

## **Dale Beaner and The Turtle Boy**

Written & performed by Devon Hyland & Connor Thompson

From the rapid-fire banter of the baseball commentators, to the charming title characters and their radically different controlling fathers, Dale Beaner and The Turtle Boy is the funniest, most emotionally charged baseball game you will never see. Tightly-written, yet with a little room for improvisation to keep it fresh and energized, Devon Hyland & Connor Thompson play off each other like jazz musicians riffing on old standards. Each taking a small handful of characters apiece and almost no props, their delivery is well-paced and note-perfect, with a surprising amount of action for a show that is basically two guys talking. Catch it!

## **Crossover**

Most Fringe shows rely on sharp writing or clever turns of phrase, but sometimes it's nice to give language a rest for a while and Prairie Sky Productions' crossover is the perfect opportunity. Crossover is made up of 4 solos and 1 duet ranging from the lyrical and meditative to the powerful to the mischievous, all interspersed with playful dance "sorbets" to cleanse the palate for the next piece. You will rarely get the opportunity to see dance of this calibre in a venue this intimate.

## **The Honeymoon Period is Officially Over**

We all go through a phase in a relationship when the Honeymoon ends. Gemma takes us into her world of the honeymoon ending. However, we see it through many different eyes. Gemma plays 20 characters, including a hamster. Through fantastic light changes and different voices and characterizations, we see how, when the spark of a relationship starts to fade out, it affects everyone and everything around you. Gemma is brilliant; this is one show you must go see.

## **Phone Whore**

Well, hello, I recognize your voice... umm, where was I? Cameryn takes us behind the scenes of a phone sex operator. If one has a perception as to what the person who answers the call is doing, this might not be what you expect. She takes us on a journey through her own reasons for answering the calls and will make you think twice about your own fantasies. After all, a fantasy never hurt anyone! Plus, she does tell a good fantasy... Cameryn, you had me at "Hello".

## **Actionable**

Bob Wiseman's show is one of the best I have seen in years. His use of multi media and live music is incredibly entertaining. His story telling ability will keep you entertained and the journey his life has taken will amaze you. If you like Blue Rodeo, imagine how much better they would have been with an amazing entertainer in the band. His fascinating life will astound you. Go see this one. I am not joking!

### **Sexual Perversity in Chicago**

Ahh, who doesn't want to hear every taboo word out there. Recent graduates from MRU have taken us on the Mamet journey in small cozy space. The pace is fast and set changes are incredibly well done. Perfectly cast, the performance did not let one down. Mamet is designed to shock offend. And the cast brings it across very well. Just go see this show.

### **The Human Body Project**

Being naked and vulnerable is an experience. I think everyone has the "I walked into the room naked" dream at some point in their life. So, here it is live. The problem is, as an audience member, suddenly you feel vulnerable, too. This is more of a therapy session with the audience discussing how they feel, society, and anything else that is on your mind. It was an interesting approach to teaching a lesson.

### **NONSENSE (Artpoint)**

Yes indeed. If you like bad skits about dated material, shallow audience abuse, self depreciating comments about how bad the show is then this is the show for you. There was no director indicated, which this show desperately needed to provide some levels to the delivery and to tell Tom, "sorry, that just is not funny". Great energy from both the actors but unfortunately the material does not give them much to work with and constantly fessing up the badness of the material does not a show make.

### **PAINTING A GORILLA (Lantern BSMT)**

A lovely one woman show set in a bus depot, a circus, a roof top and an art class skillfully done by Straightup Productions. The story has some nice twists and the characters are interesting and well conceived. The direction is crisp and the lighting is effective for denoting the different locations. The description in the Fringe Guide gives very little indication of the story within the play but it is a recommended production to see.

### **THIRD TIME LUCKY (Cantina)**

What can you say, Paul Hutcheson is at it again with his wonderful tales of growing up and growing up gay. Words, expressions (facial, vocal and bodily) come at you a mile a minute and doesn't let up. All kinds of tall tails delightfully presented and hysterically funny presenting a show that is far too much fun. Highly recommended (especially for Teachers).

### **THE GOODTIMES (Cantina)**

There is a certain amount of “oh my God what am I watching” in this show but you cannot fault The Goodtimes fun and enthusiasm for their musical ditties and raunchy humour. I struggled with finding a comfortable spot between “Is this a Parody of a genre or do these guys really believe in what they are doing”. Recommended though for some silly, silly fun. Watch out for the song worms that will develop in your head.

### **Don't Make Fun of Jesus**

Sherri D. Sutton presents a show that is a hybrid of stand-up comedy and a conventional autobiographical one-woman show. Sherri milks growing up gay in a highly repressed Southern Baptist family and ending up in a cult for a steady stream of laughs and a few moments of genuine poignancy. She finds a good balance of jokes, self-mockery and emotional vulnerability that makes for an entertaining hour.

### **Glengarry Glen Beck**

Comedy troupe Obscene But Not Heard returns to the Fringe with a new collection of sketches. They get great laughs out of everything from the Calgary Sun to Glen Beck's paranoid rantings to Christopher Walken to speed dating, even managing a quick jab at Windows 7's ad campaign. The transitions from sketch to sketch are typically instant, keeping things moving at a good pace. It's a fast and funny hour that has better flow and is more consistently funny than their previous (and make no mistake, still hilarious) show, Jihad Me at Hello.

### **Dr. Horrible**

How does one make a low-budget stage version of Internet hit Dr. Horrible's Sing-a-Long Blog? It's hard not to lose something in the transition from screen to stage, but this production does a decent job of it. The cast make the show their own rather than try to impersonate Neil Patrick Harris and company, meaning that Dr. Horrible fans get a fresh take on the material that makes it worth seeing. Newcomers might be confused by a few things, particularly the changes between locations. With no clear signs as to whether the scene is in Dr. Horrible's lair or a Laundromat or elsewhere, following the action might prove tricky. The cast is solid and makes good and creative use of their small chorus, although at times the volume of the backing music made the singers hard to hear.

### **The Last Goddamned Performance Piece**

In five words: Do not miss this one.

Long version: “Coarse theatre,” in which comedy comes from the show appearing to go bad in as many ways as possible, can be tricky, but this show makes it look easy. After 9 out of 11 cast members quit at the last the final two members of the UMI Performance Collective attempt to deliver one last show. The Last Goddamned Performance Piece

works as comedy, works as a parody of performance art, works in a few scenes as religious satire, and above all works as a surprisingly deep and touching story of love, loss and regret. The two leads are equally skilled at dance (you have to be good to make bad dance pieces that funny), comedy and pulling on your heart strings. It's hilarious, it's heartbreaking, I cannot recommend this show enough.

### **The Misadventurous Perils of Pauline**

A children's show done in the style of an old-time radio serial. Will young children recognize the format? Maybe, maybe not, but if they don't it won't hurt their appreciation of the show. The silly characters, puppets and advertising songs will be just as entertaining. The cast turn in highly energetic performances, shifting easily between characters. However, while the radio serial format is supposed to be based around rapid action (the characters in radio serials had to accomplish a lot in each instalment), the pacing of the show felt surprisingly lethargic. Kids should be entertained, but their parents might find it slow and unengaging at times.

### **MARCH**

MARCH is about watching four damaged people bang into each other while trying (usually unsuccessfully) not to damage each other further. Cornelia spends her free time either at the historical bookstore of fallen professor Nicole White or dating Nicole's somewhat smug estranged son. When Anderson, a history scholar with an unexplained interest in Nicole, comes to work at the store, Cornelia is obsessed with figuring out why before he disturbs her balance too much. MARCH doesn't have much of a story; in fact it ends right when every character's arc seems to be just revving up. Instead, it's about watching the characters bounce off each other, and the characters are well done enough and the performers skilled enough to make it worthwhile. Just watching Anderson and Cornelia straddle the line between fighting and flirting is worth checking out, even with the weak ending.

### **Dale Beaner and the Turtle Boy**

Two public figures with two fathers who were damaging in polar opposite ways meet at an all-star baseball game: former child star Dale Beaner, whose father has been using him as a cash cow with no concern for his feelings or wants, and the Turtle Boy, whose father's psychotic over-protectiveness began with surgically attaching a turtle shell to his infant son and somehow managed to get worse. Two actors take on both father-son pairs and the game announcers, and manage to be equally funny no matter which story is happening. A partially improvised show that was consistently funny (even when the fourth wall started cracking in the final minutes) with a few moments of genuine catharsis amongst a the laughs.

### **The Peter n' Chris Show! with Peter n' Chris!!**

What if the Muppet Babies got kicked out of the nursery and had to get jobs? What if Bosom Buddies was an action movie/musical? What if Cop Rock had been intentionally funny? Throw those possibilities in a blender and hit frappe and you have something that tastes almost as good as The Peter n' Chris Show! With great comedic chemistry and surprisingly sharp choreography, Peter and Chris try to balance the necessities of food and shelter with the joy of escapism and power ballads. Not to be missed!

### **Pick Your Food up off the Floor and Eat it!**

Jason Seelman challenges himself to create a realistic one-man show of a murderer's reason for killing a tycoon's son and then turning himself in a week later. The stage is a blank white room, the audience the review board, and Seelman is prisoner 3781314 giving his story from a single chair. The telling is rough but matter-of-fact, at times emotional but not melodramatic. The stark setting and minimal light effects bring all attention to the prisoner's voice and few gestures, making the story the full focus and leaving the audience to decide whether or not his actions were justified.

### **SEEKING...**

Written by Chris Caswell, Marianne DiMascio and Geeda Searfoorce  
Directed by Kim Jordan

Two close friends skirting the edge of becoming more than friends, two sisters trying to find the right guy, and a married couple trying to add spice to their sex life. Chris Caswell, Zach Council and Celine Filion play them all with aplomb, crossing genders and interweaving plotlines with ease as they navigate through blind dates, speed dating, and the cryptic acronyms of personal ads. Bring a friend and get coffee with them after.

### **Antoine Feval**

Written & Performed by Chris Gibbs

I could try to dissuade you from seeing Antoine Feval, claiming that Chris Gibbs is as incompetent and ordinary as Barnaby Gibbs, the Victorian-era narrator he plays. Strangely enough, he would probably agree with me and still manage to turn it around with the Olympic-level self-effacing charm he brings to all of his performances, and Feval is arguably one of his best. Unfortunately, many people on the Fringe circuit already know this and word of mouth

is faster than the internet, so if you're reading this it may already be sold out. You owe it to yourself to make sure.

### **Gnomeward Bound**

Prepare yourself for Gitte (Kit), a super-active grade-sevener whose world-view has been informed as much by her grandfather's undiluted Danish folk tales as by Google and quantum theory. Ingrid Hansen's portrayal of Gitte can be intense but never becomes too frenetic as she describes her life using puppetry (with found objects and food), original songs, dream interpretations and a little help from the audience. Like the fables, the stories can be dark, but Gitte will help you get over those fears and maybe whisper to your inner kinder.