Aug, 2.30pm.

#### The Big Bite-size Play Factory's Family Creatures



It's really the grown up Bite Size shows that are the tried and tested element here, because these compilations of short plays, staged by White Room Theatre, have been capably entertaining Fringe audiences for quite some time. But, given their prowess at this niche genre, I can't help thinking that their children's show will be just as good. Looking forward to it.

Pleasance Courtyard, 31 Jul-26 Aug (not 13, 20), 1.00pm.

### 3 adaptations

#### I Believe In Unicorns by Michael Morpurgo



Judging by the reviews I've read when browsing children's books on the internet, Michael Morpurgo hardly ever has a bad word said about his work. This is a very interactive show based on the author's novel, and I suspect that will work well for those who haven't read the book as well as those who have. It sounds promising.

Pleasance Courtyard, 31 Jul-26 Aug (not 12), 11.45am.

#### Romeo and Juliet



A children's adaptation of one of Shakespeare's most popular plays seems like a very good idea for older children, though, as someone who has dragged a small child to any number of different types of Fringe show, I'm slightly wary of the claim that this show would be suitable for all ages. It does look good, though, and appears to have a great team behind it, so those of you with children old enough to follow a narrative should check it out.

Assembly George Square, 1-18 Aug, 11.20am.

#### Help! My Supply Teacher is Magic!



If you have children who are CBBC watchers, or are indeed watchers yourselves (I sometimes tune in for 'Horrible Histories') you might be familiar with this TV show, in which, as you might suspect from the title, children are filmed being subjected to the 'teaching' of alleged supply teachers who turn out to be magicians. The reason I'm putting this in the adaptation section is because it kind of is adapted really; it can't possibly take the format of the CBBC show itself, obviously, but will feature a number of the acts who have featured on it.

Underbelly Bristo Square, 1-25 Aug, 1.10pm.

### 3 participation

#### Drama Workshops For 5-12s



When I take my daughter to see Fringe shows, she always wants to get up on stage and join in. Now that she's over five, I can send her along to one of these workshops which are run by the brilliant Spotlites, who are great with children and who do great, interactive shows for children. Plus, you get to

leave the kids behind for an hour and go off and have a lovely coffee. Mmmm. Spotlites @ The Merchants Hall, 30 Jul-14 Aug, 17 and 18 Aug, 24 and 25 Aug, 10.00am.

#### Reading Workshops at the Edinburgh International Book Festival



These are for older children, aged 12+, and see authors taking a close look at a classic text; for example, Alan Durant examines 'Catcher In The Rye', Sally Gardner takes a look at Maggot Moon, and Charlie Fletcher tackles Treasure Island. See the Book Festival's programme, or website - [www.edbookfest.co.uk](http://www.edbookfest.co.uk) - for a full list of events and more details.

Charlotte Square Gardens, 10-23 Aug, 11.00am.

#### Flamenco for Kids



I took my daughter to Ricardo Garcia's 'Flamenco For Kids' last year and she had an absolutely brilliant time learning to dance a bit whilst wearing a glamorous outfit. Garcia et al are all so delightfully friendly and generally lovely that children just can't help relaxing and getting into the flow of things. Super. C, 21 - 25 Aug, 2.15pm.

TW

Sweet Venues presents  
**TOE-TICKLING FUN!!!**

Dean Friedman's  
**Smelly Feet**

words & music by Dean Friedman  
book by Dean Friedman  
directed by JD Henshaw

**A Children's Musical that Really Stinks!**

August 1 - 25 (not Weds) 12:10pm  
Sweet Grassmarket Venue 18

ORDER TICKETS: [www.EdFringe.com](http://www.EdFringe.com) or call 0131 226 0000

**CURSE OF PHARAOH'S TOMB**

Professional interactive play for 5-12s

★★★★★ 'Brilliant'  
Broadway Baby

★★★★★ 'Outstanding'  
FringeReview, both on 'Merlin's Dragon' 2012

Battle mummies with real whips!  
Crack the code and escape the traps!  
Kids come onstage throughout!

30 July - 18, 24 & 25 August  
£7 (£6) £24 family

Interactive theatre: kids come onstage throughout!

**RAPUNZEL**  
MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU!  
Defend Rapunzel's Tower with real lightsabres!  
Master Jedi Skills to defeat Dark Vadia!

Spotlites @ The Merchants' Hall, Venue 278, 22 Hanover St, Edinburgh, EH2 2EP

[www.spotlites.co.uk](http://www.spotlites.co.uk) **0131 220 5911**

## ThreeWeeks - at the heart of the festival for 18 years



**ThreeWeeks Co-Editor Chris Cooke on where ThreeWeeks fits in...**

ThreeWeeks is the complete guide to the Edinburgh Festival, the world's biggest and most exciting cultural event, and this August is the eighteenth time we've covered it all, though our weekly magazine, daily reviews sheet, website and podcast, with regular email and social media updates.

Both ThreeWeeks and the Edinburgh Festival have grown and evolved a lot since 1996, when I teamed up with my co-founders Geraint Preston and Alex Thomson to create a bespoke magazine for this magnificent event.

Though both retain their core missions. The Edinburgh Festival still brings together brilliant performers and cultural companies from all four corners of the world and, through its Fringe, provides a perfect platform for every new generation of cultural talent, to perfect their art, connect with their peers, and launch their careers.

ThreeWeeks has always endeavoured to live by that same ethos. We go out of our way to cover a wide variety of the genres, acts and shows appearing at the Festival, with a constant drive to discover and champion the new and the alternative. While, through our acclaimed media-skills programme, more on which from Caro in a minute, we also provide a platform for each new generation of media and journalistic talent.

For all its foibles and imperfections, the wider Edinburgh Festival, and especially the Edinburgh Fringe, remains the most invigorating cultural festival in the world, and the most exciting place to be on earth each August. Navigating the thousands of shows on offer each year remains challenging, but when you look back at the hundreds of performers, writers and arts companies we have discovered at the Fringe over the last seventeen festivals, and the brilliant work those individuals and groups have presented, covering this event is as exciting as ever.

This year, as more performers than ever arrive in Edinburgh to take part in this event, a ThreeWeeks team of one hundred will be ready to cover it in-depth. This includes the many young writers and culture fans that make up our fresh new review team this year, and the experienced editorial team who commission the interviews and guest columns, and pull the whole thing together. We know you'll enjoy the festival, and we hope you enjoy our coverage.



**Co-Editor Caro Moses on the ThreeWeeks review team**

For the uninitiated, let me tell you how reviewing works at ThreeWeeks. Sitting behind the magazine and website is a very popular media-skills training programme, aimed at aspiring writers and journalists. Each

year we recruit a team of about 100 young writers. Some are students, many recent graduates, and some are already working, in the arts and media, or elsewhere. All are united by a passion for culture, and a desire to hone their critical and writing skills.

Each of our new recruits (about a quarter of the team are 'returners') then attends a very packed one-day training course in late July. We introduce them to the Edinburgh Festival, the role of the reviewer, what kinds of things our readers want to know about shows, and how best to communicate that information in a punchy review. These people then become our review team. We select shows for them to see based on their genre knowledge, and they write reviews to our guidelines, many receiving feedback as we go from our professional sub-editors.

This programme means that every year ThreeWeeks enjoys a fresh set of reviewers - our eyes and ears at the Festival - telling us and you what is good, what is innovative, and what is exciting, and providing young culture fans with an insightful guide to Edinburgh's mad cultural extravaganza. Meanwhile, just as the Fringe itself hones and showcases the next generation of arts talent, we help launch the next generation of journalists and arts media people.

Our review team is supported and backed up by our core editorial team of experienced editors, led by me and co-Editor Chris, and both of us are doing this for the eighteenth time this August. The core editorial team brings years of Festival experience to the mix - reporting on events, interviewing performers and commissioning guest columns, and processing the hundreds and hundreds of reviews our review team submit - making the ThreeWeeks team one of the freshest, yet one of the most experienced at the Festival.

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

# SHOWS



### MUSIC

**THE ADVENTURES OF JOHN PAUL JONES**  
Hold on tight as terrific tales and toe-tappin' tunes whisk you off on an epic journey! Live traditional music and storytelling weave together the extraordinary tale of this 18th Century Scots mariner in this radio-theatre piece. Sit back and enjoy!

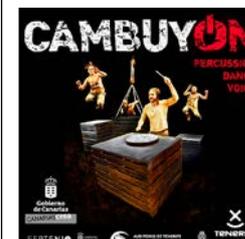
Acoustic Music Centre at St Bride's | fpp 198



### MUSIC

**ANYTHING GOES - A TRIBUTE TO COLE PORTER**  
Join Pam and her band (Tom Finlay, Ed Kelly, Phil O'Malley & Jordie Gilmour) in a tribute to Cole Porter. With so many wonderful songs, there will be an opportunity each night for the audience to select a song for the set. It'll be "Too Darn Hot".

The Outhouse | fpp 200



### DANCE & PHYSICAL THEATRE

**CAMBUYÓN** is packed with rhythm! From tap to hip-hop, drumming to body percussion and singing, 7 performers deliver a vision on how rhythm has been evolving thru the different cultures that surround us. An outstanding show you cannot miss!

Assembly Roxy | fpp 171



### CABARET

#### CHANSONS FRANÇAISES

Edith Piaf, Charles Aznavour, Mireille Mathieu and other great names of La Chanson Française will be interpreted by Dr2 (AKA Zahida). You will not regret having attended the show as it closes with the all time classic: Non, je ne regrette rien...!

Laughing Horse @ The Counting House | fpp09



### SPOKEN WORD

#### EVIE AND THE PERFECT CUPCAKE

In Evie's world, she's punished for plumpness, her sister's perfect, her job sucks. If thin = happy, can she really have her cake and eat it? Join satirical poet Tina Sederholm seeking health, happiness & an end to suffering. 3-14 Aug. 18.20. FREE.

Banshee Labyrinth | fpp 249



### THEATRE

**HUMANS INC.** The year is 2440 AD. Humans can now give their bodies the latest system upgrades. Isaac has three days left to pay for his upgrade. Sci-fi epic with physical storytelling and live music. Features flying cars. C venues, 8-26 Aug, 18:10. @scifionstagesic and storytelling weave together the extraordinary tale of this 18th Century Scots mariner in this radio-theatre piece. Sit back and enjoy! C | fpp 290

## CREDITS & INFO >

**Editors:** Chris Cooke and Caro Moses

**Picture Editor:** Kat Gollock

**Admin Manager:** Matt Tester

**Advertising Manager:** Sam Taylor

**Design:** Chris Cooke, Edward Stone

**Founders:** Chris Cooke, Geraint Preston, Alex Thomson

**Publishers:** Chris Cooke and Caro Moses

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Tel: 0131 516 8842

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### GET IN TOUCH!

**Editorial contact:**  
[tw.edinburgh@unlimitedmedia.co.uk](mailto:tw.edinburgh@unlimitedmedia.co.uk)

**Advertising contact:**  
[tw.advertising@unlimitedmedia.co.uk](mailto:tw.advertising@unlimitedmedia.co.uk)

**News desk:**  
[tw.news@unlimitedmedia.co.uk](mailto:tw.news@unlimitedmedia.co.uk)

[www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk)  
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# this week Edinburgh | next week London?

if you are heading back South, get daily cultural recommendations and regular Q&As from the TW team at [www.ThisWeekLondon.com](http://www.ThisWeekLondon.com)

Brett Vincent for GetComedy presents...

**Glenn Wool** 21.50  
*This road has tolls*  
 31 July  
 26 Aug  
 (not 12 & 19)

"One of the best hours of comedy I have ever seen"  
 ★★★★★  
 THE SCOTSMAN

assembly  
 GEORGE SQUARE  
 BOX OFFICE 0131 623 8030

**ANDREW MAXWELL** 19.15  
**BANANA KINGDOM**  
 31 July  
 26 Aug  
 (not 12)

"One of the most significant comedians working in the country today"  
 ★★★★★  
 INDEPENDENT

underbelly  
 BRISTO SQUARE

**Benny Boot** 17.30  
 31 July  
 26 Aug  
 (not 12)

AS SEEN ON TV  
 "One of the best joke writers in the country"  
 THE SCOTSMAN

fringe  
 Sell Out Show  
 2012

clover  
 BRISTO SQUARE

**MARCUS BRIGSTOCKE PRESENTS** 14.40  
**UNAVAILABLE FOR COMMENT**  
 1 Aug  
 25 Aug  
 (not 12)

SPECIAL FESTIVAL GUESTS EVERY DAY  
 got to [underbelly.co.uk](http://underbelly.co.uk)  
 and follow @marcusbrigUFC  
 on twitter for line-ups

underbelly  
 BRISTO SQUARE

★★★★★  
 "A national treasure"  
 CHORTLE  
 "Gut bustingly funny"  
 SCOTSMAN

**Tim FitzHigham** 19.30  
**CHALLENGER**  
 31 July  
 26 Aug  
 (not 14)

fringe  
 Sell Out Show  
 2012

33  
 PLEASANCE COURTYARD

**Felicity Ward** 22.00  
**irregardless**  
 31 July  
 26 Aug  
 (not 12)

"This is one of the funniest shows I've seen this year"  
 ★★★★★  
 THE SCOTSMAN

dairy room  
 BRISTO SQUARE

**HOWARD READ** 21.30  
**HIDE AND SPEAK**  
 31 July  
 26 Aug  
 (not 12)

"Breaking boundaries in stand-up comedy"  
 INDEPENDENT

GILDED BALLOON

**TERRY CLEMENT: DINTIMES8** 20.05  
 1 Aug  
 25 Aug  
 (not 12)

"The effort he puts into every performance is really something you have to see"  
 TORONTOIST (CANADA)

underbelly

**Ben Van der Velde's** 16.00  
**Chain Letter**  
 31 July  
 26 Aug  
 (not 12)

"A sharp and crafty gagsmith"  
 CHORTLE

clover  
 BRISTO SQUARE

**LITTLE HOWARD'S BIG SHOW FOR KIDS** 14.45  
 31 July  
 25 Aug  
 (not 12)

"Incredibly, achingly funny"  
 ★★★★★  
 DAILY MAIL

cowbarn  
 BRISTO SQUARE

