

# ThreeWeeks

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## Edinburgh's short-film strand: CineFringe



Helping to ensure that pretty much every genre is represented at the world's biggest cultural festival, CineFringe returns to Edinburgh this weekend for its fourth year, presenting four collections of short films selected from submissions from nearly 500 filmmakers. Meanwhile organisers of the annual event have launched a Kickstarter campaign, in a bid to secure the funding to help the Fringe's own film strand grow and develop at future festivals.

"CineFringe was conceived in 2009 out of frustration, when I couldn't find any event to screen my own short about the Fringe", explains Director

John Lynch. "Rather than hire an entire Fringe slot for a six minute film, I decided to put out a call for other people with shorts and return in 2010

with a tiny band of volunteers and a fully(ish) fledged film festival!"

Since that first outing, CineFringe has grown, not least in terms of the pool of films from which the event's curated collections of shorts are selected. 35 filmmakers submitted work in year one, while this year nearly 500 from 45 countries put their pictures forward. "We try not to limit our film-makers too much" Lynch says about the selection process, with only length (less than 30 minutes) being a requirement; "Our screenings are very eclectic as a result!" he adds.

"In general we look for raw talent over slick visuals, but we've had plenty of beautiful films too. The main thing is that we want to champion independent film, like the Fringe itself we provide a platform for art that you might not see anywhere else. That's also why we make it free for film-makers to put forward their work". It's a commitment to keep the selection process that way that has led Lynch and his team to go the Kickstarter route to try and fund the future growth of CineFringe.

"Despite us building a sizeable following over the four years, the event is still organised by the same four people who launched it in 2010.

We've been running the festival in our spare time and funding it with our spare change for four years, but the truth is with the amount of people now entering films we simply can't afford the overheads ourselves anymore. We're determined to not charge directors to submit their films, so instead we're offering some awesome incentives via Kickstarter to try and raise £5000 to sustain the whole festival and grow it over the next few years".

Lynch admits that the funding is necessary to ensure CineFringe remains part of Edinburgh's festival month. And while the Fringe isn't especially known for movies, there is definitely an appetite for quirky and innovative films amongst its audience. "People who come to our screenings often say they wish they'd known about us sooner! And lots of people return each year. And some people just like the novelty of sitting in a dark room watching a few films in comfort, after four hours straight of theatre or comedy in a moist cave!"

CineFringe is based at Sweet Grassmarket, with one screening this year at Summerhall. For info on the programme and Kickstarter campaign check [www.cinefringe.com](http://www.cinefringe.com)

TW

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## Pierre Novellie takes Amused Moose prize

Pierre Novellie has been declared winner of this year's Amused Moose Laugh Off talent contest, one of the key competitions for new stand-up talent that climaxes during the Fringe.

He competed with fellow finalists Alex Smith, Sean Cannon, Alistair Williams, Angus Dunican and Steve Bugeja at a final event at theSpace @ Symposium Hall, and was picked as winner by a combined panel of industry experts and audience vote.

22 year old Novellie, originally from Johannesburg and more recently resident of the Isle of Man, said of his win: "I'm amazed and surprised to have beaten so many incredible comedians - the final was very tough and I'm overjoyed!" Novellie wins £1500 plus the shiny moose trophy with which he is here pictured. He'll also appear alongside runners up Smith and Cannon at upcoming Amused Moose events, and can also

be currently seen as part of Just The Tonic's 'Lunchtime Special' and in 'Standing Up For Something' in the Free Fringe.

Commenting on the latest edition of the Laugh Off awards, past winners of which include Sarah Millican and Jack Whitehall, Amused Moose boss Hils Jago told ThreeWeeks: "The overall standard improves year on year. It is rare even in the qualifying rounds now that the room goes silent, so these comedians really have done very well to make it through to the final".

The Fringe remains an important place for new stand-ups to develop



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

# ThreeWeeks EDINBURGH

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

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## CARO WRITES >

And so to yet another Weekly Edition. It's only the Week Two issue, but, because we have the preview edition in late July, this is actually the third ThreeWeeks Weekly we've done this summer. So, that feels like quite a lot already, because in terms of ThreeWeeks Weekly editions, we're three quarters of the way through. And by the time you read this, it will be almost officially half way through the month of August. Which means that we are more than half way through the Fringe, if not the whole Festival (the International Festival, of course).

It's going quickly, isn't it? If you've been here since it all kicked off just a couple of weeks ago, you'll be wondering where the time went, and if you've just turned up, you're probably looking at your watch and realising that actually, you've only got about ten days to get everything you want to get done, done. Am I giving you the fear? Am I? Well, it's probably entirely appropriate because there's a lot of it going around in this issue of our esteemed organ. As well as the sweaty dread that's afflicting me at the moment at the thought of the massive amount of reviews we still have to put out there, that Keith Farnan has put the wind up me with his Top Five Fears column on page 8. And then, as if I weren't clammy enough, we're dealing with yet more trepidation in our interview with theatre director Amy Kilmartin on page 6 about her fear-focused show 'Globophobia'.

If you've read this far, you must be terrified. So now I'll soften the fearful blow with news of all the features we have for you this week that aren't at all scary. We have our regular poem from Fringe institution Luke Wright, and this week's Letter To Edinburgh from the most excellent Asher Treleaven. Then we're into Q&A heaven with the super Diane Spencer, this week's cover star Will Franken and favourites The Real McGuffins.

There's a beautiful column from David Morgan and our latest cartoon from Joe Bor, plus we talk to Paper Birds about their theatre piece 'On The One Hand', to cabaret stars Die Roten Punkte, to piano deviants Worbey and Farrell, to the team behind new musical 'Facehunters', and to playwright Oliver Emanuel about children's show 'Titus'. And, as you might expect, we've got lots and lots of reviews for you to peruse. Enjoy!

# Letter to Edinburgh: from Asher Treleaven

## TW COLUMN

**Regular faces from Festivals past, but who are not here this year, send a letter to the Fringe community via the pages of ThreeWeeks. This time, Asher Treleaven describes what it's like experiencing the Festival via his Twitter feed on the other side of the world...**

As many of you already know, I'm taking this year off the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Comedy Festival of Comedy.

Firstly, I want you to know that I'm sorry, and that it's not a decision I've taken lightly. After close consultation with my extensive team of agents, managers, producers, therapists, wives and publicists, I've decided to pass the torch to another most 'likely' lesser performer.

The last eight years I've been at the Fringe have been an absolute joy: from taking acid at midday and climbing Arthurs Seat after being nominated for the Best Newcomer prize in 2010, to yelling at myself in the mirror for being a "fucking loser asshole" in 2012, when not enough people came to see my show.

Taking a year off the Edinburgh Fringe is a serious business; it's not something to be undertaken lightly. When I decided to take a year off you can imagine the internal uproar, all those around me wrung their hands and dashed themselves on rocks, crying and shrieking, "NO, NO, NO!"

Just one year off without the proper reasons to explain one's absence can lead to a crippling back step and rumors of cowardice. All the momentum built up over years can dissolve instantly. If you don't believe me try this: name one comedian you've not heard of,

that has performed at the Fringe for sometime, taken a year off and then come back? There is a system that must be adhered to, and even a small deviation can be catastrophic to the trajectory of a comedian.

As this year's Fringe approached my news feed, Twitter feed and Facebook timeline began to buzz with the impending gathering. I looked on from afar, transfixed and nostalgic, as people patted themselves on the back or set their faces in a steely mask in preparation for the battle ahead. Questions were asked, accommodation was sought, and promises were made...

"I'm not going to read a single review!" many said.

"Off to Tesco's to buy fruit and veges for the whole 4 weeks!" some said.

"Just got my gym membership, who hasn't got 20 minutes a day, WOOT!" one said.

People wrote lovely descriptive things about the architecture; they even praised the food and the weather. Old friends met up and clutched hands on the cobbled streets, pints were emptied and drams enjoyed. Opening nights were 'SOLD OUT' or 'pretty good' or would most definitely 'get better' as the Festival progressed.

Then the reviews started to trickle in. As many of you know, reviews are sometimes more important than the actual show itself and, whether good or bad, need to be celebrated and hated with equal fervor.

"\*\*\* from The Scotsman! Fuck them they've always hated me", some tweeted.

"I got \*\*\* from some 17 year old media student from Korea, WTF!" one Facebooked.

"ONLY \*\*\*\*\* 5 STARS FROM GOLF WORLD. WOOT WOOT WOOT", many wrote.

From my five-star hotel room at the Darwin Festival in tropical



Northern Australia, I looked on with bitter jealousy as I slowly realised the mistake I'd made taking a year off. Sitting there trying to enjoy the last remnants of my tropical in-room buffet breakfast, I felt alone and distant: like the last albatross. The ceaseless flow of Instagram photos, reviews, humble bragging tweets and hungover status updates only further confirmed my fear. People are right, life doesn't exist outside of Edinburgh during August, it's grey and bland.

By taking a year off I may have catastrophically fucked my chances for people to see my shows ever again; but I promise to the people who are reading this article to its conclusion, I'll never take another year off again. Unless I get some more telly stuff or another tropical gig somewhere.

Miss you.  
Love, Asher Treleaven. Xo

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



## A poem from Luke

**Fringe favourite Luke Wright entertains you, the ThreeWeeks reader, with a weekly poem for Festival 2013. Enjoy the second one here, then catch Luke's show 'Essex Lion' at Assembly George Square.**

### Conkers

BACK TO SCHOOL the shop front posters yell, all freckled kids and cheesy chalk mark font and just as all around us starts to die our children are renewed with pencil cases and anecdotes of summer holidays, the corridors a full size smaller now.

Then after bell they're out across the road like truffle pigs in brand new lace up shoes. They snuffle out the polished antique brown till pockets swell and only trampled shells are left beneath the glum horse chestnut tree.

They're tearing home now:  
Mum! Mum! Look at these.

My father had this ancient hand-wound drill, though often, mum would skewer them for us so by the time he walked in, rain-flecked, knackered the kitchen stunk of vinegar and wood his dinner late, his boys still uniformed a mess of string and strategies and glee.

Now every year there's HEALTH & SAFETY HORROR as childless journos muse on childhood's death but still the children gather up their conkers and formulate their complex snagging rules. They cherish bully-twenties, laud their laggies, how quick the switch from champion to stampsie.

Luke Wright: Essex Lion' is on at Assembly George Square until 26 Aug (not 13) at 6.00pm.

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



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# INTERVIEWS

For updates on the latest ThreeWeeks interviews as they go live online  
Follow ThreeWeeks on Twitter @threeweeks or on Facebook at facebook.com/threeweeks

## Focusing on fear at the Fringe: Urban Fox's Globophobia



Photo: Natalia Equihua

**The Urban Fox Theatre Company explore fears - both common and uncommon - in their new work 'Globophobia' at Sweet Grassmarket this Fringe. It's a collaboration between director Amy Gilmartin and playwrights Lindsay Miller and Dave Fagnoli, the latter a ThreeWeeks contributor, though we made sure our reviewer didn't know that fact when she first saw the piece. Already on our list of ones-to-watch at the Fringe this year, a top marks review prompted us to catch a little time with Gilmartin to find out more about the project and her Fringe experiences. And fears.**

**TW:** Tell us about the Urban Fox Theatre Company, how did the group come together?

**AG:** Urban Fox started with the idea for 'Globophobia'. I had a starting

point that I used to start conversations with various playwrights, and it led me to Dave Fagnoli and Lindsay Miller. Together we began script sessions and workshops with actors, before we

cast the production in February. I have worked with some of the cast before, but some are completely new to us. Everyone was excited to work on the project because of the writing and the challenge of presenting the work at the Fringe.

**TW:** 'Globophobia' deals with fears and anxieties, why did you set out to create a piece exploring this topic?

**AG:** I have always been fascinated by fear; that something instinctual that we don't really understand. Some people know exactly when and where a fear or phobia began, but most people don't. For most it's a simple 'feeling', something they can't really explain. With this project, we began with the idea of fear, and then the work became about twenty-something anxiety. Our company's ages range from twenty-one to twenty-nine and I encouraged the writers and actors to start with the personal.

**TW:** The show's blurb talks about both 'common' and 'uncommon' fears - what kind of common and uncommon fears are touched on?

**AG:** Characters in the play deal with multiple fears, one is scared of choking, another is afraid of vomiting,

another controls his violent outbursts by shaving. A fear of beards is pretty uncommon, it's something many would categorise as irrational, ie not a sensible fear. Though a more common fear is probably spiders, or heights, and when you really think about it, that's not really any more rational than fearing the popping of a balloon.

**TW:** This is a collaborative piece with two writers, how was it put together?

**AG:** Dave and Lindsay had not worked together before, so they wrote separately and have their own stories and sets of characters in the piece. However, they were so generous with their time when working with me and each other, they actually equally invested in all the characters and the overall shape of the play. We experimented with a different order of scenes over the development period, and made the final decision about a month ago, all three of us together, with lots of post-it notes lined up along my living room floor.

**TW:** As a director, is it harder or easier working with a brand new script than an established work?

**AG:** I made the decision two years ago, when I graduated from university, to focus on new writing, and since then

I've been involved in various projects working with playwrights. I love working with someone just as an idea is beginning to develop, responding to their work, giving my thoughts and a safe space for ideas to be tried. I'm not out ruling working on established plays in future, but at the moment I'm really excited about new writing in Scotland. Whenever a country begins to debate independence, there's a surge in new work and I'm so happy to be part of it.

**TW:** What were your fears about staging a new play at the Fringe? Common and uncommon!

**AG:** Failure. No one coming to see the production. Money running out. Costumes going missing. Actors going missing. Light bulbs going out mid show. Balloons popping mid show. The list goes on...

**TW:** Although the Fringe has a long history as a hub of new playwriting, with an ever expanding programme across the board, are there challenges with bringing new theatre to the Festival?

**AG:** There are lots of challenges in being a new company and bringing a new play to the biggest arts festival in the world. We do feel very small

## A Festival hurricane: Diane Spencer

**'Hurricane Diane' has hit the Fringe, as Diane Spencer takes to the stage each day to talk you through her 'Calamity Jane Asher' of a life. "Frequently filthy but constantly hilarious" and "a whirlwind hour of anecdotal comedy" said our reviewer after she saw the show, awarding the 5/5 rating that convinced us we really ought to be tracking down Ms Spencer and asking some questions. Fully insured, we got about that task.**

**TW:** "Diane Spencer is a natural disaster" says your show blurb. Are you really that bad?!

**DS:** Ha! Probably not THAT bad, but I'll trip over more than the average bear. I use the word "disaster" to describe a range of mistakes, from asking people how their boyfriends are only to discover they've been dumped, to putting so much mustard in a king prawn curry that everyone cries and I have to throw the rest away. Add into that, when it rains it pours - I'll usually have about three whoopsies all at once, rather than one at a time. Ever seen those 'Final Destination' films? Sometimes I feel like fate is creeping up on me and tying my shoelaces together in the meantime.

**TW:** This is your third full Edinburgh show, what made you decide to focus on your personal calamities this time around?

**DS:** The theme came after the material really, because to write a show it's a case of writing and re-writing, and then looking at the structure and all that. I think futility can be really funny, and I wanted to write a joyous show this year, a really gleeful, mischievous and silly show where I'm the butt of the jokes, and I could invite people into my room and my life. I wanted to create an atmosphere of welcoming inclusion, like we're all having dinner together and I'm just telling all these disastrous stories, because you know you can trust your friend Diane to do these silly things!

**TW:** So the various disastrous incidents from your life in the show - are they all true? Have you employed any poetic licence for laughs?

**DS:** Yes, they are all true, but yes, I have employed a little poetic licence to tell the story. Any good story has been edited - I don't think it becomes a story until it's been redrafted. But I have witnesses and photographic evidence of all the events!

**TW:** Did you have plenty of such incidents to choose from? If you extend the show, will you have to instigate new personal disasters first to provide the extra material?

**DS:** Ah no, there were lots of such incidents to choose from and, as always, in the writing stage some were cut out. You see what themes emerge, and then focus and clip out those that don't quite fit. In an earlier draft, there's a true story about the time I was asked to sit in the jump seat of an aeroplane because they had overbooked the flight. I was terrified, so when they offered me some free wine I just got drunk! I'd been to a gig and they'd paid me in two different currencies, so I was drunk in a cockpit with wads of cash, and this was two days before September 11th! However, this story didn't really fit in with the whole scheme of things, so I had to drop it from the show. But I keep all my jokebooks, and sometimes I revisit material and find a home for it later.

**TW:** As I said, this is the third full solo show, meaning last August was the 'tricky second album', as it were. How did it go? Is it getting harder or easier each year?

**DS:** It was tricky! I wanted to experiment and do some social commentary, because my favourite comedians are the ones who can make me laugh and think at the same time. I also wanted to start the show with a bang and hit the ground running, so it opened with the line "I wank too much - anyone else wank so much you get prune tip?", then I held up a finger. The idea was, that



Photo: Rich Dyson

sometimes among it all. We wanted to be ambitious and we wanted to bring our very best work. So in a way, we had to forget about the challenges and our fears, and just focus on making work we are proud of. And then spend a lot of time flyering!

**TW: Our reviewer loved the show, is it going well?**

AG: The ThreeWeeks review was so amazing, we were all so excited when we read it! The production is going really well, we have managed to sell out half our nights so far and we're all really enjoying being part of the Fringe.

**TW: Do you have plans to further develop or perform 'Globophobia' beyond the Fringe?**

AG: We don't have set plans at the moment, but I don't think the play's life is finished yet. And I'm open to offers!

**TW: And what next for you and Urban Fox?**

AG: There's a new idea that we're beginning to debate. And I know I want to be part of the next Fringe. There's nothing like it, the audiences are brilliant, up for seeing work all day and all night, and seeing things they wouldn't usually take a chance on - I love making work for them.

'Globophobia' is on at Sweet Grassmarket until 25 Aug at 8.20pm.

TW

you're a bit shocked at the start, but by the end, you've gone on a journey, and you're laughing at much more shocking material but without realising it! In the main it worked, though some people couldn't get past that opening bit, which was a shame.

**TW: People can check out past shows of yours in full on YouTube for free. Why did you decide to do that? Do you worry about giving shows away like that, or is it essential in the YouTube age?**

DS: I don't worry about it! I found some of my favourite comedians through YouTube, and it's a way of giving back to the online community. Plus if people like my work they'll still come to see me live. I did a gig in Rome and two guys flew over from Milan because there's a great company called ComedySubs who put Italian subtitles on my shows, and they'd seen me online. The YouTube channel is also a great way of keeping a record of my shows, and tracking my development as a performer. People still order copies of the DVDs, even if they can see it online for free. I don't think the YouTube thing is necessarily 'essential' in this day and age, but I'm only well known in certain circles, and it's a great way of getting new fans.

Read more answers from Diane online at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013DS](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013DS)

'Diane Spencer: Hurricane Diane' is on at Gilded Balloon Teviot until 25 Aug at 5.45pm.

TW



Photo: Kat Gallock

## The many personas of Will Franken

**"Part character comedy, part one-man sketch show, Franken is an arresting and devastating stage presence" said our reviewer of this man after seeing his first Edinburgh show last August. And there's a plethora of new characters to enjoy in Will's 2013 show 'Concert To Benefit The Victims Of My Father', many informed by his experiences as an American living in Britain. We managed to get a few moments with the real Franken though, to get an insight into his career, his new show, and his Edinburgh plans.**

**TW: According to the ever reliable Wikipedia you began your career as an actor. What made you switch to comedy?**

WF: I actually wanted to be a comedian first. I had done a few scattered gigs and one-man type comedy shows in various comedy clubs and book stores in small towns in Missouri.

But when I moved to New York to pursue it further, I got so frustrated with the ridiculously long lines at open mic nights - sometimes not going up until 2 am on a Sunday - and the "bringer" shows - bring five people who pay five dollars to watch you do five minutes on a night where the booker isn't even there - that I fell into acting almost out of frustration.

At least with an audition I knew I was going to get up for a chance to do something, either a cold reading or a monologue. I found that I got cast frequently thanks to a growing repertoire of voices and characters. I miss it often. There's a comfort in interpreting someone else's lines sometimes; the onus of writing is

subtracted from the equation and it can be quite relaxing.

**TW: Wikipedia also says you used to be a teacher. What was that like?**

WF: Well, I've had stints teaching at the college level and at the junior high school level (sixth, seventh, and eighth grades in America). Teaching college was fun. It's the kind of job you get when you don't want to work, you can show off how smart you are and flirt with eighteen to nineteen year old chicks in a meaningful way.

That being said, I was the kind of teacher I hated to have. A fun teacher. The professors I admired were the ones that stuck to the subject matter, never showed a sense of humour, and wore tweed jackets. A bit like the lead character in 'The Browning Version' or Houseman in 'The Paper Chase'. The students liked me. I got great reviews at the end of semester - save for the random Mormon chick who took umbrage at my rampant profanity.

I taught beginning English, so I could justify anything under that rubric. If I felt like playing The Who's 'Live At Leeds', I'd get a boom box from the AV department and talk about Pete Townsend's use of "inner dialogue". If I felt like watching 'Taxi Driver', I'd bring in a TV and ask the students to look for "themes". Mostly it was fifty minutes three times a week for me to hone my improvisational comedy skills.

I taught junior high for one year - 1999-2000 - in inner-city Harlem and I was so traumatised by the abuse from the children and the negligence of the administration, I vowed I would never work a regular job again in my life. And I haven't. I was so egotistical, I thought I would approach the first day like Robin Williams in 'Dead Poets Society' and transform their lives from ghetto ignorance into Blakean mysticism. By day two, it was "SHUT UP! SHUT UP! SHUT UP!"

**TW: You made your Edinburgh debut last year with a show that certainly grabbed the attention of our reviewer. Did you enjoy your time here last year, and what made you decide to return? Do you see yourself coming back year after year?**

WF: Well, first off, ThreeWeeks, let me say thanks again for the wonderful review from last year! I especially dig the Marmite reference, as I've become quite fond of Marmite myself - especially on toast with some pilchards. And I absolutely enjoyed my time up in Edinburgh last year. I suppose my return is based on the utilitarian purpose of being able to live and work in the UK, combined with the aesthetic impetus of unveiling a brand-new hour; with 60-70 percent of material and characters drawn from my experiences as an ex-pat living in England.

Not sure if I'll return to Edinburgh year after year, though. Even when things are going well, the Festival can play merry hell on the nervous system. I suppose it also depends on the disposable income factor. What really seems to make sense to me these days, from talking with other performers, is the Free Fringe. Coming from a working class background as I do - small-town Missouri - there's something that makes sense about an actual jar going around at the end of a show with actual money in it. I can dig that.

**TW: That new show is called 'Concert To Benefit The Victims Of My Father'. What's it about? Are they all new characters?**

WF: Well, as I say, what I really like about this current show is the proliferation of UK characters and anecdotes that I've built into it. There's an extended piece concerning my first gig in Wales, coupled with a prolonged joke about my inability to master the accent, and a romantic country duet

with me playing both myself and a Welsh female bartender. And there's the racist gormless cabbie lecturing me about the lack of civility of the French and a very trippy HSBC advert with some extended vox-pops.

One thing that's noticeably different about this particular show is that I'm playing myself as straight man more than I ever have before. At times, it's almost like a picaresque narrative of an Anglophile's rosy-eyed view of the UK, and a commentary on the pitfalls of placing things too high on a pedestal. There's no repeat of any characters from last year as far as I can see - though I do have a sexual harassment seminar leader that's somewhat of a mirror to last year's celebrate diversity seminar leader.

**TW: Which other acts are on your must-see list at the Festival this year?**

WF: Deffo my funny friends from Brighton, Casual Violence, who are also playing at the Pleasance, I believe. And hell, all the friends I've made since being out here, like Milo McCabe and Jessie Cave (I love the precocious little girl angle she has). If I get a chance I'll also check out Jerry Sadowitz; I had the honour of opening up for him at the Leicester Square Theatre last year and was so impressed with his balls-out, say what the hell you want, anti-PC stances, that it felt like he just ripped the laughter straight out of me with his sheer audacity. So many friends, so many shows. Not sure where to start; but I'll try to see as many as possible.

Read more from Will, and find out about his comedy heroes, in the full interview at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013WF](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013WF)

'Will Franken: Concert to Benefit the Victims of My Father' is on at Pleasance Dome until 26 Aug (not 14) at 5.40pm.

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

TW

## Keith Farnan's Top Five Fears

### TW COLUMN

**While the Urban Fox Theatre Company considers fear in the Festival's theatre programme this year (see more on page 6), Irish stand-up Keith Farnan also ponders some phobias over on the comedy Fringe, with his new show 'Fear Itself'. To get you in the mood, Keith shares what he reckons might be the five most common fears of all.**

One of my favourite t-shirts when I worked in Australia for a year was a No Fear one. It had a picture of a fish piloting a robot. I'm not sure how it tied into the No Fear brand, maybe fish have an innate fear of piloting robots, who knows? Most fears are irrational but that one seemed off the scale even for me. The list of phobias is endless (there is a fear of beards, called pogonophobia. Why would you fear a beard?! It's like a lovely fluffy glove for my chin). There are some pretty common ones though, and if you asked a roomful of people what they're afraid of, chances are they'd say at least one of the following five. But why?

#### 1. Heights

This is probably an evolutionary hangover to the days of the cavemen who climbed trees, thinking that was a good idea, just before they were accidentally munched up by a dinosaur that was formerly vegetarian but now enjoyed the taste of human flesh. This resulted in the dinosaurs going on a crazy rampaging human buffet

that lasted for centuries and made Glasgow's Sauchiehall Street on a Saturday night look positively peaceful. What I'm trying to say here is that our adventurous spirit was accidentally responsible for the t-rexes, and yet we keep building skyscrapers, which will eventually anger the gods of gravity, who will then send back giant lizards to punish us. We've all seen 'Pacific Rim' right? 'Godzilla'? This is the future people.

#### 2. The Dark

Nightmares never come when you're awake. This is one of those first harsh lessons of childhood and a precursor to an insomnia filled life. If you are lucky enough to have your imagination stifled as a young child, then you'll turn out the lights and just go la-la-lah and sleep! However, if you're one of these poor fools whose parents believed in some sort of laissez faire cultural education and you were allowed to read Stephen King at the age of ten, well then take your pick of bogeymen, clowns, St Bernards and dead pets returning. Meanwhile, children are now so well educated in Ireland on the economics of the country, that they lie awake terrified that the European Central Bank is under the bed waiting to terrorise them.

#### 3. Spiders

They're spiders. They have eight legs. Next.

#### 4. Public Speaking

This is all about identity. When you write a speech or have to give a presentation, you have an idea in your head of who you are and how you will present yourself to the world. It's the bathroom mirror effect. Standing alone in your bathroom, you feel confident, you

look confident. Standing in front of an expectant crowd robs you of all that immediately and, if you fail to deliver the speech in the way you hoped, you might wonder if you are the person you thought you were and an existential crisis kicks in. Now imagine that's your job and you'll understand why comedians are generally such a mess.

#### 5. Flying

Getting in a plane and travelling above the earth at a height of several thousand feet is probably the nearest any of us get to feeling like God. I'm not saying God has to shove his bag into the blue cage for hand luggage, while Ryanair employees start their voodoo incantations to exact more money from his wallet, but seeing the world from that height for the first time is astonishing. After repeated viewings, however, the earth gets a bit boring and you realise the view and your comparison to God was distracting you from the fact that you're travelling in a metal tube, powered by tiny explosions under the control of complete strangers who are at the mercy of nature. And if you weren't afraid of flying before, then you should be now.

On the other hand, Freud said that all phobias can be explained by sex. It could be that the first time you had sex was in a tree-house in the dark when you were attacked by a crazy flying spider that would only let you live if you made a speech while being carried off into the clouds. Sure, we've all been there.

'Keith Farnan: Fear Itself' is on at Underbelly Cowgate until 25 Aug at 6.20pm.

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



### 5/5 SHOW

#### Tom Craine: Crying On A Waltzer (Avalon Promotions)

"I might be an idiot, but at least I'm not a prick". Tom Craine, of Jigsaw and R4 fame, led us through a comical review of his past year, which, it seems, has been miserable. Charming and instantly likeable, Craine discussed everything from his recent break-up to Christmas with his parents, offering material of the kind anyone can relate to, and keeping his sympathetic audience laughing all evening. The main focus of this self-proclaimed idiot's set is his break-up with his girlfriend, a fellow comedian, and he covers every corner of the failure of that relationship, from the moving out moment, to post-break up blues, and on to considering a proposal; real life stories which really struck a chord, and generated mirth, despite the sadness. Which just proves that Tom Craine is simply a really funny guy, whatever the subject matter.

Pleasance Courtyard, until 25 Aug, 8.20pm.  
tw rating 5/5 | [Sarah Virgo]

#### Sarah Campbell: Isn't It Fun? (PBH's Free Fringe)

A novel take on the old children's board-game 'Guess Who?' kicks off the show in an original and hilarious manner, before Sarah Campbell's comedy takes a turn for the run-of-the-mill with too many slightly clichéd approaches to the topics in hand; reading bad hotel reviews from TripAdvisor, for example, and making a laboured point about waving her hands in the air at festivals. However, even this material generated humorous moments, and Campbell does have enough stage presence to keep the audience's attention, though that might also have been to do with the remarkable noise levels: words were generally screamed into a microphone that was turned up full and a klaxon was sounded periodically. Ultimately, this won't force your own hands into the air, but the show offers enough hilarity to make it worth the trip.

The Cabaret Voltaire, 8-24 Aug (Not 15 Aug), 5.05pm.

tw rating | 3/5 [Ian Freeman]

#### Tania Edwards: The Art Of War (Tania Edwards)

For those who haven't read it, 'The Art Of War' is a book of sixth-century military strategy. Its premise, that real victories are won without fighting, seems to be Tania Edwards' philosophy. Her comedy is slow-burning, low-key stuff, delivered in a babbling stream that's sometimes meandering but easy to warm to. Taking the time to build a solid rapport, she jokes about her relationship, her competitive streak and her failed career as a medical test subject. These aren't original topics, but her self-deprecating slant and dark 'did I just hear that' asides keep things funny and fresh. Many comedians would say the Fringe feels like a losing battle, but Edwards easily wins her audience over.

Pleasance Courtyard, until 25 Aug (not 12), 3.20pm

tw rating 4/5 | [Dave Fargnoli]

#### Christian Schulte-Loh: Attack of the 50 Foot German Comedian (Christian Schulte-Loh / PBH's Free Fringe)

There's a calm confidence about Christian Schulte-Loh, which is no bad thing for a German comedian, given he opens with a sequence of gags referencing the Second World War. His routine is a mixture of funny anecdotes and him riffing on audience participation, and it is the latter that really demonstrates what a funny, highly skilled comedian he is. Though he doesn't only trade on obvious gags about being German, national identity is a clear theme running through his material. A free show, at 5 o'clock, in a seedy nightclub, is not the most auspicious of venues, yet given the quality of his material, and his skill in audience banter, he could easily be packing out bigger rooms.

Base Nightclub, until 24 Aug (not 13, 20), 5.00pm. tw rating 4/5 [Andrew Leask]

#### PC, Mac And Me: The Funny Side Of Computers (Dan Willis)

With so much comedy to choose from at the Fringe addressing a niche market is a risky business. Computer geek Dan Willis brings IT banter down to a level accessible to every audience. Laughing with the crowd about the kids who never used VHS and have no idea who 'Ferris Bueller' is, he cleverly incorporates a Mac versus PC debate. A show brilliantly designed to make everybody born pre-1993 feel ancient, and good about it, and the younger audience realise what they missed out on - one television per household and computers which wouldn't be able to process one Facebook photograph. Team Mac or Team PC? If you ever had an original Gameboy, you're probably qualified to decide.

Laughing Horse @ City Cafe, until 25 Aug, 1.45pm.

tw rating 4/5 | [Rebecca Lunn]



Photo: Natalia Equihua

## Bookshop Midnight Mayhem (Phil Kay / Miss Behave / Bob Slayer / Pay What You Want)

Never has a show been more aptly named than 'Bookshop Midnight Mayhem'. In the front room of a small book-less bookshop, utter chaos reigns during the wee hours of the morning at this brilliant off-the-cuff show. Barefoot compère Bob Slayer hosts an evening of debauchery, hilarity, and general absurdity with the help of a few comedic friends. With little forward planning, 'Bookshop Midnight Mayhem' has a very organic feeling to it, as comedy, stories, and music come from all corners of the room over the course of the side-splitting evening. This show is everything that a late night comedy show should be; odd, crude, and inappropriate. So grab a pint, strap yourself in, and prepare for mayhem.

Heroes @ Bob's Bookshop, until 26 Aug, 11.59pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Peter Dorman]

## The Human Centrepiece (SweetAS)

As one of only two audience members, I was apprehensive as to what to expect from this show; the banter and atmosphere was inevitably intimate but as the show progressed, I realised that this was not due to a lack of a crowd, but the quality of the comedians themselves. One memorable moment came from unlisted performer Stuart Richards, who opened the show in a blaze of MC Hammer, and while some of the jokes were reliant on having more audience members, each act adapted quickly to this challenge. A perfect show for a group of friends, as it is so friendly and personal, everyone might as well be sitting in a pub with one another. You will not be disappointed.

Laughing Horse @ The Counting House, until 24 Aug (not 4, 11, 18), 12.45pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Mairi McNicol]

## Birthday Girls: 2053 (Mick Perrin Worldwide)

This was by far one of the best shows of its kind that I have seen this year. With a brilliant concept behind them - the conceit is that it's a comedy sketch show being performed as an anti-anti-comedy protest in the dystopian 2053 - the trio performed confidently and demonstrated a great rapport. The troupe's innovative sketch ideas were both hilarious and quirky, and though, as

with all comedy, there were a few jokes that didn't get a laugh, the slick performance never lost its flow. Some sketches had too feeble a basis to really justify forming a whole scene around them, but even when they didn't work so well, the pace was so fast that you forgot about the less impressive moments straight away. I would see this show again in a heartbeat.

Pleasance Courtyard, until 26 Aug (not 13), 6.00pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Victoria Beardwood]

## Comedy & Cupcakes (Laura Hayden)

Any production offering novelties like cupcakes to audience members immediately raises suspicion - and a critical eyebrow. But with a mouthful of icing and a good-natured verbal assault from our host, it all made sense. Returning to the fringe for a third time, Laura Hayden knows exactly what she's doing: the cupcakes don't replace comic substance, they're just a cheeky trick to fill the yurt with potential laughers. Hayden doesn't plead for co-operation like a school talent-show compère, but does permit the audience refusal to laugh at the daily curated collection - even more of a treat than free cupcakes. Throwing together a dynamic and diverse melange of comedians, Hayden is not only a riotous compère but understands how to create an atmosphere that oozes mirth.

Laughing Horse @ The Free Sisters, until 25 Aug, 5.45pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Kate Pasola]

## Gary Colman Grind (Gary Colman / PBH Free Fringe)

Late into the game (but not a veteran, as he is keen to point out), it is almost a shame Gary Colman hasn't had more time to develop his routine. As a performer, Colman is a natural; his set, pitching and rolling, has enough to keep the audience interested without ever feeling like the material is being stretched further than it ought. Bright, energetic and enthusiastic, Colman engages with a set encompassing the mundane and the absurd; it is hard to tell which is which, such is the bizarreness of his life to this point. If the potential of this show is anything to go by, Colman may have another notch to add to his extensive list of achievements soon.

Whistlebinkies, 24 Aug, 14.45pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Joseph Trotter]



## 5/5 SHOW

### Jimmy McGhie: Delusions of Candour (Avalon Promotions)

Making a mockery out of everything middle-class, Jimmy McGhie was nothing short of outstanding. His social commentary, to the audience's amusement, was delivered with the world-weary bitterness of a man well beyond his years. Yet, where many comedians might roll off onto irrelevant rants, McGhie was cutting and pertinent. Don't be fooled by the intelligent and interesting observations into thinking it will be purely highbrow, however; if a penis joke presented itself, he couldn't resist. His show stands out because of the sheer scope and range of his material and this you should discover for yourself. It is so much more than just stand and deliver; McGhie interacted, improvised and ultimately impressed.

Pleasance Courtyard, until 25 Aug, 8.40pm.  
tw rating 5/5 | [Ankur Anil Shah]



## 5/5 SHOW Late Night Gimp Fight (Phil McIntyre Entertainments)

Oddly named Fringe veterans Late Night Gimp Fight produce a weird and wonderful show that is most certainly not one to miss. The troupe get through a vast array of sketches, with topics ranging from celebrity paedophiles to a homosexual Dracula, and the result is a side-splittingly funny show, fantastically performed by all involved. The enviable stage presence of this quintet keeps the audience completely engaged, while the show's diversity - they break into musical numbers on a regular basis - makes for an hour of highly varied hilarity. The sketches themselves are well written and truly funny, while some of the a cappella songs performed are quite simply a stroke of genius. Who knew five gimps could put on such a good show?

Pleasance Dome, until 25 Aug, 10.00pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Peter Dorman]

TW

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## Welcome back the real deal

### TW INTERVIEW

We loved *The Real MacGuffins*' show at Festival 2011, but then last summer, with those Olympic-style distractions, they were nowhere to be found. But now they are safely back at Underbelly with a brand new show, 'The Real MacGuffins Come Again'. We caught up with all three members of the group - Dan, Jim and Matt - for a good old fashioned chinwag.

**TW:** Welcome back to the Fringe! You took a year off in 2012 - what exactly were you doing?!

**Dan:** Last year we appeared in a few things on TV - actually I was in 'Miranda'...

**Jim:** Dan likes to talk about that, I was in 'Lee Nelson's Well Funny People'.

**Matt:** Jim likes to talk about that.

**Dan:** And Matt was in 'Embarrassing Bodies'.

**Jim:** But he doesn't want to talk about that.



Photo: Rich Dyson

**Matt:** In the summer, we partnered with Channel Flip to film a series of 20 Olympics-based sketches ranging from the 50m halitosis qualifiers to the limp handshaking finals and the 110m cheating hurdles, all of which went viral...

**Dan:** In Israel. We have a big internet following there.

**Jim:** Last August we were also invited to perform at the Bush Theatre...

**Dan:** In Israel. We have a big comedy following there.

**Jim:** Not Israel - London's prestigious Bush Theatre! Which was an honour.

**TW:** How does it feel to be back, did the year off help?

**Jim:** It feels great to be back - having a year off gave us more time to develop, experiment and create material for what we feel is our best show yet.

**Matt:** And it gave me a chance to save some money... especially as I'm getting married...

**Jim:** Yeah, yeah.

**Dan:** I got to travel. Went to Israel. Visited a lot of internet cafes.

**TW:** To the fools who didn't see your shows in 2010 and 2011, how would

you describe your comedy?

**Dan:** They're not necessarily fools - just unlucky.

**Jim:** People can make mistakes - so don't feel bad, just do everything you can not to make the same mistake again - we're on at 5pm Underbelly Cowgate.

**Matt:** We would describe our comedy as big, silly and clever. We love word play, inventive ideas and utter stupidity.

**TW:** Tell us about 'The Real MacGuffins Come Again', how does it compare to the past shows?

**Matt:** It's our most honest show - you see even more of us than ever before.

**Dan:** Well, you'll see a lot more of Matt than you want to anyway.

**Jim:** It's definitely our biggest, most ambitious show ever, and the most satisfying in the way the sketches are linked together. We've tied in a few surprises but we don't want to give too much away.

**Matt:** We've even got a set.

**Dan:** We've got a whole range of sketches, so if you're a fan of Frankenstein, grammatical errors, Isambard Kingdom Brunel and computer games you'll love this show.

**Jim:** I said don't give too much away!

**TW:** The blurb says you're 'fitter, stronger and fatter' this year. Which one of you is fitter, stronger and fatter?

**Matt:** Jim single-handedly built the set so he's stronger.

**Jim:** Dan single-handedly ate while I built the set so he's fatter.

**Dan:** And Matt single-handedly fitted himself into a suitcase.

**Matt:** You put me...

**Dan:** So he's fitter.

**TW:** You raised some of your Fringe budget this year via an Indiegogo crowd-funding campaign. Why did you decide to do that? What does it involve?

**Dan:** That was Matt's idea.

**Matt:** We floated ourselves as a

company and sold shares in us. We decided it was a really good way not only to raise some much needed funds but also to raise awareness of our show. It was great that the Scotsman ran an article about it.

**Jim:** It was a lot of hard work though...

**Dan:** Yeah, Matt was exhausted. It really helps if you have a nerdy work-horse in your group.

**TW:** Was it successful? Would you recommend it to other performers?

**Matt:** Yes. We raised enough funds to pay for all our printing costs, director, rehearsal space and a lot of other things. Without the help we received we couldn't have put together the show that we have.

**Jim:** We're hugely grateful to all those that got involved with our campaign.

**Dan:** A big thank you to all our shareholders - your stock is rising.

**TW:** There's talk of 'projects in development' for TV and radio - can you tell us anything more about that? What would you dream TV or radio project be?

**Jim:** That's also one of the things we were able to focus on in 2012 - working with producers on TV and radio projects. They're still ongoing so we can't say too much. We don't want to jinx anything.

**Dan:** My dream project would involve me and Mila Kunis and Audrey Tautou.

**Matt:** I've been asked to be in the next series of 'Embarrassing Bodies'.

**TW:** We're nearly at half-way point for this Festival - what have been the highlights and low points so far?

**Matt:** Sitting in the Abattoir bar relaxing with a post show drink by the fountain and someone running over to tell us how much he loved the show (thanks Tim!)

**Jim:** I nearly cut my finger off putting the finishing touches to the set. A particular low point for me, but it gave the Underbelly first aid team their first crisis of the Fringe, so possibly a highlight for them?

**Dan:** I've ripped two pairs of my jeans in the crotch area. That's a low point.

**TW:** And other than 'The Real MacGuffins Come Again', any other tips for shows to see?

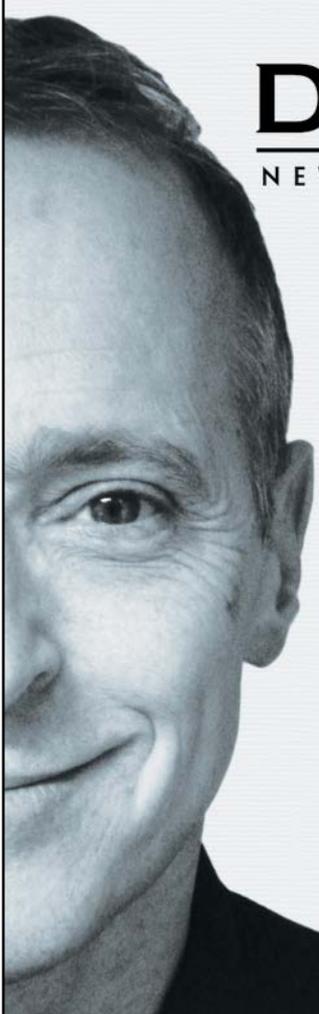
**Jim:** Well we all enjoyed George Ryegold 'Adulterated' the other night. Lovely material, deftly delivered. A great show.

**Matt:** Check out 'McNeil And Pamphilon Go 8-bit' too - it's only on a few nights, but it's lots of comics playing computer games and larking about - we had great fun guesting on it.

**Dan:** If you want something different, I went to see 'Tongue Fu'. A crazy late night mash up of spoken word, beat box, jazz, and even Howard Marks turned up in a fez.

'The Real MacGuffins Come Again' plays at Underbelly Cowgate until 25 Aug at 5.00pm.

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



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## David Morgan: What makes you beautiful?

### TW COLUMN

**David Morgan wishes he was pretty” says the programme blurb. Well his show is pretty. In that it’s called ‘Pretty’. And that’s beautiful. But what, exactly, is beauty? Morgan ponders...**

What makes someone beautiful - in the words of One Direction (bear with) - is not knowing that they're beautiful. Sadly that is also very annoying, it's like having the power to fly but being afraid of heights. If I was beautiful I'd know it, and I think I'd be the worst, the actual worst. I'd test the limits of my beauty and see if I could get away with mass genocide by smiling sweetly or twerking my way to innocence in the Hague. So we should all be very happy that I'm not super-uber-crazy-hot.

The hot but genocidal David Morgan would be taller. I have this thing at the moment where if I see a really tall man (6'6"+) I want to climb him like a tree and koala-hug him for a while. My need to be tall is odd though, because most of the hottest film actors are under 6 foot, Brad Pitt is 5'10" for example. And whilst I would climb the fabulously tall Vernon Kay, he's not beautiful.

Dictator Morgan would have a tight and muscled body, toned and healthy though, no bouncy castle muscles that tip the balance from beautiful to terrifying. One bit of me I wouldn't mind being a little more inflated, however, is the bit that's gotten Jon Hamm so many column inches recently.

My building of 'the beautiful but evil David' is completely unattainable. People who undergo massive plastic surgery to achieve perfection end up looking like the heroes from a budget game for the Nintendo Wii (although if the hero to that game was Joan Rivers I would totally play it).

It's odd how much emphasis we put on becoming perfect looking. And when it's gotten to the point where people are creating super-beautiful composites from two already gorgeous celebrities or models just to lust after, it's gone too far. Very soon the only thing that makes someone beautiful will be Photoshop. Well, at least we can print in 3D now.

In researching for my show 'Pretty', I read countless studies about attractiveness, and what interested me is that, whilst people might look at the 'hot King David' and think he's great looking, they wouldn't necessarily perceive him as 'beautiful'. Beauty is a word more often reserved for a combination



Photo: Rich Dyson

of both looks and personality, to be beautiful you can't just be hot, you have to be nice too.

I take my view on beauty now not from One Direction (Zayn, Naill, Harry, Louis and Liam in that order) but from Roald Dahl in 'The Twits'. "If a person has ugly thoughts, it begins to show on the face. And when that person has ugly thoughts every day, every week, every year, the face gets uglier and uglier until you can hardly bear to look at it".

He goes on: "A person who has

good thoughts cannot ever be ugly. You can have a wonky nose and a crooked mouth and a double chin and stick-out teeth, but if you have good thoughts it will shine out of your face like sunbeams and you will always look lovely".

Wise words. Though of course my vanity still wants me to eat less cake and moisturise more.

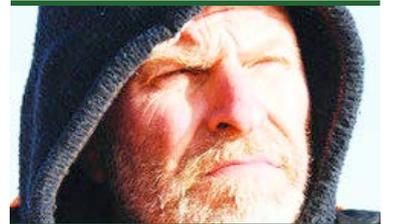
'David Morgan: Pretty' is on Underbelly Bristo Square until 25 Aug at 7.00pm.

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

### MORE ONLINE>

“ I have called my show for Edinburgh 2013 'Leashed'. I'm not sure why. Like many of the big decisions in my life - getting married, having kids, growing out my nasal hair - I have just gone ahead and done it. Often, these serve a single, small private joke. In the case of the above examples, the jokes are all at the expense of my father, though he has yet to realise it. Boy, is he gonna be mad! However, having committed to the title, I now have to post-rationalise some sort of justification for it. A Thought For The Day style 'but actually, you know, when you stop to really think about it, in a sense we are all leashed, aren't we? Leashed... to God' ”

Simon Evans on his choice of show name this year. Read his column at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013SE](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013SE)



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Photo: Mark Dawson

## Perspectives through the ages

As they celebrate their ten year anniversary, **The Paper Birds** have become quite a mature theatre company, and in their latest production it is the ageing process that is under the spotlight. **'On The One Hand'** is an enlightened and enlightening piece that looks at ageing through the eyes of women of various different ages, based on the stories and observations of numerous women of different generations. We spoke to the company's Co-Artistic Director Jemma McDonnell to find out more.

### TW INTERVIEW

**TW:** In 'On The One Hand' you're exploring ageing from the perspective of women of different ages. Where did the motivation for this piece come from?

**JM:** It was mainly turning 30 and everyone asking if I was going to have babies now and get a mortgage! I started thinking about the expectations and roles we are supposed to fulfil throughout our whole life, and began to look at

ageing as a life-long process. The show examines growing older through the eyes of women who are very different ages and at different points in their lives.

**TW:** You spoke to a lot of women about their experiences to inform this piece - how did you select those people, and what form did the research take?

**JM:** We asked for women to volunteer. We began interviewing women - our youngest was 12 and our oldest 92 - asking them a series of questions about what it means

to be their age. Sometimes I would speak to the women for hours, just listening to their stories, and it was fascinating. We would then begin to try to stage some of those stories or try to find ways to present or explore the stereotypes of certain ages.

**TW:** How were the real life stories you uncovered developed into the piece we can now see? Are any of the women in the piece based on specific people you spoke to?

**JM:** Because we met so many women we could not include all the stories and experiences that were shared. The characters that now exist in the play are often an amalgamation of a few women that we met and many of the stories they told us are referenced but not told in full. Some of our shows before this one have included verbatim material, but we don't call this show verbatim as the script was shaped around so many women.

**TW:** I know you initially worked with ten women over 60 on their stories, but then extended it out to take in the ageing thoughts and fears of women of all ages. Why did you do that?

**JM:** When people think about ageing they tend to think of being elderly. The reaction to this is normally negative as well. We wanted to look at ageing throughout life, with old age itself being just part of that journey. We change a lot throughout our life, and often when we look into the future we are limited in how far we can see, how far we can imagine ourselves. I don't think about being elderly, I think about ageing and I think about being 40 or maybe 50. It felt important to look at the whole emotional and physical journey we take as we age.

**TW:** The Paper Birds are known for creating theatre that responds to current social and political issues; does this piece fit into that ambition?

**JM:** I think it is political. There are a number of obvious political issues surrounding the subject of age that the show touches upon, but the main thing for us was looking at the 'roles' that women are expecting to take on throughout their life: daughter, wife, mother, business women, carer, so on. We also wanted to address the lack of parts on TV and in theatre for women over the age of 40.

**TW:** You've collaborated with Northern Stage on this piece, and are performing it at their Fringe venue at St Stephens. How did that partnership come about?

**JM:** Northern Stage have an award called Title Pending, which they present to a company or artist who has an exciting and engaging idea for a new piece of theatre. After a workshop weekend and interview sharing our ideas on ageing, we won the award and then had the opportunity to spend some time in their building developing the show.

That was the start of a fantastic relationship!

**TW:** The Paper Birds have now been producing theatre for ten years. Has your process - artistic or as producers - changed over the decade?

**JM:** We are constantly changing, we try to remain brave in our decisions and make work that is important. This year we wanted to write some roles for older women and see women of different ages on the stage together, and next we want to make a one-woman beat-boxing show! The ten years have taught us a lot, but most of all we try to let the work lead us.

**TW:** Does it get easier as you become more established as a company, or do new challenges emerge?

**JM:** Some things have become a little easier. There was a point where we used to make our own sets and now we have a wonderful designer who does that for us. But I would say that there are always challenges even after ten years; making a show - from finding the money and the collaborators to just MAKING the show - is never easy.

**TW:** Is the Fringe still a good place to present innovative theatre of this kind?

**JM:** Yes, there is an audience at the Fringe who are willing to take risks and this is incredibly important. There are visitors to the Fringe who go and see companies they have never heard of and the Festival needs this type of audience - otherwise it just becomes about the famous comedians.

Read more [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013PB](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013PB)

'On The One Hand' is being performed at Northern Stage at St Stephen's until 24 August (not 20) at 6.35pm.

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

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## TW REVIEWS

### The Fanny Hill Project (TheatreState)

"Guys, what was that?!" I hear some audience members saying after the play has finished. Indeed, The Fanny Hill Project is a deliberate assault, a wicked, morbid satire on beauty stereotypes. A feminist statement, if you will, that sharply criticizes the way in which pop culture and media choose to depict and objectify women. A circus of colours blends with overtly sexist jokes and in the background, a young woman is struggling to reach the surface in a misogynist and chauvinist society. What are we to understand from it? Our feelings range from deeply uncomfortable to utterly irritated, or to feeling assaulted; we understand the absurdity of these social rules as we try to shake off our exasperation.

Zoo, until 26 Aug, 4.05pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Iris Ordean]

### The Three Lions (Jenny Topper and Rosie Bowen for PBJ Management With Pleasance)

'The Three Lions' is the love child of 'The Thick of it' and 'Fawcety Towers', kidnapped by Baddiel and Skinner. This satirical look at what (possibly) derailed England's attempt to host the 2018 football World Cup follows David Beckham, Prince William and David Cameron - the not-exactly-macho Lions leading England's bid - as they meet in a Swiss hotel on the eve of the decision. All three are brilliantly parodied, with jokes that only occasionally feel predictable, while Cameron's ditz PA is wonderfully played by Alice Bailey-Johnson. But the show is stolen by Dugald Bruce-Lockhart's Prime Minister, whose blue-blooded tirade on losing the bid is a horrific joy. Not quite a shoe-in for the cup, but semi-finalists at least.

Pleasance Courtyard, until 26 Aug (not 13, 20), 4.30pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Sarah Richardson]

### I'm With the Band (Traverse & Wales Millennium Centre)

Entertaining rock-musical allegory for the state of the UK. A big stadium Britpop band are in the process of breaking up. They're all fairly awful - England's a control freak, Scotland a bitter hothead, Wales a neurotic lad, Northern Ireland an abusive alcoholic. (The funniest song's about Ireland and Ulster's rough sex life.) It suffers slightly because fictional music has to work as both music and narrative unit - so songs like England's 'awful', revolt-inspiring 'Hell is an English Garden' can't live up to itself. But it's miraculous that they manage the one 80min extended metaphor so lightly. (Note the EU's appearance as Record Label.) After an excellent job of avoiding one-sided polemic, they end on a song called 'The Future'.

Traverse Theatre, until 25th Aug, times vary.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Gavin Leech]

### The Seer (Penn Dixie Productions)

Rimbaud and Verlaine are the go-to poets for narcissistic teenagers and this play cuts through such reverence, represented by an out-of-touch biographer who clings to his Rimbaud anthology, with razor sharp wit. Rimbaud is portrayed as selfish, violent and pompous and Verlaine as preening and manipulative. The play is greatly post-modern, as the fourth wall is repeatedly broken, to the point of a cast member violently kissing a man in the front row. It's chaotic and hilarious, with the details of their love affair and Verlaine's paternal strifes rushed through at eye-watering pace. You won't get all the details first time, perhaps because large sections are in French, but that just means you'll have to come again, which will be no bad thing.

Underbelly, Cowgate, until 25 Aug (not 13), 10.30.  
tw rating 4/5 | [James Hampson]

### Vessel (Fine Frenzy Theatre)

'Vessel' combines moments of laugh-out-loud humour and moments of

startling violence in this convincing portrayal of a family both torn apart and thrown together by their shared history. The play shifts seamlessly between past and present with never a moment of confusion. It is also a strikingly visual piece of theatre: between scenes, actors use rope, torches and their own bodies to create the illusion of an ocean-tossed boat, to the accompaniment of sea sounds. The characters' lost brother, John, is represented by a jacket worn by various members of the cast at various times as the play works towards its startling conclusion. 'Vessel' is an absorbing and deeply memorable play, performed with elegance and flair - a must-see.

theSpace on North Bridge, until 24 Aug (not 11, 18, 25), 9.05pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Eilidh Johnstone]

### Killers (Boys Of The Empire Productions / The Assembly Rooms)

Enthralling, conflicting and hugely captivating, 'Killers' offers a rare insight into the psyches of three notorious imprisoned serial killers, and those on the outside that feel compelled to engage with them. Ian Brady, Peter Sutcliffe and Dennis Nilsen address their fans, and audience, in an intense production that, although short on tangible excitement, achieves an uneasy and compelling sincerity. Based on real fan mail, the play's rigid staging and continuous monologues are justified by the setting - incarcerated indefinitely, the letters offer an intimate outlet for disturbing expression and provoke impressive individual performances from Edward Cory, Arron Usher and Gareth Morrison. Although not a classically enjoyable topic, I found this production undoubtedly powerful, and I left unnerved, intrigued and certainly unsettled.

The Assembly Rooms, until 25 Aug (not 12), 6.10pm  
tw rating 4/5 | [Polly Davidson]



### How to Occupy an Oil Rig (ARC Stockton)

The minute I walked in and got handed a lump of plasticine, my inner five year old did a fist-pump. 'How to Occupy an Oil Rig' is a step by step guide to the practical elements of protesting, from joining a protest march to safely chaining yourself to a radiator. With jumbo Lego bricks, plasticine people and lurid wigs, everything appears childlike and whimsical, but beneath this façade is a compelling and very grown-up appeal to action. Provocative, playful and engaging, this earnest performance makes you believe that you can and should be changing the world. If you decide against occupying an oil rig today, do the next best thing and track down an 'ARC Stockton' show, I guarantee your world will be changed.

Northern Stage at St Stephen's, until 24 Aug (not 12, 19), 12.35pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Holly Sharp]

### The Collision of Things (Move to Stand)

An innovative clash of stagnant realism, physical theatre and music, 'The Collision of Things' is the story of three reasonably ordinary friends. Simple as. No histrionics, no terminal illness diagnosis, no long-lost buddy with blood-lust. There's grief without the wailing, relationship problems without hideous break-ups, drinking binges without world-changing confessions; just three mates, getting on with life and putting up with its obstacles. It does at times feel engulfed by the gaping performance space, however. It's beautifully simple, though; theatre that takes your hand and becomes your best friend before crushing you with its heart-rending finish. A moving, excruciatingly accurate representation of what it is to be human, as it is, with some of the rubbish, some of the fun and some of the same-old.

Pleasance Dome, until 25 Aug (not 13, 20), 5.45pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Holly Sharp]

### And They Played Shang-a-Lang (Craft Theatre Company / The Stand Comedy Club)

Growing up is always a confusing adventure, so the coming-of-age recounted in 'And They Played Shang-a-Lang' is bound to resonate with a lot of people. Set in 1970s Edinburgh, the play is full of the kind of nostalgia that will probably win the heart of anyone who was a teenager during this era. Luckily, the '70s cultural references are only occasionally obscure enough to bewilder the younger audience members, who are nevertheless spirited along with renditions of 'Waterloo' and 'YMCA' (and 'Shang-a-Lang', of course). However, it is also a bitter-sweet production, simultaneously celebrating the joy of life, as well as mourning its often untimely end. Watching this, you could as easily be crying with laughter as laughing through your tears.

The Stand Comedy Club III & IV, until 25 Aug (not 12), 12.50pm.  
tw rating 4/5 | [Melissa Steel]

TW

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## 5/5 SHOW



### Alba Flamenca (Alba Flamenca)

Away from the dreary clouds and maddening crowds of Edinburgh, you can find a little slice of sizzling Spain. A whole fiesta of intoxicating sounds and thumping Mediterranean rhythms, 'Alba Flamenca' bristles with authenticity and visceral power. Boasting some of the most technically challenging and sharply percussive flamenco I've seen, delivered with fiery conviction and breathless passion, this show is a genuine privilege to experience. Soaring from the moody to the sorrowful to the ecstatic, 'Alba Flamenca' becomes an overwhelming and headily claustrophobic furnace of intense emotion. As the room begins to rumble under the raucous frenzy of noise and lightening-like feet, it shakes into take-off, blasting away from Scotland right to the heart of some hidden Spanish enclave.

Alba Flamenca, until 25 Aug, 8.15pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Katharine Wootton]

## TW INTERVIEW

### India Flamenco (Alba Flamenca)

Three passionate and talented dancers and a traditional vocalist/musician make up this act. 'India Flamenco' tells the story of gypsies who travel and share their knowledge, and it is by means of this story that the fusion of dance styles comes about. This link between the dance styles does feel more than a little tenuous - there simply to enable the dance company to display a range of talent. One can overlook this, though, as individually, the dancers are magnificent: Kirsten Newell's classical Indian Odissi routine is particularly stunning, Leti Vicente Vila's Flamenco has all the restrained fire of a bull on the rampage and Ingrida Dornbrook's fusion piece of calculated cheekiness offsets these two beautifully. Striking and memorable.

Alba Flamenca, until 13 Aug, 6.30pm.

tw rating 4/5 | [Jasmine Faller]

### Noodles (NoFit State Circus)

'Noodles' is as mad as it sounds: acrobats swinging from the ceiling, walking on tightropes and contorting themselves, all whilst covered in and wading through long strands of spaghetti-like substances. Clearly designed to be simple bit of fun, this is unpretentious, light-hearted and exciting. The amazing circus skills

exhibited by five talented artists are complemented by rousing music and hilarious sound effects. Add in a bit of magic, and the show is exciting for all ages. Whilst the storyline seems rather ridiculous and at times confusing, the play lays its cards on the table as an absurdist piece from the beginning. Colourful, clever and with some perfectly timed comic moments, 'Noodles' is a fabulous spectacle, and bags of fun.

New Town Theatre, until 25 Aug (not 6, 13, 20), 12.45pm.

tw rating 4/5 | [Helena Wadia]

### One Step Before The Fall (Spitfire Company and Damúza Theater)

'One Step Before The Fall' is the energetic and impassioned solo dance of Marketa Vacovska (dancer of the year 2013), accompanied by Lenka Dusilova (Czech Grammy Award holder), to dance Muhammad Ali's heart-breaking story of triumph and loss. Marketa uses fast passed movements and spinning to great effect within the boxing ring that makes up the stage and the live vocals really add something to this vigorous display. This may not appeal to everyone with its themes or occasionally repetitive visuals, but it is with defiance that this dancer rises and repeats herself, which is completely fitting to the tale being told. A performance which well deserved the standing ovation it

received from this audience.

Zoo, until 22 Aug (not 16, 17, 18), 8.30pm.

tw rating 4/5 | [Jasmine Faller]

### S/he is Nancy Joe (Mirenka Cechova and Tantehorse)

One woman tells her sister's true story of growing up transgendered through graffiti, comics and contemporary dance. A very brave show, 'S/he is Nancy Joe' explores the pain and victimisation of one person trying to find their true identity. The piece was full of emotion and innovative dance, with a clear and thought-provoking story. However, as the use of technology was key to this performance, to be successful, it was essential that timing be spot on; unfortunately the show sometimes failed in that respect. Despite this, for the most part, the play made very clever use of said technology, though at times movements could have been more precise. Ultimately, it was a fearless and inventive show, with an uplifting ending.

Zoo Southside, until 18 Aug (not 6, 12, 13), 1.30pm.

tw rating 3/5 | [Helena Wadia]

1/5 Bad  
2/5 Mediocre  
3/5 Good  
4/5 Very Good  
5/5 Excellent

TW

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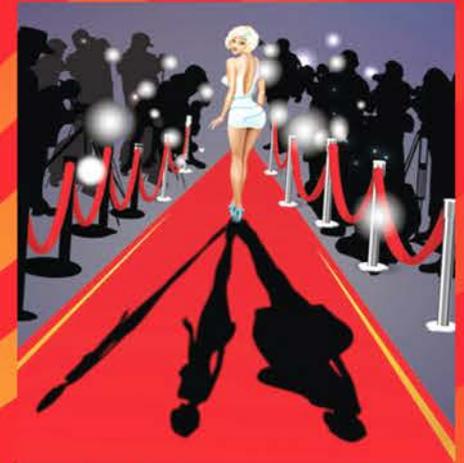
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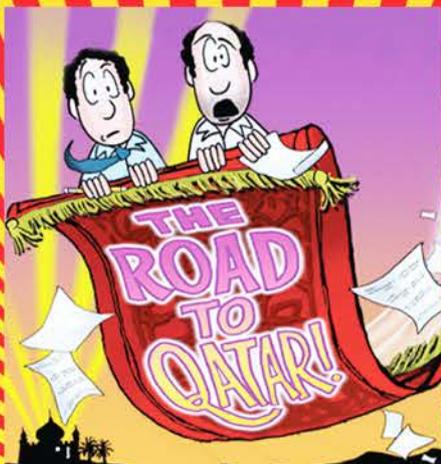
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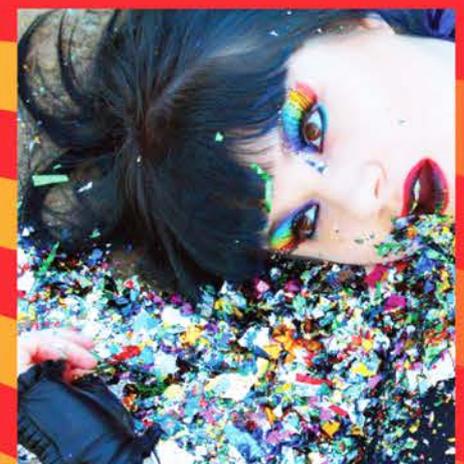


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## Worbey And Farrell: Deviating the musical Fringe



Photo: Rich Dyson

**Worbey And Farrell's piano recital with a difference tours the world, though feels particularly at home at the Edinburgh Fringe. Unfortunately they're only here for a couple more days, but if you can, get in and see their great show 'Deviations On The Piano' at The Assembly Rooms before they speed off East. To get you in the mood, we had a very quick chat with the guys to find out more.**

**TW:** Where did the idea for the 'Deviations On The Piano' show come from?

**W&F:** Well, the name comes from our composition called 'Deviations On A Caprice' - the highlight of the show, we think - so we thought we'd use the word 'deviation' in the title of the show too. Because we do rather deviate from the traditional piano recital!

**TW:** For the uninitiated, what does the show consist of?

**W&F:** It's a music-based show. We play the piano in a way seldom seen, with four hands. It's fun and uplifting. For part of the show we have the keyboard displayed on a screen so all can see the choreography.

**TW:** How do you choose what music to play? Your repertoire seems pretty eclectic.

**W&F:** We simply choose the music we love and hope the audience will feel the same. From Bach to Coldplay!

**TW:** Our reviewer was very taken with the chat element too. Is that an important part of the show for you guys? Is it scripted?

**W&F:** It is crucial. We like to make friends with the audience; there are far too many concerts where the soloist seems to have no personality. It is organised but never scripted, not least because we never know what the audience are going to come out with.

**TW:** That camera above the piano that you mentioned is a great touch - does that happen a lot these days at piano recitals? Why did you decide to do it?

**W&F:** It rarely happens in recitals; sometimes in organ concerts though. Due to the shape of a piano it's difficult for the whole audience to see the hands and keys, so we decided to use a camera and projector. We're careful not to do this too much though, as it causes split focus, and we want the audience to watch us too!

**TW:** How has your Fringe been going so far?

**W&F:** We've had the most amazing time and the response has been phenomenal. We really wish we could stay and perform until the end of the Festival but we have to go to Turkey to perform on 17th. Boo.

**TW:** You're only here for a couple more days, how can people enjoy your work outside of the Fringe?

**W&F:** We're constantly touring. We've hit over 150 countries so far; our website has our tour dates on it and there are more going up very soon.

Read some more W&F answers at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013WF](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013WF)

Worbey And Farrell are playing at The Assembly Rooms until 15 Aug at 2.45pm.

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

## TW REVIEWS

### Anatomy of the Piano (Will Pickvance)

Will Pickvance is an exceptionally talented pianist with a quirky and almost shy demeanour. His fantasy lecture about the 'Anatomy Of The Piano' is a cute and poetic exploration of the instrument as a living organism, one with skin, teeth and personality; he tells us of its ancestor, the cave piano, and its origins under water. His sweet, whimsical, sometimes humorous prose is accompanied by a slide-show of surreal illustrations that keeps moving as his fingers are tickling the ivories. This is a highly appealing show, if a little bit strange; it did have me wondering if this was written under the influence of anything, or if Pickvance himself is naturally something of an eccentric.

Summerhall, until 25 Aug, 9.50pm.

tw rating 4/5 | [Samantha Strachan]

### Bangalore Rock (Thermal And A Quarter)

Thermal And A Quarter are an incredibly tight three piece band who play contemporary Indian rock with a refreshing sense of humour. The pounding drums and funky, driving bass form a formidable rhythm section at the heart of the trio; meanwhile guitarist and frontman Bruce Lee Mani also has fantastic technical ability and a clear love for what the band do, but never takes himself too seriously, offering often humorous lyrics and jokey patter. As well as being enjoyable

TW

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and entertaining, their songs are also musically very interesting, one example being the fusion of southern Indian folk with blues. This is rock with a twist at its finest.

Spotlites @ The Merchants' Hall, until 26 Aug, times vary, tw rating 4/5 | [Elspeth Rudd]

### Little Jazz Bird (Victoria Bennett)

With a high, sweet voice and a set full of romantic songs, it's clear to see why Victoria Bennett identifies with the 'Little Jazz Bird' of the classic Gershwin number. Though overly tentative at first, she soon relaxes into the gig, revealing a richly emotional voice and a talent for finding fresh sentiments in well-known standards. This is particularly clear on perennial classic 'My Funny Valentine,' which she playfully dedicates to drummer Kevin Dorrian. Ever-dependable bassist Ed Kelly and pianist Campbell Normand round out the sound, with the latter's swaggering, bluesy playing almost stealing the show. In the end though, it's Bennett's evident affection for the music that shines through, making this a warm and enjoyable performance.

The Jazz Bar, 8, 15, 17, 24 Aug, times vary  
tw rating 4/5 | [Dave Fargnoli]

### Beyond West (Susanna Orr Holland / PBH's Free Fringe)

Susanna Orr Holland has a very impressive vocal range with a stunning vocal ability that is put to good use. She sings and plays ballads, ragas and her own compositions and clearly has a broad knowledge of the music she performs. The only slight criticism I have is that the only non-western content were the ragas, so the breadth of material possibly is not quite as 'Beyond West' as the billing might suggest. The mixture of the ragas and folk was, however, a nice combination and made for interesting listening. Holland's performance provides an enjoyable, often captivating experience that will be of interest to any folk fan.

Free Fringe George, until 25 Aug (not 12, 19), 2.30pm, tw rating 4/5 | [Elspeth Rudd]

### Mike Oldfield's Tubular Bells 'For Two' (places and spaces)

To play as many instruments as these two Australians do even separately is remarkable in itself. To play them all in the same piece, sometimes simultaneously, is an extraordinary feat, and one they pull off without any noticeable faults. For an hour Daniel Holdsworth and Aidan Roberts dart around the stage, demonstrating their skill on many, many instruments (Mike Oldfield's original track contained 27). There are a few moments in the performance where as an audience member you start to consider whether they're pushing a bit too far, that at any moment they're going to trip over an instrument or knock down a microphone stand - but it never happens, because these are two very talented musicians, bringing an old, much loved piece of music back to life.

Underbelly, Bristo Square, until 26 Aug (not 12, 19), 5.45pm.

tw rating 5/5 | [Stephanie Gray]

## The Picture Of A Modern Day Hipster: Facehunters

**The Hungry Bitches are back at theSpace @ Symposium Hall with a show first performed at the Fringe last year, and further developed over the last twelve months, with the latest version getting a neat 5/5 from the ThreeWeeks review team. A brand new musical inspired by Oscar Wilde's 'The Picture Of Dorian Gray' and exploring a hipster scene obsessed with appearance, 'Facehunters' boasts "catchy songs and aggressive choreography" while "brilliantly ridiculing the hipster scene". We spoke to the core creative team of director Matthew Reynolds, writer/composer Graham Mercer, choreographer Megan Griffith and producer Sarah Hyman to find out more about The Hungry Bitches and their hipster ridiculing musical extravaganza.**

**TW: Let's start at the start, how did you guys come to form Hungry Bitches Productions?**

**Sarah:** The Hungry Bitches started off in 2008 as a riot girl punk band, born in the hot pink arty depths of Graham's bedroom. Matthew and Graham began fantasising about the performance spectacle of their first live gig, yet never actually made it out of that hot pink room; deciding, instead, that they were more like wanna-be rockstar thespians than an actual riot girl punk band. And that's when the rest of us got involved. And so, in our first year at university in Leeds, we formed the company and began making musical theatre together.

**TW: Where did the idea for 'Facehunters' come from?**

**Matthew:** The idea began with us being a little bit obsessed with hipsters, and following the hipster scene online. Our personal experiences of hipster culture, as wannabes trying to be as cool as them, failed miserably. And quickly taught us that the hipster is actually the product of a lost generation, they stand for nothing and the only thing that unites them is an obsession with appearance. This vanity-driven identity struggle forms a great social backdrop to complement our love for Oscar Wilde's 'The Picture Of Dorian Gray'. Like the hipster, and Gray, the Hungry Bitches loathe the idea of growing old and tired.

**TW: How much of 'Dorian Gray' is in the musical?**

**Matthew:** The novel was largely just the central motif, which could be married so well with the east London hipster scene, running with the Faustian pact idea and keeping it in

tandem with the hipster obsession of image and vanity.

**Graham:** Though upon reading the novel again, and after developing 'Facehunters' over the past couple of years, there are other similarities between the two, though nothing entirely deliberate. Wilde's novel is a chilling gothic horror, ours a fantastical, almost sci-fi, coming of age satire, with characters you hopefully recognise and connect with.

**TW: You also performed 'Facehunters' at last year's Festival, has it progressed or developed in the intervening year?**

**Graham:** Yes. 'Facehunters' has undergone two rewrites since last year's Festival. Although the basis of it has not changed, many of the threads have now evolved. Story, concept and characters are now all much more concentrated, clearer and cohesive.

**TW: There seem to be a lot fewer new musicals than new plays - certainly at the Fringe, but also in general - why do you think that is?**

**Graham:** Firstly, it is much easier to write a new play than a new musical. There are so many layers to writing a new musical show, and then even



more complexities to putting it on its feet.

**Sarah:** In terms of doing a new musical at the Fringe, it's not something that comes cheap, as it involves more people and is much more costly with aspects such as sound to think about. We have a cast and crew of 23 people, that as a factor alone is definitely restricting.

**Megan:** However, we are lucky enough to have such a fantastic cast and crew who all fund themselves with no one being paid. Hungry Bitches Productions receives no funding and works on an entirely recycled budget.

**TW: With the West End seemingly filled with so called 'jukebox**

**musicals', is it harder to get brand new musical shows off the ground? Do you think that's a problem?**

**Matthew:** Yes, the West End is full of many jukebox musicals. But those musicals largely play on nostalgia, where as we feel there is a gap in the market for something which is current and created for a contemporary audience. Like the musicals 'Hair' and 'Rent' in their respective eras, 'Facehunters' is a musical that speaks for its generation.

Find out more about Hungry Bitches' projects in the full interview online at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013HB](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013HB)

'Facehunters' plays at theSpace @ Symposium Hall until 17 Aug at 9.45pm.

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## TW REVIEWS

### Sugar & Vice: All The Men We've Never Slept With (HMD Productions)

The girls of Sugar and Vice bring stories and songs about virginity versus promiscuity and everything in between: this Australian duo, Courtney Powell and Brydie Lee-Kennedy, share funny anecdotes about past encounters and how things never quite turn out as planned. Mixing in 90s covers and quirky originals, they tell us of lost loves and in Brydie's case, "lays". Be prepared; they open the discourse up to the audience, asking everyone to reflect and share their past relationship mishaps, and they will post these stories on their Facebook page (we're promised it'll remain anonymous). This honest and funny show is one that everyone can relate to, regardless of their level of sexual experience.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, until 26 Aug (not 14), 9.00pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Samantha Strachan]

### Young & Strange - Magic, Illusion And A Hate For Each Other (Young & Strange)

I had no idea just how popular this show is, until I just scraped in and the people in the line behind me were told the venue was full, and this is impressive because The Jam House is quite large. Unfortunately, however, once Young & Strange made it on stage (after a mediocre video introduction) they didn't bring with them any large scale illusions, only party tricks. The show is gimmicky and heavily prop based, and the duo's humour was awkward, while there was an elaborately bungled (on purpose?) card trick that took too long to resolve. There was never any real explanation about why these long term friends hated each other, and their reconciliation at the end whilst sweet, was still not impressive.

The Jam House, until 23 Aug, 6.30pm. tw rating 2/5 | [Samantha Strachan]



### ED2013 Cabaret Review: Julie Madly Deeply (Sarah-Louise Young and Michael Roulston - Festival Highlights)

'Julie Madly Deeply' is deliriously wonderful cabaret, not least because Sarah-Louise Young has an absolutely thrilling singing voice. This lovely, stunning cabaret is more than just a fan letter: it makes for heart-warming and compelling viewing, and it is an absolute delight to watch Young masterfully channel Julie Andrews. Funny, witty, and charming, 'Julie Madly Deeply' never lets go of the audience, and the audience never let go of it. Sentimental in all the right ways, this show was a truly wonderful journey, leaving the audience in hysterics as often as it left some members in tears. A charming, intimate portrait of Andrews life and work, and a must see for Andrews fans and enthusiasts everywhere.

Gilded Balloon Teviot, until 26 Aug (not 14), 12.40pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Otamere Guobadia]

### God Versus The Mind Reader (Mark Cairns)

Cairns' constant insistence that we are all slaves to confirmation bias, filling gaps between what we see and incongruous occurrences with our preconceptions, though refreshingly gentle as rationalism goes, comes across as condescending, particularly with his repeated insistence that he is "not a psychic". Whilst astutely observing that audiences, particularly those for mind-reading acts, try to work out how it's done, it's reductive to treat them as undifferentiated clusters of assumptions, defined by the excuses they make for things they don't understand, rather than their curiosity. It was a skilled cold-reading, which impressed all those present, but it was strung together with an earnest account of his divorce and an attempt at commentary on religious belief and rational thought which felt like superficial, underdeveloped filler between the tricks.

theSpace on The Mile until 24 Aug, 2.50pm. tw rating 2/5 | [Joe Abel]

### Lady Carol: Betwixt and Between (Lady Carol)

'Lady Carol: Betwixt and Between' is a slightly mad and wonderfully rambling show. Lady Carol quickly charms with her quirky, autobiographical tale of growing up - the lovely, mad disarray of her existence - and with every story you get the sense that her whole persona is winking at you, bidding you to join her on her weird and wonderful journey. Her singing voice is sublime, and her delightfully eclectic set list makes it all the more exciting. Something about her is wildly original and honest, and you'll enjoy watching Lady Carol's show, if not for her storytelling - sure to warm your heart - but for her light and slightly irreverent humour, which, coupled with her natural charm makes the show a delight.

The Assembly Rooms, until 25 Aug (not 12), 6.15pm. tw rating 4/5 | [Otamere Guobadia]



## On the art rock edge of the cabaret Fringe

### TW INTERVIEW

**Meine Damen und Herren, the cabaret Fringe has some serious indie credentials this year, as Germany's finest indie rock duo Die Roten Punkte return once again to play Assembly's George Square Gardens. With a new album up-coming, and a movie in the pipeline, we managed to grab a few moments with Astrid and Otto to ask some quick questions.**

**TW: Welcome back to the Fringe, how are you finding the Festival this year?**  
**Astrid:** Super and great! It's awesome being at the Assembly George Square Gardens. Each night before our show, I grab a sausage from the German sausage shop outside and then I just roll down the astro turf slope to the beautiful Bosco tent, ready to rock and roll!

**TW: Let's go back to the start for a moment. How did you guys come to form the band?**

**Otto:** One night Astrid and I went to see David Bowie at the Deutschlandhalle in Berlin and it changed our lives. From that moment on we knew we only ever wanted to be in a band.

**TW: Your official blurb says "a sonic collision between B52s, Kraftwerk and early Ramones", which is pretty eclectic. How do you describe your music?**

**Otto:** We definitely love all of those bands.

**Astrid:** I guess we are like indie rock, but we also have pop and punk influences, like Blondie, Devo, Talking Heads and The Pixies.

**TW: You have a brand new album in the pipeline. How does it compare to what's gone before?**

**Otto:** Well the last album 'Super Musician' was a straight-forward rock n roll album and we love it. But this time we wanted to do something more arty. We've been listening a lot to John Cale, Brian Eno, Laurie Anderson and Einstürzende Neubauten.

**Astrid:** Otto also made me listen to the sound of teaspoons rattling in a thermos for ten hours for inspiration. Which was horrible.

**TW: There's quite a lot of music at the Fringe, but not so many indie stars like yourself. What would you say to persuade other indie rockers to the Fringe?**

**Astrid:** We're a serious rock band, but we have a terrible manager who keeps putting us in comedy and theatre festivals all around the world. And then people come and laugh at us. So we're hoping this interview will bring some more serious music lovers to our concerts.

**TW: Those are interesting accents - where exactly in Germany are you from?**

**Otto:** Where exactly? Well, we grew up in Grunewald which is out in the woods on the edge of Berlin, but then after our parents were killed by a lion we moved to Kreuzberg.

**Astrid:** They were killed by a train, not a lion.

**Otto:** Then we lived in a squat in Kreuzberg and one day Astrid brought home a video player, but we only had two videos, 'Sixteen Candles' and 'Pretty In Pink'. So Molly Ringwald pretty much taught us how to speak English.

**TW: Taking of films, did I hear mention of a Die Roten Punkte movie?**

**Astrid:** Someone is making a feature length documentary about us touring all over North America. They start filming this November after we finish touring with Amanda Palmer.

**TW: Will you be doing any songwriting while in the Festival City? Is there anything about the Fringe that might inspire a new song?**

**Astrid:** I might write a breakfast song dedicated to The City Cafe which has a chorus featuring bacon, pork sausage, haggis and black pudding. It will be called, 'This Little Piggy Went To Edinburgh And Never Came Home'  
**Otto:** That's so gross! That song will not be on any Die Roten Punkte album.

**TW: We're half way through the Festival now, are there any other shows you'd recommend we go see?**

**Otto:** I love Red Bastard.  
**Astrid:** And I love Lords Of Strut. They can strut all over me any time they like...

'Die Roten Punkte - KUNST ROCK (ART ROCK)' is on at Assembly George Street until 25 Aug at 8.55pm.

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## 5/5 Scroobius Pip - Words (The Pleasance / Scroobius Pip)

Managing to ensnare and enthrall a rowdy, sell-out audience to hushed silence is not an easy task, but 'Words' is capable of doing just that. Admittedly, it's not all a barrel of laughs, but Scroobius Pip is able to describe pain with beauty, capture emotion with grace and evoke a plethora of situations and characters with what can only be described as rock-star presence. Technically and poetically, Pip's spoken word is mind-blowing, manipulating rhythm with truly impressive precision, and utilising his Essex twang to construct unusual rhyme after rhyme. He challenged the audience to check up that his thousand word poem was exactly that, subtly highlighting the deft precision and meticulous planning behind his work. Not just a spoken word artist and social commentator, but a spectacularly smart one.

Pleasance Dome until 26 Aug (not 19), 9.40pm. tw rating 5/5 | [Elizabeth Jewell]

## TW REVIEWS

### SPOKEN WORD REVIEWS

#### Monkey Poet (Monkey Poet / PBH's Free Fringe)

An hour with the Monkey Poet is like an evening at the pub with the friend we all wish we were cool enough to have. From pornography to David Cameron to St George, there is nothing immune to his intelligent, piercing mockery - and all of it done in rhyme! Exuding easy charm, the Manchester native and Fringe veteran maintains a friendly, informal atmosphere even while addressing the most provocative and relevant issues of the day in the rudest fashion possible. Not only is his poetry fresh and biting, but the stories that accompany them are often even more amusing, particularly when accents and impressions are involved. Irreverent, fast, furious, and fun, the Monkey Poet is not to be missed!

The Banshee Labyrinth, until 24 Aug (not 13, 20), 5.10pm.

tw rating 5/5 | [Elaine Teng]

#### Stand-Up Tragedy (Stand-Up Tragedy/ PBH's Free Fringe)

You've heard of stand-up comedy, now here's stand-up tragedy, an eclectic mix of performances ranging through music, poetry, spoken word, comedy and the downright odd, with the intention of making you

feel sad, think or smile. The line-up changes every night but the theme of tragedy, whether they decide to take it seriously or have a bit of fun with it, remains. Unfortunately one or two of the acts on the night I went must have missed the memo, as even with leaving room for poetic interpretation, their set had nothing to do with tragedy! This aside, the atmosphere of the evening was vibrant and there were some excellent acts keeping the audience hanging on their every word, or making them seemingly wet themselves with laughter.

The Fiddler's Elbow, until 14 Aug, 6.30pm.  
tw rating 3/5 | [Anita Magee]

### VISUAL ART REVIEWS

#### Print Fusion (Gallery TEN)

Printmaking today encompasses a wide range of artistic practices. To prove the point, this small but varied collection features work from nearly a dozen artists, showing off screenprints, lithographs, etchings and digitally-aided pieces. Standing out amongst them are Rebecca King's vivid laser-cut cityscapes in luminous indigos and acid greens, and Sue Corke's moody and imposing 'Ideal Sketch Of The Moon.' Next to such eye-catching designs, however, the smaller or more abstract prints seem crowded, and are easily overlooked. Partly the lack of space is due to the exhibition's location in a commercial gallery, which can make viewing these works feel a little like window

shopping. Ultimately though, this remains a satisfying showcase of contemporary talent and diverse technique.

Gallery TEN, until 1 Sep (not 7), times vary  
tw rating 3/5 | [Dave Fargnoli]

#### Ethiopia (Galerie Mirages)

This charming Brighton-esque gallery is good for the snooper trying to get away off the beaten path and to somewhere a little different away from the crowds of the centre. About half a mile from the botanical gardens, it is perfect if you are having a "calm day" at the festival. The simply named 'Ethiopia', is a temporary exhibition for the festival, and they have managed to collect some wonderful pieces. The pottery is particularly pleasing, and with little knick knacks to collect, it offered the feeling of a satisfying venture. I wish I could have got more information on the pieces that day but overall, it's worth the walk from the gardens to have a snoop.

Galerie Mirages, until 5 Sep, 10.00am.  
tw rating 3/5 | [Christopher Spring]

1/5 Bad  
2/5 Mediocre  
3/5 Good  
4/5 Very Good  
5/5 Excellent

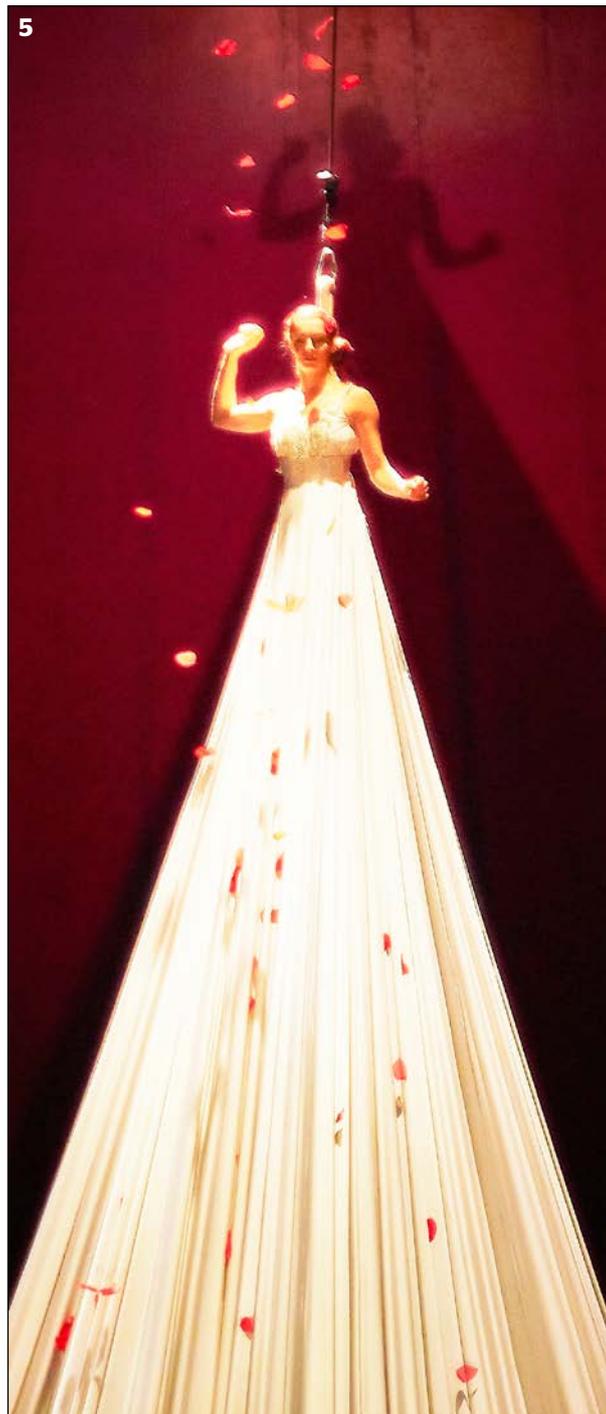
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1. The Peculiar Tale Of Pablo Picasso And The Mona Lisa at theSpace on Niddry Street. Photo: Rich Dyson

2. Peep at Assembly George Square. Photo: Natalia Equihua

3. Damsel In Shining Armour at Underbelly Cowgate. Photo: Rich Dyson

4. The Greatest Liar In All The World at Underbelly Cowgate. Photo: Natalia Equihua

5. Bianco at the No Fit State Big Top. Photo: Mark Dawson

6. Farce Noir at Underbelly Bristo Square. Photo: Mark Dawson

7. Orkestra Del Sol at Queens Hall. Photo: Mark Dawson



# CHILDREN'S SHOWS

For plenty of reviews of children's shows at the Fringe  
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Photo: Rich Dyson

## Children's theatre on the edge

### TW INTERVIEW

**In amongst the many and varied treats on offer in the Fringe's children's programme is the acclaimed one-man theatrical piece 'Titus', an English adaptation of a popular play for children originally conceived by Belgian actor, director and playwright Jan Sobrie. Part of the Made In Scotland showcase, it's "the story of a ten year-old boy on the edge - literally on the roof of his school", and has been adapted by Scottish playwright Oliver Emanuel with director Lu Kemp and actor Joe Arkleyon (pictured on the edge of the roof of his Summerhall venue). We caught up with Emanuel to discuss the play, the process of adaptation, and Scottish playwriting at the Festival.**

**TW: For the uninitiated, tell us a little about the original script for 'Titus'.**  
OE: 'Titus' is a big deal in continental Europe. It's originally in Flemish but has been translated into German and French, winning awards all over the place. This is the first time it has been performed in English. It was a solo piece that Jan performed himself; he's a very talented actor as well as writer.

**TW: Where did the idea to adapt the play come from? How close is your version to the original?**

OE: Lu Kemp, the director, approached me to do a new English version. We've worked a lot together on both stage and radio, most recently on the National Theatre Of Scotland's 'The Day I Swapped My Dad For Two Goldfish'. We went over to Belgium to work with Jan, and he gave us pretty much free reign to do what we wanted. He was very generous. My version is a wee bit slimmer and I've drawn the story out a bit more. Jokes and details have been made more Scottish or British. Oh, and we don't have a pig's head!

**TW: How closely did you work with director Lu Kemp and actor Joe Arkleyon bringing the piece to life?**

OE: We worked very closely together. I sat in on rehearsals and we developed the script as the performance grew. Both Lu and Joe are very collaborative, so it's really been the three of us working together to make the piece as good as we can.

**TW: The play isn't, perhaps, of the classic mould for children's theatre, but seems to really work. Why do you think that is?**

OE: I wanted to challenge the audience a bit. And myself as a writer. I wanted to find the toughest way of telling the story - standing still on a desk - and see if we could keep the audience's attention. 'Titus' is such a brilliant character that it really works.

**TW: Ah yes, keeping the attention of a young audience for a full forty minutes. With just one actor that's quite a challenge. But you seem to manage it with 'Titus'.**

OE: Yes. This play has a lot in it. It has an exciting premise, a complicated family relationship, a love story and a great

joke about a pig. What more can you want? Joe is amazing at knowing how to hold his audience's attention and we've never had a problem.

**TW: How does adapting an existing work compare to writing a play from scratch?**

OE: I won't lie, it's a lot easier adapting than writing an original play. You are using all the tools you would use on your own plays but you are trying to tune into someone else's world rather than creating your own. I love writing both adaptations and originals. They are both part of being a playwright.

**TW: And how did writing a children's piece compare to writing theatre for adults?**

OE: It's the same as far as I'm concerned, I don't treat them differently. Each play I write I think about what would be most interesting for the audience and how I can tell the story as clearly as possible.

**TW: As a Scottish playwright, is it important to have work performed at the Edinburgh Fringe?**

OE: Absolutely. Scotland is my home and I think we have a brilliant contemporary theatre scene. I make work for Scottish audiences but want my plays to be seen by as many people as possible. The Made In Scotland showcase has been a great way of bringing Scottish work to an international audience.

Read more at [www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013OE](http://www.ThreeWeeks.co.uk/2013OE)

'Titus' plays at Summerhall until 25 Aug (not 16, 19) at 12.10pm.

LINKS: [www.macrobobert.org](http://www.macrobobert.org)

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### TW INTERVIEW

**The Adventure (Bad Physics / Mercury Colchester / Escalator East to Edinburgh / Richard Jordan)**

What is heartening about this show is how little Bad Physics have felt the need to play down to children: the building looks like a disused office and the plot isn't all that far from a traditional crime thriller. The actors, as well, are competent in both their performance and management of the audience, and it all adds up to a great interactive play; one that's only really suited to small audiences though, as with just twenty spectators it was hard to keep up the sense of urgency and excitement as it could take five minutes just to all get through a door way. However, this is a great show for introducing children to interactive theatre, a genuine slice of adventure to add to their Fringe experience.

Pleasance Courtyard, until 25 Aug (not 5, 12, 19), 11.00am, 2.00pm, 5.00pm.

tw rating 4/5 | [Lizzie Milton]

**Lissa and Neenee's Riverside Adventure (Lissa (Melissa Western) and NeeNee (Antony Dyer))**

Colourful and energetic musical duo Melissa Western and Antony Dyer's new show isn't exactly a riverside adventure so much as an excuse to sing a few original songs and covers on the theme of the river. However, the songs are catchy, and the couple are accomplished performers, easily warming the audience into their routine. Unfortunately, even at the more manageable length of forty minutes, there doesn't seem quite enough interaction to keep the youngest audience members entertained as they would often lose focus when it was just the two performers on stage. When there was audience interaction it was well done, though: Melissa has a particular way with the younger children, and Antony built a great rapport with some of the parents.

Paradise at the Kirkhouse, until 26 Aug, 10.00am.

tw rating 3/5 | [Lizzie Milton]

**Captain Flinn And The Pirate Dinosaurs (Les Petits Theatre Company, Greenwich Theatre and Underbelly productions)**

Captain Flinn and his friends find themselves flung into a magical adventure on the high seas, fighting pirate dinosaurs and reclaiming lost ships. This show has all the right ingredients to entertain a child (or a whole theatre-full, as was the case); fast-paced and exciting action, humour, singing and dancing, and intense overacting. Oh, and a huge talking dinosaur. The children responded well to the 'pantomime' aspects of the show; calling out when prompted and trying to warn Flinn and his friends of the dinosaurs lurking behind them, and at times the room was full of excited laughter. The enthusiasm of the performers was infectious, and it seemed to engage the children the whole way through.

Underbelly Bristo Square, until 26 Aug (not 12), 3.00pm.

tw rating 5/5 | [Jessica Cropper]

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# 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!

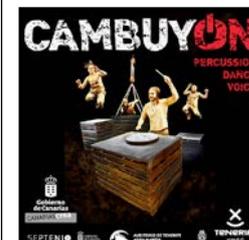
Acoustic Music Centre at St Bride's | fpp 198



## 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 songs 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



## 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 | fpp 290

## STAND OUT FROM THE CROWDS

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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: ON TIME 58** 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 Chain Letter** 16.00  
 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

