



LA Theatre Review



Presents

The HollywoodFRINGE Daily Rag

Day Six

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***Bonnie In Brighton* at Theatre Asylum (Lab)**

by Sylvia Blush ~

Under the guiding hand of an astute director, Erin Parks, pulls off a performance of sheer brilliance. Unassuming, charismatic, and intuitively magnetic, Parks who plays Bonnie immediately grabs a hold of our hearts as she carefully unfolds *Bonnie in Brighton*, a one woman show about “drinking every drop of life”.

Deliberately simple, this show pulls out all the stops in good old-fashioned storytelling. Guy Picot (writer/director), has eloquently captured the essence of a coming of age story without making it melodramatic or exotic. Injecting poetry to gently push the action forward, Picot, writes a relatable tale with plausible events. Each new verse serves as the soundtrack for each transition of Bonnie’s growth.

Bonnie in Brighton is about a young woman on a year long adventure in Europe which turns into unconventional life lessons. There aren’t big flashy costumes or sets, and the sound primarily comes from Parks, yet the overwhelming feeling of having witnessed a grand event washes over you as you walk out of the theatre.

Bonnie In Brighton remaining shows: oops, you missed it and I was one of the lucky few who caught the closing performance.

***Deadly Sin Bingo* at the Second City Studio Theatre**

by Marcus Kaye~

With no plot to speak of, audience participation, games and prizes, and a finale sing-a-long, *Deadly Sin Bingo* can hardly be considered the theatrical experience that it’s touting itself to be- but that doesn’t make it any less fun.

Led by Jon Marco as the enthusiastic game-show host, Father Chuck Martini, the *Deadly Sin Bingo* show is divided into three bingo games, each based on different deadly sins. Winning audience members are awarded prizes that reflect the contrasting heavenly virtue.

The show doesn’t branch out further than themed bingo, but

Marco’s on-the-fly improv, and the supporting commentary provided by Jenni Lamb and Lisa Merkin as Sister Cherisse and Sister Roberta, respectively, moves the show along, providing a bevy of laughs along the way.

The show is ludicrous without ever being blasphemous, but it often opts for silliness over substance. Any real commentary about the nature of sin is avoided and while this might not be the proper place for righteousness, it is the proper place for entertainment. It might not have heart- but it’s got prizes.

Deadly Sin Bingo plays June 17, 19 and 21 at 10pm and June 20 at 2pm at The Second City Studio Theatre and June 26 at 1PM at ComedySportz LA.

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***My Penis - In and Out of Trouble* at Theatre Asylum**

by K. Primeau~

Antonio Sacre used storytelling to work his way off the stripper's pole and into the assembly halls of hundreds of schools across America. No joke. With a hit tale about a barking mouse, the articulate performer made a suitable living before deciding to create an adult story for adult fringe audiences. The resulting romp through milestones in his penis' personal history recalls his first wet dream, coming too quickly in a soon-to-be supermodel dream girl, and the time his sexual hunger and hubris almost got him killed. This was the show which brought him recognition, laughs, and a tiny bit of controversy, and he steps out of the set and addresses the audience to tell us so.

To this reviewer's disappointment, however, for Hollywood Fringe he's evolved the plot to include material about a mediated tiff with master of morality Bill O'Reilly. Leaving his frank and funny penis chronicles behind, Sacre recalls being taken out of context during a controversial lecture at a Coloradan high school and sets the story straight, reading the piece that finally got him blacklisted on the adolescent lecture circuit. While it is heartfelt and honest, his disbelieving jab at Fox's censorship reads more inspirational speaker than personally incredulous, and sideswipes the tone and momentum from the first half of the show. Ultimately, Sacre

proves that sex is a sensitive subject matter- at home, school, on TV, and yes, even in the theatre- but that won't stop him from talking about it.

June 24 @ 2:30 PM, 25 @ 5:30 PM, and 27th @ 8:30 PM

***T-O-T-A-L-L-Y* at Theatre of NOTE**

by Ashley Steed~

As soon as the lights go up Kimleigh Smith will have you charmed. She juts out with exuberance as the 17-year-old virgin cheerleader who is totally ready to celebrate the college football team's victory. Rather than ignore the late-seaters, she uses them to her benefit, exciting laughter from everyone. She tells us she's a super hero, and without a doubt she is. After college she has issues with paralysis and decides to go to a therapist or "the-rapist," which, ironically, is exactly the reason why she needs therapy. After being raped she goes through complete repression and becomes a "doer."

Never a victim, ashamed or self-loathing Smith shares her life with honesty, enthusiasm and humor. She claims back her sexuality by taking on a "lovah" in perhaps one of the funniest seduction scenes ever.

Although the script itself is lacking, it is impossible not to totally C-H-E-E-R her on. Director Paula Killen has clearly shaped and encouraged Smith's natural performing style, letting her personality shine. Smith is a larger-than-life performer, always in full control of the stage. She will have you laughing, smiling and laughing some more.

T-O-T-A-L-L-Y play June 25 at 8:30 PM and June 26, 27 at 4:15 PM at Theatre of NOTE

***Rehab the Musical* at the Paul G. Gleason Theatre**

by Rachel Stoll ~

Musicals are not my thing, and unfortunately *Rehab! The Musical* did not change my opinion. The songs and performers were hit or miss, the staging and scene transitions were awkward, and the entire thing never really seemed to come together. Maybe it was the space itself that made this production so awkward, with cast members walking by the audience constantly. It could have also been that the songs were a mix of good, bad, and/or contrived. Perhaps it was that the most redeeming quality of this show was "Hot Nurse #2." Still, the production seems rough and some of the choices were off, such as buying elaborate

costumes but using plastic storage boxes for seats on stage. *Rehab! The Musical* has a lot of potential, but that potential was not realized in this production.

Theatre of NOTE - June 19, 25 at 12:30 AM ?June 22 at 10:00 PM

Paul G. Gleason Theatre - June 20 at 9:00 PM ?June 21 at 9:30 PM ?June 24 at 10:30 PM ?June 27 at 10:00 PM

***Mission of Flowers* at Theatre Asylum**

by K. Primeau~

After a crash-landing April 13, 1933, in middle of the Sahara Desert, pioneer aviator Bill Lancaster (played by aviation great Sir Charles Kingford-Smith's grand-nephew, Leof) rations his canteen into seven pints- one per day as he awaits rescue amidst the searing heat and freezing nights. He slowly drinks his way through them, sharing last thoughts from his pilot's logbook-turned-diary, about love and loss, ego and adventure. Between desperate gulps we learn of his ex-wife Kiki, whom he left to adventure with the "love of his life" Chubbie Miller, all of the aviation records he attempted (and failed) to break, his dreams of rising above the anonymous thousands and achieving fame and fortune in the Golden Age of Aviation, and a suicide (or was it murder?) that distanced his love forever. A rather romantic look at an egotistic, achievement-obsessed philanderer, we can't help but agree when Lancaster, perched in the shade beneath the wing of his fallen plane, admits he got his due dying of thirst. Based on a true story, Kingsford-Smith managers to play Lancaster with charm, if not grace, amidst Allan Walpole's clever set design, a repetitively tinkling piano soundtrack, and brash lighting changes.

Mission of Flowers plays June 23 @ 8:30 PM, 24 @ 4 PM, 25 and 26th @ 7 PM, and 27th @ 1 PM

State of Theatre in LA: Critic's Panel Discussion

LATR invites you to join us for a FREE closing day panel discussion with fellow critics from the LA Theatre scene. Panel begins at 1pm at Fringe Central on June 27th. More info forthcoming - hope to see you there!