Rank that Year	Review	Venue	Year	Date Seen that Year
1	The Nature of Forgetting (*****) On his 55th birthday, we see what is going on inside the mind of a fellow with dementia. The rapid, precise, complex choreography of the four cancers created an amazing live dreamscape. The first scene with him unable to find the proper black suit with a red tie in its pocket because search missed the red tie was a perfect introduction for the rest of the play.	Grand at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	18
2	Ordinary Decent Criminal (*****) Mark Thomas plays all of the parts in a story of a former political protester who finds himself in a model prison for importing marijuana, and must navigate its powerful men. Whether playing a Belfast IRA convict, or the little kingpin of the prison, he imbues each with unique characteristics that obviates the need for him to use costume changes to indicate which character he is inhabiting. Many of his characters have a vitality that makes their interactions tense and riveting for us.	TechCube 0 at Summerhall	2025	1
3	Red Like Fruit (*****) A journalist/playwright sits mostly silently in a chair while a man reads aloud her script about her sexual encounters. The range and ambiguity of her encounters creates the shades of gray of her reality that are vexing for the journalist who needs some right or wrong answers. The use of a male reader makes it easier for the script to remain more dispassionate than if a woman added her voice to it.	Traverse 2 at Traverse Theatre	2025	-31

4	RIFT (*****) Four years after his brother's sentencing, a grad student of English finally visits the murderer in prison. I was rivetted throughout the play as it explored prison life, racism, sexual abuse, and family dynamics. As the play proceeds, the turbulence of their relationship facilitates a range of perspectives of the issues.	Traverse 2 at Traverse Theatre	2025	-31
5	Casablanca: The Gin Joint Cut (*****) This homage is a remarkable mix of reverent recital and play-within-a-play antics. I've seen Casablanca countless times, and I was amazed how the cast of three would play every touching scene straight, but then add every sort of high jinx to the other scenes. I should warn the uninitiated that many of their funny touches, such as air freshener sprayed all over the set to simulate fog in the airport scene, will make little sense to you. Note: I saw this play in 2011 with the same Bogart actor, and thought it the best play that year, and feel uneasy about not rating this #2 this year.	Auditorium at Ghillie Dhu	2025	2
6	1984 (*****) A cast of three, using life-size puppets at times, produce a thorough recreation of Orwell's dystopian book. Winston Smith, Julia, and various supporting characters are here to suffer the history twisting ever watched world from love to torture. I was truly amazed how they crammed all of the atmosphere and events into 70 minutes without it feeling rushed.	Above at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	22
7	Personal Statement (*****) A huge cast of high schools students attend training program where each offers at least two different college personal statements before the instructor accepts the last one. Both the script and the actors were exceptional with only a few weak voices and offkey statements. This brought tears to my eyes on several occasions, and is the best high school production I have ever seen.	Auditorium at Central Hall	2025	6

8	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu 2) (*****) This great set of five sketches were about: a man's plan to propose on a Ferris wheel; as a volunteer, an actor offers to apply his craft to a food bank line; a mundane package delivery initiates mayhem; the last wishes of their close friend reveal the latent differences among three longtime girlfriends; and a climate changing denying American TV news duo contends with an English weatherman who is a scientist. Each of the five evolves in a funny but reasonable fashion. There were all humorous through and through.	Pleasance One at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	3
9	Locusts (*****) A gay man must deal with a his former pastor who had tried to convert his sexuality. This four-hander delicately deals with this topic in a way that allows each character a chance to express their motivation and emotional states without being preachy. The Christian protagonist does a great job of being tender, and conflicted.	Studio at theSpaceTriplex	2025	5
10	Do You Accept These Charges? (*****) A woman describes her real relationship with a convict while he is in and out of prison. Her acting skills combined with a screen showing photos from her life and copies of their texts creates a powerful show. Whether trying to sneak marijuana into prison, or having phone sex, her recreations are sincere and heartbreaking.	Below at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	14

11	World's Greatest Lover -- The New Musical (*****) Five famous lovers from history set about saving love by learning from their mistakes. The lyrics are good, the music and singing great, and the choreography top notch from this professional company. Normally I don't like audience participation, but when they chose a woman to come on stage and be serenaded by them it suited the romantic theme of the show.	Pleasance One at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	21
12	Bill Bailey: Thoughtifier (*****) Bailey covers a lot of ground in the two hour show by combining stand-up with playing an amazing range of musical instruments. The topics of his stand-up routines ranged from pallbearer in Indonesia to nuclear science. He was accompanied by drums, bass, and violin as e played instruments ranging from Turkish lute to piano to musical rubber bouncing balls to laser beams to the audience itself.	Edinburgh Playhouse - Auditorium	2025	23
13	We'll Get Back to You (*****) When a free spirited woman attends a job interview, it takes an odd turn. Her approach to life has a different, but positive impact on each person she meets. Every scene is heartwarming, well written,and well acted with only a meeting with a salesman missing a connection in her reasoning.	Sanctuary at Paradise in Augustines	2025	9
14	Flush (*****) We watch five women play 14 roles as they recreate the events in a bathroom of a night club where a hen party, office party, and three high school girls are drinking. With three different groups interacting there was plenty of room for interesting conversations. While all of the intra-group conversations worked, it was the high school girls dealing with their elders that provided an opportunity for unique topics.	Upstairs at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	14

15	Mark Thomas: WD40 (*****) Thomas combines quips with tales of his rough grandmother, and tirades against the government and right wing politicians. I suppose I think he is great because I agree with his politics and love his passion. His over-the-top zeal carries us over some of his more unrealistic suggestions with its hilarity.	Stand 1 at The Stand Comedy Club	2025	16
16	Mariupol (*****) An Ukrainian merchant seaman and a Muscovite college student meet at a wedding in Mariupol, Ukraine in 1992, and have their lives cross until 2022. There is not a false note anywhere as their relationship changes with each meeting, though some of the scene changes were a bit long. The plotting that has them meeting during wartime is a natural confluence from the previous events.	Beneath at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	20
17	Out of the Blue (*****) I traditionally see Out of the Blue on the last day of the Fringe because they never disappoint me with their great singing and exuberant choreography. This version fulfilled my expectations. This year they again had some newer songs that I hadn't heard before, but they were still fun, and seemed well justified by the age of the performers.	Gordon Aikman Theatre at Assembly George Square	2025	25
18	Bairns (*****) We hear of the pregnancy of a young woman who has reluctantly agreed to be a surrogate for sister. She describes her indecision and the whole process from the implant to birth with honesty and humor. Her ambivalence adds the sincere emotional elements that trans forms this from stand-up comedy to a thoughtful play.	Bunker Three at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	23
19	Strangewife (*****) A desperate actor is hired by a woman to spend the evening with her. The complex interplay between her perfectionist requests and his struggle to please her is engrossing. The last act works perfectly.	Front Room at Assembly Rooms	2025	14

20	Body Count (*****) This solo show has a woman become a vigilante who attacks men when she hears of how they abused her friends. Her righteous anger is difficult for her to control as we silently cheer her on. As the play continues it becomes darker, but her perfect characterizations of the offending men kept us on her side. The final, somewhat fantastic, part of the plot veers into an alternative world that some would wish for, and would disgust others.	Coorie at Gilded Balloon Patter House	2025	25
21	A Gambler's Guide to Dying (*****) A young man recounts his grandfather's gambling philosophy, and how it influenced their close friendship. He described how to prolong a dream, and allowing a bet to energize a cancer ridden walk to death. The tale of his Scottish grandfather's mob beating in a bar after betting on England revealed a realist who was willing to accept both the winning and losing in life. Note: I saw this in 2015, and gave it 5 stars, but my poor hearing now meant that I missed much because of his brogue and would have given it 4 stars.	Traverse 2 at Traverse Theatre	2025	-31
22	Chokeslam (****) A young woman tells how she came to love pro-wrestling, then vividly describes famous bouts. She and her friends hold parties to watch wrestling, her wedding had a wrestling theme with a ring announcer, but the story of her divorce from the man who turned her on to wrestling shows another side of her. I saw this last year, and now realize what a great job of acting this is with her infectious enthusiasm, pain of an unsatisfying marriage, and surprising confession.	Daisy at Underbelly; Bristo Square	2025	10

23	Giselle: Remix (****) This queer interpretation of the classic French ballet has lip syncing drag queen as the protagonist with four supporting dancers. The dancing is usually fast and sensual accompanied by loud rave music. Similar to the ballet, one scene has the ensemble frantically dance until Giselle must drop from exhaustion.	Forth at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	17
24	Refuse (****) In Ukraine just before the Russians invade, an affable garbage collector helps his wife and a beautiful woman on his route. The show offers a window into normal life in Ukraine, and then instances of how they react on the first day of the invasion. I thought a scene where he appreciates the offer of a shower demonstrated the purity of spirit of the individuals involved.	Studio Five at Assembly George Square Studios	2025	16
25	I Wish My Life Were Like a Musical (****) Four singer/dancers take us from auditioning through moving up the ranks to star in musicals. This clever show has solo and/or group songs about some less obvious aspects such as understudies, dealing with divas, and the physical and mental strain of dance numbers. The show had everything you could ask for: good voices, lyrics, music, and plot.	Auditorium at the Museum	2025	23
26	#Hysteria: A (History of Human Sexuality with Callaghans Questions (****) A Victorian woman/man expounds on the approaches that various civilizations have taken to sex with particular attention to Victorian values regarding women's sexuality. The energetic performer/writer combines props and frequent screenshots of historic documents to create a vibrant, satirical lecture that alternates between myths of the past and real facts. The show is delightful with just the right amount of audience participation.	Ruby at Gilded Balloon at Appleton Tower	2025	-30

27	Down to Chance (****) Based on a true story, a radio journalist steps in, and assumes an important part in aftermath of the 9.2 earthquake in Anchorage, Alaska. The breadth of the scenes is heartwarming as we see how many groups steeped up in the crisis. Her argument for withholding some information has us on appropriately on edge.	Beside at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	24
28	Out of My Head -- Alan Watts is Alive and Well... Dead (****) An actor bounces between being himself, and portraying the 1970s Zen guru talking about life and philosophy. We even had a chance to put questions to "Watts". As someone who listened to Watts each Sunday in my late teens, I found his answers to our questions remarkably in tune with that of Watts himself.	Upstairs at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	25
29	Same (****) Two young best friends, one with a single mother, and the other with a golden boy for a brother, don't share their troubles with each other. The story deftly shows how two such men would end up hiding the depth of their issues whether due to timing or shame. The plot smartly provides clues to the other's problem that troubled person denies in some way.	Olive Studio at Greenside @ George Street	2025	16
30	One Man Poe: The Tell-Tale Heart and The Pit and the Pendulum (****) The actor conveys all the macabre atmosphere of both stories as he portrays their protagonists telling their tales. Whether bragging murderer or terrified prisoner, Poe has us tense throughout each story as we relive their dark lives. With nary a prop, the actor transports us with his nuanced storytelling.	Willow Studio at Greenside @ Riddles Court	2025	22

31	The Lolita Apologies (****) An actress notes that adaptations of Nabokov's "Lolita" ignore that Humbert Humbert is an unreliable narrator, and treat Lolita (nee Dolores) as a seducer rather than the victim of child sexual abuse. As the actress seeks apologies from an actor who is portraying men who were involved with the adaptations his responses are varied and spot on. I was particularly pleased with the accuracy of the portrayal of the feisty New Yorker Stanley Kubrick who, like Trump, would never give an inch.	Muse at Braw Venues @ Hill Street	2025	14
32	Trouble; Struggle; Bubble and Squeak (****) An activist/writer tells of the true story of how she joined a Civil War battle re-enactment group, and then tried to help a town re-claim a plot of land for allotment gardens. The interplay between her two roles makes for an entertaining and uplifting story. Her description of the embattled amateur soldiers facing a defiant crowd is priceless.	Above at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	16
33	Matt Forde: Defying Calamity (****) The comedian/political commentators lampoons various current political leaders and parties with wit and great impressions. While I didn't know all the British political leaders at the beginning, by the end I felt I had a pretty good understanding of Keir Starmer and why he deserves Forde's ridicule. I certainly laughed whenever Forde addressed Trump's antics, but I was most impressed by how Forde was able to find so much humor in his own erectile dysfunction and cancer.	Beyond at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	21

34	Smile: The Story of Charlie Chaplin (****) A mime recreates Charlie Chaplin in parts of the1925 film "The Gold Rush", and then enlists audience members in portraying Chaplin's life in silence. He has Chaplin's physicality down pat, and covers all of the big events of Chaplin's life. My pet peeve is that using audience members takes time away from the story and is easily avoidable in this instance in all but the case of a Keystone Kop chase and battering.	Below at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	21
35	Dial 1 for UK (****) An illegal Indian immigrant finds that life in the UK is not what he dreamed, partly because gangsters asked exorbitant fees for illegal student visas and then took away his passport so the could abuse him. The actor/playwright makes good use of the 8' x 8' stage to provide a compelling story using photographs and his trusty I-phone, Selena. The plot twists nicely as the happy go lucky former customer service operator becomes desperate and uses his skills from India to get by.	Pickle Studio at Greenside @ Riddles Court	2025	2
36	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu 1) (****) These premises of these five sketches are: a status concious couple are burglarized; two nearby people having different phones conversations sound like they could be conversing with each other; at the FA CUP at Wembly, a head coach suddenly has doubts; when a woman is summoned to A&E she discovers that she is still the emergency contact for her former lover; after a murder, the leader of an improv troupe is grilled by two cops. We enjoyed all but the twin phone call sketch because we couldn't hear the woman. The denouement of the burglary is particularly clever and funny.	Pleasance One at Pleasance Courtyard (Menu 1)	2025	5

37	One Man Poe: The Black Cat and The Raven (****) Without histrionics that others might read Poe, the actor delivers the two stories with all the underlying terror they can engender. The slower, subdued cadence of this performance adds the appropriate dread to the whole show. When he tackles the second story, his makeup adds subtle, dark, references from “The Black Cat”.	Willow Studio at Greenside @ Riddles Court	2025	9
38	King Lear (****) Pip Utton edits the lines from all characters of King Lear, and added a few Shakespearean lines of his own so that his King Lear could perform the play alone. His work as a playwright is true to the spirit and text of the play while making it more accessible. His work as an actor gives us a Lear who is, in turns, naïve, aggrieved, crazy, and grief stricken in this wonderful interpretation.	Baby Grand at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	23
39	The Essence of Audrey (****) An actress portrays Audrey speaking with her delicate, precise diction of the events of her whole life. Despite the small stage, she frequently moved to provide a sense of smooth flow the suits the former aspiring ballerina’s life. Nonetheless, we learned that the physical and emotional trauma in the Netherlands during the Nazi occupation as well as her strict mother imbued her with a physical and emotional fragility that was evident in many of her roles.	Cellar at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	23
40	Wodehouse in Wonderland (****) Set in his 1950s Long Island house, P.G Wodehouse tells of answering the questions of his biographer. We learn of his friends, family, and Jeeves while he occasionally provides snippets of some of the memorable Broadway songs for which he wrote the lyrics. He spent a lot of time defending his four notorious appearances on Nazi radio in the USA and UK while he was imprisoned in France.	Studio Three at Assembly George Square Studios	2025	-30

41	Hold the Line (****) We watch a day of calls for a fellow who mans the NHS non-emergency phone line. The range of calls was well selected to reflect the pressure and occasional impotence for situations that range from minor to deadly serious. The key call that overarches the whole show works well to highlight the difficult position such workers are in.	Bunker Two at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	24
42	3 Chickens Confront Existence (****) This bit of existential fluff has three actors in chicken suits in three cages in a broiler house who spend their days chatting while watching other chickens being taken away to their deaths. The script does a good job of mining their predicament for many different topics, including trying to predict when their row will be called, and writing a creation story for chickens. A wonderful sequence occurs when a blue feather floats down and lands on the comb of one of the chickens who immediately assumes that it is a sign that he should be the leader of the chickens, and proceeds with all that entails, including sycophants and spies.	Belly Button at Underbelly; Cowgate	2025	1
43	Bury The Hatchet (****) A guitarist, fiddler, and singer provide all the facts and rumors surrounding the murder of Lizzie Borden's parents in 1892. Between scenes, they combined to sing songs of that era. In the end, virtually all of the evidence, and theories point at her guilt.	Queen Dome at Pleasance Dome	2025	13
44	Ego Show (****) A talented singer presents a show about how our egos affect our lives with emphasis on his ego. His approach that alternates between an egotistic self, and a more grounded self allows him to really display his talent at song writing and performing. As a fellow with a degree in psychology, I found that I missed at least a mention of actual Freudian purpose of the ego to mediate between the id and superego.	Thistle Theatre at Greendside @ Riddle Court	2025	9

45	She's Behind You (****) A famous Scottish Pantomine Dame named Dot Trot tells of how his role has evolved over time to modernize and improve pantomime. The audience really got into the pantomime spirit with its call and responses, and had great time. Unhappily, with my poor hearing and lack of context much of the fun was lost on me, but the finale brought tears to my eyes.	Traverse 1 at Traverse Theatre	2025	1
46	Miles (****) This two-hander has Miles Davis talking about his in general, and the making of the 1959 ground breaking “Kind of Blue” jazz album owhile also critiquing the playing of a livetalented trumpeter. The play covers the significant events of Davis’ life as well give us some insight into his thought process when recording that album in just two days with some of the greatest jazz musicians of his day as side men. The accomplished trumpeter, Jay Phelps, is indispensable as he provides snippets from Davis’ development as as the album.	TechCube 0 at Summerhall	2025	5
47	Pretty, Witty Nell (****) Speaking in iambic pentameter, an actress portrays Nell Gwyn, Charles II long time mistress, as scribes her life from orange girl on the floor of the Theatre Royal to mother of a duke and a lord. She does a remarkable job of covering the ups and downs of the whole of the witty woman’s life. I found the competition among the king’s mistresses, and the king’s concern for her welfare a revelation.	Bedlam Theatre	2025	13

48	The Birthday Party: A Theatrical Catastrophe (****) A veteran actor, and fine storyteller, relates his experiences while participating in producing Harold Pinter's "The Birthday Party". This engaging piece gave me a much better understanding of the steps of preparation of a play, and just how they can go terribly wrong. He describes the clashes between the director William Friedkin and the villainous actor Steven Berkoff with wonderful detail.	Theatre 1 at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	6
49	Fuselage (****) With the help of two other actors, a woman who was a college drama student tells of the college lives of her friends, particularly her best friend, who were on the Pan Am 103 flight that exploded over Lockerbie. Though part of the story is about the impact of the bombing on the performer, most is bringing to our attention the lives of those college friends. The recurring snippets of news broadcasts of pertinent events from the previous decade really added to the production.	Above at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	12
50	Nowhere--Here & Now Showcase (****) Using an extensive multimedia presentation, a man of Egyptian descent tells of his family, the Arab Spring particularly in Egypt, and the Gaza war. I found his story touching, and most of the presentation top notch. The show seemed too long, with too much time wasted watching him dance.	Traverse 1 at Traverse Theatre	2025	12
51	Three Can Keep a Secret (****) A mob money man invites two gangsters to a poker game who have other ideas. This show has the audience vote on how the story should proceed at various very critical points, and then obey their decision. It is obvious that the cast is well prepared for the various possible choices, and the whole show proceeds with an interesting well told story.	Space 3 at theSpace on the Mile	2025	6

52	K Mak at the Planetarium (***) A band composed of drums, keyboard, cello, and violin play atmospheric songs while complex computer videos play on a huge wall behind them. The videos varied from kaleidoscopic to microscopic to time lapsed flowers. This is one of the few shows that worked well in the circular Demonstration Room at Summerhall with its strong reverberations.	Demonstration Room at Summerhall	2025	20
53	Managed Approach (****) After Leed's created a Red Light district in its Holbeck district, a mother who lives there becomes very protective of her daughter and neighborhood. Instead of a common expose of the lives of prostitutes, this is a story that digs into a homelife with no direct connection to prostitution. The mother-daughter see saw relationship works well, except that the young mother actress belied her role by wearing the jewelry of twentysomething girl.	Coorie at Gilded Balloon Patter House	2025	9
54	Amazons (***) An indigenous Amazon woman just days ahead of receiving her British citizenship talks about famous indigenous women from the time of the arrival of the European colonizers, and tries tracing her female lineage back a few generations using tales, miniature models, maps, and photos. I was impressed that the natives were so fierce that the colonizers had to resort to importing African slaves to work their farms. Categorizing from a chart the different types of curly hair she, her mother, and grandmother have served to highlight the historical mix of bloods that now is common in the Amazon.	Former Gents Locker Room at Summerhall	2025	25

55	Mrs Roosevelt Flies to London (***) A senior actress plays Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of President Franklin Roosevelt, describing her trip around England in 1942 intermixed with other events of her long life. Her whole life is interesting, but it loses much of its power by dashing back and forth chronologically. I was surprised to learn that she headed the United Nations commission that wrote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights despite the many objections of the Soviets.	Drawing Room at Assembly Rooms	2025	17
56	Once Upon a Bridge (***) Based on a true story, three characters involved in a jogger pushing a pregnant woman out of his way tell of their lives before and after the incident. The individual lives cross for only a moment, and so the tales are separate and more about their lives than the incident. I was surprised that the incident made front page news, and that the final, coincidental plot twist has no basis in reality.	Stephenson Theatre at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	22
57	Consumed (***) When the four generations of women come together for the great grandmother's 90th birthday their grievances come to the fore. While there are surprises galore, and each criticism has merit, the lack of true love and understanding makes it unpalatable. The final revelation just seems too unreal.	Traverse 1 at Traverse Theatre	2025	19
58	Motorhome Marilyn (***) An aging Marilyn Monroe street imitator in Las Vegas auditions for a new show composed of past celebrities lives. As events from her past come back to haunt her ties to Marilyn take a back seat. She is a good performer who warmed to the role as the show continued, but, based on other reviews, I had expected more.	Doonstairs at Gilded Balloon Patter House	2025	25

59	Kirsty Mann -- Corpse (WIP) (***) This solo show had a married couple finally getting to buy a Victorian house she loved, and find that there are many disquieting reminders of the old woman who had lived there for many years. Between the old woman sister's grizzly revelations and the flickering lights there were plenty of hints of ghosts in this well told tale. The doctor's graphic description of the 5-minute time-of-death routine that she had often carried out provided an extra connection to death that pervaded the whole show.	eFormer Gents Locker Room at Summerhall	2025	7
60	An American Love Letter to Edinburgh (***) An American ex-pat combines a story of his own exploration of the UK with that of Benjamin Franklin's. His tale works well as we hear of highlights from both the past and the present. When he lists the men that Franklin met when he came to Edinburgh, and their accomplishments, it easy to see why Edinburgh had earned the title of Athens of the North.	Netherbow Theatre at Scottish Storytelling Centre	2025	18
61	F.U.D.S (***) Three twenty something mates share camaraderie, marijuana, and dissatisfaction with their place in the world. Despite not being able to understand some of their brogue, I found that I understood enough to enjoy the eff and flow of their tale. Originally I was upset at the yelling of one actor, but, in hindsight, I realize that his volatile character would shout his convictions.	Nip at Gilded Balloon Patter House	2025	11

62	Operation Blank (***) When a nuclear bomb destroys Copenhagen, an advisor to the UK prime minister joins a video meeting of the top officials of the country. From the minute we see the young PM propped up on pillows while laying in bed on the call, we expect this to be a wild satire on how a modern government may deal with such an emergency—with evasion and procrastination. For some reason, I just bought into the concept, and joined with the frustrated advisor as he repeatedly rejected the ineffective solutions offered by the cabinet.	leming Theatre at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	7
63	The Beautiful Future Is Coming (***) Three couples from past, present, and future deal with climate change. By intermixing their tales, each story loses much of its impact. Many times we couldn't hear the wife of the present which made her story even weaker.	Traverse 1 at Traverse Theatre	2025	Traverse 1 at Traverse Theatre
64	Thanks for Being Here (***) This unusual show relies on videos of the audience with actors mixed in them to completely demolish the fourth wall. The constantly panning cameras never focus on anyone in particularly so no one seemed embarrassed. It is a unique, albeit a little over long, experience that is well worth visiting.	Main House at ZOO Southside	2025	17
65	Adrienne: An American in Paris (***) Set in the 1920s, a self-described bibliophile from New Jersey finds herself in Paris among the literati of the time. While she ends up living with a man, it is books that are always the focus with sex and love never even mentioned. This lack of passion outside of books puts a limit on the thrill of her experience and the play.	Pickle Studio at Greenside @ Riddles Court	2025	16

66	Dracula's Guest (***) A lawyer is sent by his company to stay with Dracula for two months. The new story maintains its tension throughout, including it ending. The lawyer is perfect, and Dracula is appropriately large and scary, but he doesn't speak loud enough.	CC Bloom's (Free Fringe)	2025	11
67	Air Heart (***) This show has Amelia Earhart talk about her whole life from breaking her younger sister's front teeth on backyard roller coaster that Amelia had built, to her platonic marriage to her beloved manager. Throughout the tale she keeps coming back to her love of flight. I am not sure how they know the verbatim contents of the letters she had with her on her doomed solo Pacific flight.	studio at C ARTS | C venues | C alto	2025	10
68	Tadiwa Mahlunge: Hakuna Ma Tad Tad (***) Mahlunge starts off by describing how his family fled their mansion and servants in Zimbabwe for council housing in Cardiff after death threats from Robert Mugabe, and then relates tales mostly of his family life, with a few notes about racism in the UK. While he has had many funny experiences, his presentation needed work. His ethnic joke about his assimilated sister's choice of New Balance shoes fell flat, and he failed to thoroughly mine the humor of trying to fake that he has a baby to quiet his downstairs neighbor.	The Tron at Monkey Barrel Comedy (The Tron)	2025	-29
69	Liberace -- In His Own Words (***) A fine pianist emulates Librace's style both in flamboyantly playing the piano, and then congenially speaking of Liberace's life. His blending of songs from classical to pop matched that of the entertainer. As a former pianist, I sat in the front row left so I could watch his fingers fly over the keys.	Ballroom at PBH's Free Fringe @ Voodoo Rooms	2025	15

70	Chunky Jewellery (***) Two middle aged women provide an hour of song and dance of pop tunes. One had a great voice, and the other had a good voice and was surprisingly good at dancing. The dance where she slowly throws pieces of chunky jewellery off was a great symbol for finally dealing with her grief.	Music Hall at Assembly Rooms	2025	15
71	Almost Everything (***) A fellow gets a new, attractive housemate. There is a certain predictability to the story, but his bond with a later character seems poorly justified. The final act seemed straight out of a soap opera.	Alba Theatre at Braw Venues @ Hill Street	2025	16
72	In the Land of Eagles (***) A English woman tells of joining with her father in a return to the village in Albania of his birth. Despite her being a good storyteller, and my companions enjoyment, I found that my attention wandered for some reason. Nonetheless, her description of their final destination made want to visit Albania.	Baby Grand at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	18
73	Brits Abroad: Banned (***) A guitarist accompanies three actors who populate sketches veering from Cockney rhythm slang to British airline tourists modifying hell to dancing to disco tunes. As you can imagine, this Yank did not get many of the British references nor the songs, but my English wife loved it, and helped decide its rating. The guitarist did a great job of providing the wide range of music asked of him.	Baby Grand at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	12
74	Death on the Clyde (***) This tale of murder in a remote Scottish hamlet at a time when Christianity still battled river spirits has a wonderful mixture of dance, song, and criminology. Though the accidental dropping of a ring seemed a bit contrived, the investigation still was satisfying. While speaking in a softer, understandable brogue, the whole play did a great job of keeping the other possible anachronisms at bay,.	The Speakeasy at The Speakeasy at The Royal Scots Club	2025	7

75	Ghost Light (***) A new wardrobe assistant in a very old theatre finds that she sometimes can interact with the ghosts of long dead performers. This strange combination of production dance numbers from popular plays, and a story of murder would work well but for the fact that we often could not understand the lines. The production of “One (Singular Sensation)” from “A Chorus Line” was great.	Pleasance One at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	3
76	Lost Paws (***) Two cats escape from their owners and explore London while their two owners search for them. The interactions between the cats with each other and their owners are cute, and the slowly developing romances are heartwarming. This is just a good, solid, fun Fringe play that doesn’t ask too much of the audience.	Haldane Theatre at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	20
77	People We Bury Alive (***) This solo show explores two aspects of social isolation: self-enforced, and that instituted by a friend or family member. She does a good mixing her own experiences with that of others shown in video snippets. On the whole, it was a quite satisfying show.	Playground 3 at ZOO Playground	2025	3
78	The Infant (***) A mother is interrogated about the death of her baby using a mind reader. While I liked that the play made me think about some problematic ethical questions, it does have two flaws: 1) in America, when a suspect asks for a lawyer, any interrogation must stop, or else nothing said, nor based on what is said may be used in court; and 2) the twist at the end weakens the play by adding confusion to the whole previous experience. The whole play would be better served if it was set in a psychiatrist’s office, or after a guilty verdict.	Theatre 1 at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	20

79	Seizure (***) This play within a play has a little sister of a powerful attorney invited to come back home for a big company party. The interactions between the outer and inner plays are a bit confusing, but, unlike some other audience members, I found that intriguing. The late reveal does tie up all the loose ends, but the final event is a little over the top.	Grand Theatre at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	6
80	Cold; Dark Matters (***) A storyteller tells of an author who became interest in a shed on common land in a Cornwall field. The fellow was winning as was the story. Only the last revelations hurt as they didn't make sense in the context of the previous story.	studio at C ARTS | C venues | C aurora	2025	5
81	Lost Property (***) Every Fringe I get behind in writing my reviews, and one play is so unremarkable that I cannot remember it. This is that play for this year. It was neither great, nor terrible.	Theatre 3 at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	15
82	The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (***) A large cast of adults portray a spelling contest among primary age kids. The cast is quite capable, and the plotting good, but the music and lyrics are pretty worthless. The aggressive nerd with his spelling foot is unforgettable.	Forest Theatre at Greenside @ George Street	2025	18
83	Tilly No-Body (***) This solo show has the early 20th century German theater star, Tilly Wedekind, talking about her life married to a famous but overbearing playwright/director. From teen to senior citizen the actress ably conveys the fragility and prowess of the actress. However, the lack of chronological signposts severely weakens the power of the play—we cannot tell whether months or years have passed between critical events.	Bramley at Gilded Balloon at Appleton Tower	2025	-30

84	The Last Rites (***) A prisoner facing execution today argues with a priest who is there to save the condemned man's soul. The two actors were very good, but I have heard their debate many times before, and only a late plot twist piqued my interest. An incomplete costume change in the last scene really distracted me.	Theatre at Bedlam Theatre	2025	-30
85	A Gerry Christmas Carroll (***) The actor abridges the book to be a one hour tale. He does a fine job of choosing those aspects of the original that give a real feel for early 19th century London. With nary a missed line this as good a performance of the off-season tale as one could hope.	Just the Attic at Just the Tonic at The Mash House	2025	7
86	The Speakeasy Experience (***) A French woman offers two cocktails in a small room decorated as hidden bar while talking about their origins and how speakeasies came to be in America. The two cocktails were delicious, and she was entertaining. While she was making the cocktails we had a real speakeasy experience as we chatted with a fellow from Brazil, and another from Yorkshire at our table for four.	Summerhall Distillery at Summerhall	2025	20
87	Horny for the End of the World (***) After her boyfriend breaks up with her a young woman hears the news that the world will end in two weeks. The short play works well as she responds to several former boyfriends' telephone calls trying to hook up with her before the end. It was a cute bit of fluff to end the day with.	Stephenson Theatre at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	1
88	Do Astronauts Masturbate in Space? (***) In the future, a couple discovers that she is pregnant, and they must spend a week enduring a state test to determine if they may have the baby. The early scenes well establish their fitness, but some of the tests seem fantastic. There some chaotic scenes that seemed absurd, and detracted from the poignancy of the play.	Willow Studio at Greenside @ Riddles Court	2025	15

89	Newsrevue (***) Four comedians and a keyboardist produced a few short skits and a lot of ditties lampooning mostly politicians. Since I could understand little, and Debbie could only understand half, neither of us enjoyed the show. Based on the muted response of the audience, we were not alone, and think that even people with good hearing would think this an unexceptional show.	Ballroom at Assembly Rooms	2025	24
90	A Murder in Motley (***) A pub owner and shareholder in the Globe theatre in Shakespearean times is murdered, an unidentified boy in a jester costume was seen near the crime so two jesters are tried for the murder. The initial scene confused me because of my poor hearing and dense writing, but after that I did a little better despite some unintelligible lines. The pub dance that became rowdier as it progressed was perfect, I just was frustrated that I didn't hear some crucial lines used to determine guilt.	Willow Studio at Greenside @ Riddles Court	2025	2
91	Dead Air (***) This dense solo show has a troubled young woman talking to her mother, lover, stepfather, and an AI generated version of her dead father. While she was a tour de force of acting the show seems overlong. I did think the AI was well done as she keeps tuning its personality, though his amplified voice was often hard to understand because of the reverberation of the bunker.	Bunker One at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	-30
92	Charming (***) Cinderella's fairy godmother delivers a list of demands to modernize that Prince Charming must meet, or she will divorce him. This slight play has fun with the concept of an 18th century senior citizen royal who is reluctant to catch-up with the 2020s. Even though the plot has a nice twist, the twist was not explored in a way that justified 55 minutes.	Forest Theatre at Greenside @ George Street	2025	2

93	A Dress (***) This large high school cast portrays life outside the classroom while following a girl preparing for her senior prom. We see all the stereotypes and cliques, but in the hands of this troupe their words and actions ring true. The comments from fellow students after the show confirmed this, and the depressing fact that the students are quite aware of gun violence in American schools.	The Great Hall at Nicolson Square Venues	2025	6
94	A Lie Club (***) A fellow joins a group meeting for people who are habitual liars, and is attracted to one woman there. The pranks together work well, but the play has trouble dealing with the problem of two liars forming an honest romantic relationship in a satisfying manner. Without a backstory, the woman seems a cypher with an inexplicable condition.	Studio at theSpaceTriplex	2025	14
95	Bloomsbury Bell (***) Vanessa Dell literally paints a portrait of her dead sister, Virginia Woolf, while relating tales from the Bloomsbury group of artists and intellectuals. She covers the liaisons and belief in the arts of the group without much nuance in her presentation. Though their stories were interesting, m attention often strayer to watching her water color painting.	Cellar at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	13
96	Good For You (***) Three women lawyers are all vying to handle a big case for different reasons. Three of the four characters are well drawn, but the youngest is too antic to be real. I found the finale quite satisfying.	Space 3 at theSpace on the Mile	2025	21
97	Tom at the Farm (***) A close friend of fellow shows up at the farm run by his brother and mother for his funeral. The dark, physicality of this supertitled show is impressive, but I found the story too slow. The ferocity of the brother, particularly during the fights, cannot be denied.	Lennox Theatre at Pleasance at EICC	2025	15

98	The Time Painter (***) Five young Korean women quietly mostly use paper, scissors, and apples to allude to the Gwangju Democratic Uprising 0f 1980. While some of their performance was interesting to me, the bulk was too esoteric for me to understand. Their use of paper razors to create a town was the highlight for me.	Studio Three at Assembly George Square Studios	2025	22
99	I'm Ready to Talk Now (***) A personable fellow asks about your presentation preferences, then accommodate any of your needs, and has a multi-presentation derived from his long stay in a hospital. I think I spent more time chatting before and after than experience the presentation. He is warm and engaging, and the presentation felt low key.	Traverse Foyer: Meeting Point at Traverse Theatre	2025	8
100	Sponsored by The Void (***) A submissive woman is offered a chance to have help with a Halloween party. Although we see how many people take advantage of the protagonist, I never felt that she had the strength of character to make her momentous decision. Though the Void was literally characterized, somehow it felt like a thing from a horror story rather than real.	Thistle Theatre at Greenside @ Riddles Court	2025	9
101	The Scold's Bridle (***) This short two-hander has a 17th century misogynistic husband subjecting his submissive wife to all sorts of physical abuse, including a scold's bridle. Part of the play tells of the witchcraft prisons and test like other such plays, but stepping into a commoners homelife offers something unique that is well explored. However, a scene with a knife is either out of place chronologically, or completely unnecessary and confusing.	Willow Studio at Greenside @ Riddles Court	2025	6

102	Almost Famous (***) A senior actress who has returned to England from Hollywood is about to audition for a part in a touring play. As she recounts her career, she takes the opportunity to demonstrate that she can still dance like she did decades ago. After a life as a single, estranged mother, we realize that she is a totally self-centered person who never thought of others in her whole life.	Theatre 2 at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	12
103	The Thistle and the Rose by Linda Gates (***) Queen Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots pass correspondence back and forth as Mary tries to secure her position among the Scots, and, later, the English. I was impressed by how cordial they were until almost the end. The staging was pretty static, but that suited a straightforward, factual exchange of letters.	Haldane Theatre at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	12
104	Small Town Boys (***) A gay young man leaves his small town for a big city and its vibrant gay scene. Unhappily, after having just seen “Giselle: Remix”, the dancing seemed stale. I am afraid that the whole production felt workman like.	Main House at ZOO Southside	2025	17
105	Read My Lips (***) Four roommates must all deal with one of them who is the troubled girl friend of another roommate. Sexual contact unnecessarily permeates the show when the focus should be on the troubled woman’s backstory. The romantic interchanges are a bit quiet, but the physical contact avoids studiously erogenous zones.	Studio at theSpace @ Niddry St	2025	11

106	Proust Effect (***) A Korean magician starts by creating an amazing number of playing cards out of thin air, and then moves on to do magic tricks themed on different countries of the world. His sleight of hand is fantastic, but I had seen his magic tricks before, and he didn't have the entertaining patter to save them. His final trick of having provided the results of several audience participations to us before the show started, only highlighted how little spontaneous magic was involved.	Temple at WU Asia Pacific	2025	1
107	Body Count (***) This feminist show about unsatisfying sex and male abuse has a woman post an ad that she wants to have sex with 1000 men, and will do anything each wants. The actress gave her all interspersing early disappointing introductions to sex with a variety of mostly despicable encounters with the thousand. The main problems wer the chotic plotting and her poor ability to differentiate between the characters.	The Green at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	24
108	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu 3) (***) This five sketches of this menu have: a woman waiting for her date defending a second chair in a pub; a woman asks her brother to be her sperm donor; at the end of their first date, a woman sets an unusual rule about becoming more intimate; a woman is nervous on a flight; a successful apple farmer uses an unusual planting technique. Unlike the other two menus, I only found two of the sketches really funny. Working around the dating rule proved the to be a treasure trove of humorous efforts.	Pleasance One at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	10
109	Articulate (***) Two teams of three get together for their not so friendly yearly game of Articulate. The overarching theme of biting rivalry casts a pall over the whole show. The youngest member's contribution to the story seemed an afterthought.	Theatre 2 at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	8

110	Pride and Prejudice (***) This high school troupe tackles Austin's book about five sisters contending with the conventions of early 19th century England. The cast was capable, and carried off the dance sequences well, but their director let them down. Besides allowing some of them to speak too softly, the director chose caricature over character for Mrs. Bennett, Lady Catherine's daughter, and Mr. Collins that detracted from the whole production.	The Great Hall at Nicolson Square Venues	2025	1
111	The Sculpture (***) After a sensational beginning to her movie career in 1928, actress Molly O'Day went to extreme lengths to lose the weight required by her contract. In addition to standard life portrayals, the large cast also uses songs, poems, and spoken chorus to convey the dissatisfaction of the public and studios with her. Between the overload recorded music and asynchronous vocals much of the show was lost on us.	Just The Fancy Room at Just the Tonic at The Caves	2025	3
112	Iago Speaks (***) After the events in "Othello", we find a jailer dealing with Iago in a prison cell living up to his promise to never speak again. The first half of the play is slow as the jailer rails about his life, but the second comes alive as the two interact more. The later events are true to form and satisfying until the last five minutes where the play steps into farce and a superfluous final plot twist.	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	21

113	Matt Winning: Solastalgia (***) A personable PhD pontificates about the planet's petroleum peril. He covers both the history of the oil industry, focusing particularly on John D. Rockefeller, and the global warming crisis while intermixing a tale of waiting for his wife to give birth to their son. As a former banker, he pointed out that the companies of the financial industry wont switch their support to energy alternatives until they all agree to do so. The big problem with this play is that Winning has not taken enough time to learn his lines, and spends a lot of time reading them his script.	Studio Five at Assembly George Square Studios	2025	-30
114	Lucky Tonight! (***) A Manchester-born Bangladeshi woman combines tales from her life with a pub quiz on I-pads supplied to the audience. She makes the show fun at times, but often her show wastes time on things, a dance sequence for example, that seem too self-centered. With its concentration on her world of the 1990s and 2000s, England, and Bangladesh, I was of no help on the pub quiz.	Traverse 2 at Traverse Theatre	2025	-31
115	Lunchbox (***) In a Glasgow high school, a Pakistani girl is subject to bullying while a Scottish boy is a bully. The play does a good job of looking into how home life and teachers can have an impact on dealing with bullying. She is an engaging performer.	The Green at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	14
116	Whisper Walk (***) Armed with a link to a webpage, I followed its instructed path to six sight where I listened to four-minute spoken word taled related to the the specific location. I had visited most of the sites before in my travels so the lack of information about them was only a bit of a disappointment. But, hey,, it was a beautiful day for a relaxing walk that took me 75 minutes partly because of poor coverage on Cowgate.	Meeting point at Assembly George Square	2025	25

117	Sam Blythe: Method in My Madness (A One-Man Hamlet) (***) A fellow in pajamas wakes up, puts on a red clown nose, and then presents “A One Man Hamlet” that he supposedly wrote purely from Hamlet’s perspective. There were certainly many beautiful passages from Shakespeare’s play, but without contributions from the rest of the characters the play is almost incoherent. The actor’s sleight of hand with the foam red nose is amusing, but adds nothing to the story.	Studio Four at Assembly George Square Studios	2025	24
118	Mushroomification (Legs; Legs; Legs) (***) A mad scientist and his brother/partner must deal with an unusual mushroom. The musing mushroom character is wonderful as it grapples with its situation throughout the play. However, the insane brother lacked consistency and pushes the absurdity to humorless incoherency.	Just the Bottle Room at Just the Tonic at The Mash House	2025	5
119	Myth Adventures -- Five Greek Classics (***) This high school troupe of a male Dionysus narrator and the rest girls tackles these five myths: Midas’ golden touch, musical Orpheus retrieving his lover from Hades, Echo and Narcissus paying their prices, Daedalus and Icarus flying, and Theseus killing the Minotaur. The group was competent with no missteps nor missed lines, though a few need to learn to project better. The cast has a couple of strong actresses that seemed to live their roles.	Hall at Central Hall	2025	2
120	Transfers (***) This show is composed of eight scenes where 500 pounds is transferred from one person to another in various ways. Though we do see the same 500 pounds transferred in some scenes, others are completely independent. The motivations varied, and the acting fine, but the show just felt like nothing special.	Space 2 at theSpace on the Mile	2025	15

121	1612 (***) In 1612, in Lancashire, based on the bribed testimony of a very young girl several women were tried, found guilty, and hung for witchcraft. Most of the play has the women pleading their innocence which grows tiresome. The costumes of the poor accused women were too clean, as was that of original state of the little girl.	Space 1 at theSpace on the Mile	2025	21
122	City of Incurable Women (***) This devised one-woman show investigates the concept of hysteria from ancient to modern times. Though some of the history was interesting, there were a lot of superfluous scenes. She took the time to silently peel and eat a lemon as well as drink an entire bottle of water for reasons that were unclear.	Upstairs at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	14
123	Drama Girls (***) Three young women in drama school train for a showcase show while helping and criticizing each other. Due to my poor hearing, two of the three spoke so fast that I could rarely understand what they said. As such, most the play was lost on me.	Annexe at theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2025	23
124	Jack Offerman's Big Uncut Flick (***) A cast of four recreate a 1950s local TV show that showcases a B film noir movie using a smarmy emcee. Some of the audience like their broad, almost slapstick, humor, but much lacked originality. As with many farces, the director seemed to believe that louder is funnier.	Downstairs at Assembly Roxy	2025	10
125	Big Little Sister (***) A 26-year old woman describes her life in a family with a brother seven years older than her who was born with severe cerebral palsy. It was surprising to hear of the mix of meanness, love, and caring that she exhibits. The short video of him late in the show helped to better understand his disability, but a song he wrote and the mention of college for him left me confused.	Playground 2 at ZOO Playground	2025	13

126	The Strongest Girl in the World (***) A 28-year old woman performs a play about her life before and after her father died of kidney cancer when she was 10. She has a nice singing voice, and created wonderful pop-up books. However, the show never escapes being another vanity Fringe show by a twenty-something woman who believes her story is unique with the telltale repetition of her name.	Snug at Gilded Balloon Patter House	2025	11
127	I'm Trying, Please Clap (***) This very personal show has a fellow reading his poetry and singing songs drawn from small, mundane events in his current life. This is definitely a work in progress by a performer who is learning what it is like to perform. His poem about his effort to learn to swim particularly touched me.	Satyr Bar	2025	6
128	Standing in the Shadows of Giants (***) An aspiring actress, who is the older sister of a rock star, finds the pills and alcohol of his parties a fine refuge from her dissatisfying life. From the initial breaking of the fourth wall this came across as an all too common Fringe vanity piece that had nothing to offer but self-pity, and by the time of her big revelation occurs I no longer cared. While she seems a capable actress with a decent singing voice, as a playwright her talents are wasted in such a banal piece.	Traverse 2 at Traverse Theatre	2025	-31
129	Courier (***) A bike courier has numerous troubles making his one delivery. The play doesn't work well because the actor does a poor job of differentiating the different characters he plays. The big plot twist at the end doesn't fit with some of the previous events.	Playground 1 at ZOO Playground	2025	24

130	David and Katie Get Re-Married (***) As the title indicates, this zany show has a late 30's couple re-marry at the end of a show after spending an hour abusing each other and then making up. While there were a few fun parts, most of the songs and antics were sophomoric at best. The one saving grace was that it was clear that the two actors enjoyed working together.	Friesian at Underbelly; Bristo Square	2025	-30
131	LA Baby (***) An out of work actress in Los Angeles takes the job of nanny for three children while dealing with her unstable lover. The central problem with the play is that the protagonist is a complete narcissist who never cares for anyone else but herself, and thus I had no emotional link with her. She only uses the children as sources of information about their father, and she says openly that the three little words she cares about are not "I love you," but instead "Live with me."	Playground 2 at ZOO Playground	2025	1
132	The Dropbox (***) On the last spaceship to travel from the AI-dominated Earth to the planet Utopia, the ship's doctor and its five passengers must deal with unexpected events. This feels like a re-make of a common sci-fi plot of something dangerous on board a spaceship with an overly evil leader and impossibly naïve heiress thrown in. The meaning of the contents of the drop box, and its connection to the others is left unexplained though they are critical to the plot.	Venue 45 at theSpace @ Venue 45	2025	6
133	Stuart Laws is Stuck (***) Laws is a standard stand-up comedian who produces material that appeals to people much younger than me. Though he made me smile a few times, the material just didn't suit me. The crowd laughed, but were not thrilled.	Monkey Barrel Comedy - Monkey Barrel 4	2025	15

134	I Was a German (***) After Brexit begins, the English granddaughter of a Jewish man who emigrated from Nazi Germany finds out that she can for German citizenship based on her grandfather. The show is a mish mash of short vides and live action depicting Nazi Germany and episodes from his and her lives. I was bored during virtually the whole show as there just wasn't enough new and/or interesting information, and her character felt one dimensional.	Studio at ZOO Southside	2025	1
135	The General Will (***) This comedy has two parts: despite having a knowledgeable aide, an incompetent UK clown prime minister cannot figure out how to address any of the countries troubles; and two young woman cannot figure out how to make a play that addresses those troubles. In either case, posing problems without solutions doesn't make for good theatre. The clown noses were superfluous in the obvious satire.	Haldane Theatre at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	11
136	W3: Filthy Filthy Witches (***) A fellow who has invented a way to create drinkable water using garbage interacts with three witches. Though there was enthusiasm galore here, I couldn't make out heads or tails of what was going on. Most of what was said seemed like nonsense to me.	Banshee Labyrinth Chamber Room (Free Fringe)	2025	20
137	Love Is the Greater Labyrinth (***) In modern times, the college age daughter of King Midas of Crete and her sister both have their hearts se on the Athenian hero Theseus, and are waiting for him to choose. My knowledge of Greek mythology is limited so I do not know who the two men were supposed to be, and if this story was supposed to be based on some obscure Greek myth. Without that knowledge, it seemed to lack much plot other than to make the pursuit of love difficult like the Labyrinth.	Ballroom at PBH's Free Fringe @ Voodoo Rooms Free Fringe)	2025	11

138	Split Ends (***) A woman has an unusual relationship with a vacuum cleaner, and a talking pair of scissors. Her sexual interactions with both seem to be a bizarre reaction to rejection my men. Though she does explain that cutting split ends supposedly prevents other split ends, we are left wondering why such a play came to be created.	Below at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	16
139	The Lost Priest (**) A Jewish fellow talks what it is like to be brought up in a practicing Jewish family, but not taking his religion seriously. Not having read a synopsis, based on its title I kept waiting for instance of a Catholic priest to show up, and was confused when that never happened. The title really spoiled the whole play for me.	Theatre 1 at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	14
140	#CHARLOTTESVILLE -- The play that Trump does not want you to see! (**) An Indian graduate student in drama created this play as her master's thesis that highlights her dramatic art skills as well as her complaint against her chairwoman all at the expense of the time spent on the tragedy of a right wing driver running down protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia. I felt like this was a variation on the classic Fringe vanity play when she chose to show a video of a speech by the prime minister of India with no translation. Her fake "special report" videos purportedly from CNN and NBC, complete with logo microphones seemed like fraud.	Bunker Two at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	24

141	I See You Watching (**) This devised play has a woman dressed in a baton twirlers costume is at an audition as asked to do increasingly more demeaning things by a director. The acting is great, but her acceptance of his orders goes on way too long when the time could have been used for more of her backstory or turn the tables on him to see some sensitivity. I was impressed with her facial contortions, but thought her later costume unnecessarily revealing.	Doonstairs at Gilded Balloon Patter House	2025	22
142	I'm Not Saying We Should; But What If We Did? (**) Two women with radical political ideas appear on a local TV interview program. The chaos of the studio, and their repeatedly ducking of questions about the implementation and justification of their policies reinforced the feeling that the show never answers the question of its title. This devised show has the women slowly over-applying their make-up to make them look like clowns in the end.	Studio at theSpaceTriplex	2025	13
143	Soul Sucking (**) An unsuccessful, self-centered young woman decides that the way out of her rut of failure is to stage her funeral, rebirth, and baptism. The cast had clearly not rehearsed with the four cooling fans running because all but the protagonist rarely spoke loud enough. With her primary characteristic of self-pity, and much of the dialog missing, I never grew to care about her of the play.	Willow Studio at Greenside @ Riddles Court	2025	11

144	How Not to Fund a Honeymoon (**) This show opens with a woman casually talking on the phone with a friend while two almost dead bodies lie at her feet, and then starts of the beginning of the burglary. Between inaudible burglar whispering, unexplained captures, caricatures, and lots of shouting, the story just fell apart for me. Somehow they thought it would enhance the show by having a policeman repeatedly try to find an appellation that would satisfy the picky victim.	Studio at theSpaceTriplex	2025	11
145	The Unstoppable Rise of Ben Manager (**) A fellow acquires a lanyard that allows him to step into the role of manager in a large corporation. His constant spouting of teamwork slogans grew quickly boring for me. The show seemed to be a one trick pony that was beaten to death.	Above at Pleasance Courtyard	2025	17
146	The Bacchae (**) From the very start, when the actor recited part of the play in Greek(?), I should have known that he valued authenticity more than entertainment. Though he covered the important events of the play, there was a never a time when I was interested. Even the horrific events were bland.	Upstairs at Assembly Roxy	2025	10
147	Orpheus (**) This interpretation of the Greek myth has a fellow walking back and forth “reading” from his notebook on the myth interspersed with a guitarist singing original songs somewhat related to the story. While the rest of the late night audience seemed to enjoy the show, I was bored. Both the music and lyrics were mediocre, and the story was nothing.	Dissection Room at Summerhall	2025	5

148	Harriet the Spy (**) Eleven-year old Harriet is always writing in her notebook about the people around her. The plot revolves around the two friends and nanny who support her and two enemies who work against her. We left halfway through because both the reverberation in the massive auditorium and the director's choice to have her often speak at the back of the huge stage made understanding the actors quite difficult.	Auditorium at Central Hall	2025	3
149	Jimmy Made Parole (**) On his first day out of prison, a young fellow tries to raise enough money for a date by any means possible—both legal and illicit. Some of the scams are fun, but the constant use of audience participation grew tiring, and slowed the show. His scam to obtain better shoes was inspired.	Snug at Paradise in Augustines	2025	8
150	misSfits (**) A real sixth grade teacher tries to use sixth grade techniques to teach us about various non-cis pupils. The problems are that we are not children, and already accept gender-diverse people. There was little here of interest except as reminder of the methods of a sixth grade teacher.	Studio at theSpaceTriplex	2025	3
151	Semi-Automatic SmokeShow (**) When her hosting app is bought, a make-up influencer is told that by modifying her life she can achieve her goal of the American Dream. The metaphorical tale of gradual disillusionment never lets us identify with the real woman before she steps into her unreal world. Her treating a blow-up doll as a real person is a step too far as a test of cognitive dissonance.	Lime Studio at Greenside @ George Street	2025	18

152	Railway 200: The Show (**) This group of railway enthusiasts present a series of scenes from the past 200 years of English railroad history. What I could heard was fun and interesting. The two stars is because they had not prepared for the very noisy environment of Waverley Station with some sort of amplification, and I could rarely hear them.	Performance Space between Platform 2 and 3 at PBH'S Free Fringe @ Edinburgh Waverley Station	2025	8
153	Be It (WIP) (**) This initial attempt at a Free Fringe show seemed to be a dream come true for the performer who had little sense of the task at hand. This was the first day, and it seemed that he entered with a few ideas written on a sheet of paper, and planned on playing the bulk of the show by ear. There was a five minute section where he exhibited a quick wit that had the rest of the audience laughing at his spontaneous quips, but, unhappily I could not make them out because he spoke them while hiding behind an air conditioner.	The Snug at Laughing Horse @ Bar 50	2025	10
154	A Monkey Trial: The Gameshow or The True and Tragic Passion of Pauline Campbell (**) A tattooed man in a wig and prison inmate jump suit argues the case for eliminating prisons to address the problem of women committing suicide in prison. His choice of portraying the argument in front of a high court composed of scenes of judicial monkeys from old PG tips TV commercials was ill conceive as it satirized the judicial process rather than addressing the question of the efficacy of prisons. The actor/playwright was clearly sincere, but he needs to provide a realistic alternative to prisons.	Muse at Braw Venues @ Hill Street	2025	2

155	End of the World FM (**) After some cataclysm, a radio host continues to broadcast even though there may be no listeners left. He rambles on aimlessly for the whole show. My mind would drift away, but each time I returned he was still spouting drivel.	Theatre 2 at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	14
156	Human Nature (**) The mayor of a small town decides that she should investigate a murder in a park by calling all of the suspects together instead of calling the police. The play doesn't work on many levels: it is illegal to not call the police immediately; virtually all of the evidence is unsupported and circumstantial at best; the method of the verdict is absurd, and many of the characters were not believable. In particular, the priest suddenly offering candy bars to the happy suspects was weird.	Theatre 2 at theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2025	20
157	Aether (**) Four leotard clad young women address physics and the universe. I know that is vague, but their racing through the text and frequent loud volume combined with the reverberation of the Anatomy Lecture Room made it virtually impossible for me (and others I spoke to afterwards) to understand them. This was another example of a show not quieting their performance to accommodate the unique acoustics of the two Summerhall lecture rooms that were designed for a time before amplification.	Anatomy Lecture Theatre at Summerhall	2025	5

158	Murder, Oops! (*) In this one woman show, she plays all the characters in a story about a young woman coming home to her dead lover and his murderer, and then falls in love with each new visitor to the apartment. Combining endless simulated solo French kissing, tuneless songs, re-takes because she forgot a visitor, emotional flights, and grotesque simulated sex took this from absurdist to amateur drivel. Her father was the techy, and I was impressed with support of his daughter.	Clover Studio at Greenside @ Riddles Court	2025	22
159. *	Italian Horror Stories (*) This show applies Italian pantomime to three horror stories: woman in black, vampires, and Frankenstein. None of them followed the traditional story lines, and a ton of time was spent with the actors growling and shrieking at the top of their lungs. Between the overriding semi-plot of trying to scare a Catholic priest, and gratuitous sexual content this was just a jumble of noise and unmotivated actions with a few interesting facts thrown in to give it the gloss of preparation.	Just Up The Stairs at Just the Tonic at The Caves	2025	3
1	Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo (*****) This huge gathering of bands and dancers warrants seeing if you have not. The production values are high, the bands first rate, and the dancers fun. The rifle twirling and tossing of the United State Nave Ceremonial Guard had the audience regularly gasping in awe. Note: I realize that comparing the Tattoo with Fringe shows is like comparing ripe apples to young oranges, but I had to mention it, so I have restarted the ratings below.	Edinburgh Castle	2024	1

2	Edinburgh's Old Town--History and Tales (*****) Our guide, Kofe, gave us a thorough tour, starting with a view of Carlton Hill, then High Street and two of its closes, then Grassmarket, and finishing in Greyfriars cemetery. He was knowledgeable, well spoken, and personable. As a former teacher, I appreciated how he used cliffhangers to prepare us for an upcoming highlight. Note: As with the Tattoo, comparing a tour with shows doesn't make sense so I restarted the numbering below.	Hot Toddy	2024	18
1	Cyrano (*****) This updated version of the long nosed master orator has a woman playing the lead, and the references firmly grounded in the 21st century. The chorus of three disparate actors is a constant source of wit besides. From the beginning to end this is a joy to watch, though the last few minutes lack some of the wit of the rest.	Traverse 1	2024	6
2	A Knock on the Roof by Khawla Ibraheem (*****) A Gazan mother repeatedly practices trying to evacuate her seventh floor apartment to prepare for a potential Israeli bombing. Though we also hear of regular Gazan life with its privations, it is each unsuccessful attempt to reach safety in five minutes that ratchets up the stress in the play. We cannot but help but sympathize with her as the little things she easily forgets would leave her in stranded as her apartment collapses.	Traverse 1	2024	13

3	David William Bryan: In Loyal Company (*****) After the blitz of Liverpool, a young man joins the army, fights in Singapore, and becomes a Japanese POW in a "Bridge Over the River Kwai" camp building a railroad in Thailand. The actor proves up to the task of blending the roles of the soldier, narrator, and a few secondary characters into a powerful whole. While the privations of the POW camp take up much of the play, it is his tales of the air attacks on his transport that stand out for me. Note: I had seen this twice before, and recommended it to my wife, and feel it deserves another entry here.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	20
4	David William Bryan: Fragility of Man (*****) A 12-year-old orphan, with a devastating right hook, spends much of his life in and out of prison. This is a literally a tour de force as the actor/playwright muscles his through his alliterative script of fights, drugs, prison, and love. Whether fighting a ferocious man or drug addiction there are no cheap shots here—it may be a one man show, but it fills the stage.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	19
5	Dissociation (*****) This clever play is about the competing aspects of a person's personality, and their relative strengths and weaknesses. From the initial mime sequence through real and dreamed scenes, it consistently explores the issue without psychobabble, nor easy solutions. The simple use of sweaters and coats served to unobtrusively and effectively differentiate the characters and personalities.	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	2
6	Alice Diamond and the Forty Elephants (*****) When her brother and his London gang leave to join the World War I British army, at the behest of her mother, Alice takes over his criminal territory, and uses the women left behind to shop lift and steal instead of armed robbery. The leads and huge cast all flawlessly recreated the many crimes and parties of the historical gangs and their "queen". The family dynamics and her relationship with her second-in command added depth to the story.	Pleasance Dome	2024	4

7	/ and Her (*****) This lovely show follows the lives of two girlhood friends, one of whom is Jane Grey, the betrothed of King Edward VJ, and destined to rule England for nine days before being executed because of her religion. From Grey's initial, shy introduction to her new friend to sharing a love of Plato to the effort of tightening each other's corsets we feel their times and their love for each other. The scene of a tween Grey baptizing two dolls sets the tone for much of the rest of her life.	C ARTS | C venues | C alto	2024	22
8	Casting the Runes (*****) A professor who prides himself on debunking supernatural frauds seemingly accidently comes to posses a paper containing some unusual runes. This big show in a small space combines a cleverr set, scattered full size puppets, fine acting, and a properly mysterious plot to give you would want from a spooky Fringe show. The changing image in a book was a simple, but effective trick, but having lamps go out as he walks by seemed inappropriate to the supposed level of supernaturalism.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	-31
9	Polishing Shakespeare (*****) Based on a true story, an American billionaire offers a theater's artistic director and a playwright a grant to "translate" Shakespeare's plays into "American" English. The show uses finely wrought prose to explore the unavoidable battle between a donor's power of the purse, and art's criticism of such power. I appreciated that the playwright character provides a legitimate, albeit short, example of a proposed adaptation of "Henry VIII", which was Shakespeare's own homage to his benefactor's family.	Assembly Rooms	2024	18

10	Born in the USA (Leaving Vietnam) (*****) This one man show has a Vietnam veteran tell of his experiences in Vietnam as an enlisted Marine, and how they continued to influence his life for decades. His bond with a medic provides a touchstone for the taciturn autoworker's tale. While I am not a veteran, his confrontation with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. mirrored my own deep appreciation of those soldiers.	C ARTS | C venues | C alto	2024	10
11	Frankenstein (On a Budget) (*****) Take a single actor trying to recreate the whole Frankenstein book, a host of cardboard props, and penchant for puns, and you get a bonkers comedy a la Rock Horror Picture Show. We were in the mood for some whimsical comedy, and he delivered on the cheap without veering too far from the original plots. It's probably a 4-star show, but it just tickled our funny bones.	Pleasance Dome	2024	26
12	Tiny Little Town (*****) When the mayor of a very small town mistakes a grifter for a federal inspector, he organizes the civic leader s to roll out the red carpet for the impostor. This music is snappy, and the choreography out of this world. The mayor, with his Ronald MacDonald hair cut sets the tone for this fun show.	Bedlam Theatre	2024	8
13	Radium Girls (*****) In the late 1920s, young women who had been painting watches with radium began to contract cancer at an inordinate rate, but their employer asserted that they had proof that it wasn't due to the radium. With one worker and the president leading this large cast, this show maintains the legal and medical tension throughout the year of their struggle. The show does a remarkable job of presenting the facts both from her medical treatments, and the university research in a clear and riveting fashion.	Greenside @ George Street	2024	10

14	I am George Massey (****) A fellow suffers from depression (PTSD?) after experiencing 9/11 when he was eight years old. Despite counseling and prescribed medications, he slowly becomes radicalized and slides to the edge of society. His portrayal is riveting without sensationalism.	theSpace on the Mile	2024	16
15	Across a Love Locked Bridge (****) The playwright reads his beautiful, evocative poems from four phases of his life. His introduction to each phase provided the background that made some of the poems even more wonderful. Since he doesn't have a book of the poems available, I cannot cite lines for examples.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	23
16	Spy Movie: The Play! (****) This spoof of the James Bonds films had me laughing from the outset, and I rarely laugh outload. As my wife would say, "it is absolutely bonkers", without going overboard into the chaos of zaniness. A perfect example is when two people are driving, and a card says they are now in England, the two actors switch places.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	25
17	5 Mistakes That Changed History (****) A sequel to last year's play of the same name, the historian found five other "mistakes" to elaborate on. These ranged from Alexander the Great leaving no heirs to tomatoes thought to be poisonous to the emperor of Japan sending five women to be educated in USA in the 19th century. His research is thorough, and entertaining.	George Square Studios	2024	25

18	Via Dolorosa by David Hare (****) A playwright recounts his meeting with the people, both famous and average, of Israel and the Palestinian Territories in the mid-1990s. From his dinner with a British cultural exchange consul in a tony Tel Aviv restaurant to the illegal settlers in their California-like suburbia homes to the Arab leader ensconced in a posh hotel amid the Gaza Strip squalor, he finds fervent opinions among the Jews and Arabs that cannot be reconciled—even among themselves. Somehow, a heated argument at the settlers' dinner table about the age of a girl in the Bible who carries water for camels seems a perfect metaphor for the intractable nature of the dilemma of the area.	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	2
19	Playfight (****) Three fifteen-year old girl friends deal with their blossoming sexuality in very different ways. While that sounds like just another coming of age story, the frank discussions of their new sexual feelings as well as the unspoken changes in their friendships separates this from such mundane stories. One scene up in their home tree is both dramatic and wonderfully subtle.	Roundabout @ Summerhall	2024	5
20	The Lady Boys of Bangkok (****) This rite of passage for Fringe goers has ten lady boys, one drag singer/comedienne, and four male dancers who dance and lip sync to pop hits with two aerialists added for a little circus feel. The costumes are great, the lip syncing perfunctory at times, and the dance routines fairly good. One male dancer/singer was particularly energetic and personable, but, unlike in 2003, it seemed that many of the "ladies" had had breast implants.	The Sabai Pavilion	2024	20

21	Avenue Q (****) In a world populated with people, puppets, and puppet monsters, a puppet who is unsure of his purpose in life rents a room in a mixed race apartment house, and falls in love with a monster puppet. The music was mundane, but the lyrics were good, if not witty. The variety of relationships that develop help to keep the play interesting.	Saint Stephen's Theatre	2024	17
22	NeuroChatter (****) For the actress, she really has three split personalities that actually know of each other, and are quite verbal as they argue about who should dominate the next piece of her life. In this show we see how the three work together to help her to be effective in life. This is a remarkable show because each of the three must act their parts for the hour of the show.	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	21
23	Trawled – When Adventure Becomes Survival (****) Eion Ryan tells of his six weeks working aboard a trawler in the South Pacific when he was 25. From unlashing a boom in shark infested waters during a raging storm to having to fight the captain he makes the harrowing journey come alive for us. I have had cracked ribs, and his vivid description having to do brutal work with broken ribs had me sympathizing with his plight.	theSpace @ Venue45	2024	12
24	After Shakespeare – Richard III (****) This two hander has ten scenes from Richard's life that argue that, despite Shakespeare's characterization, he was an honorable man who advocated for the masses at the expense of creating enemies among the ruling class. Nonetheless, the play does not ignore that he ordered a number of people executed on the advice of Buckingham. Each scene is well chosen, well acted, and well scripted.	theSpaceTriplex	2024	10

25	RUM by Joe Mallalieu (****) This one man show has a man plaster a wall as he tells tales of his trade and its history in his family. He paints a portrait of hard mens' lives with an ethos from the past. Having been a general contractor, I relished the verisimilitude of his plastering and description of tradesmen.	Underbelly, Cowgate	2024	20
26	Is the WiFi Good in Hell? (****) We follow a fearful gay 13-year old with a speech impediment from the slum seaside of Margate through a London university student career as he tries to cope with a world in which he has few safe places. Though he has a close childhood friend, and a lover later, he never seems to fit in. We cannot but empathize with the plight of the sensitive outsider.	Underbelly, Cowgate	2024	14
27	Amazing Stories of Blues and Soul: The Road Trip (****) A blues band of now old men, complete with a horn section, describe the background and then perform songs from ten American cities that demonstrate distinct strains of blues and soul music. Despite their age, these guys can really rock their tunes, and get the audience moving. Their little lessons about the songs' source is the icing on the cake that makes this a completely wonderful experience.	theSpace @ Niddry St	2024	3
28	Bonding (****) An actor combines exploring the James Bond films with the audience, and describing his own life from grandson of a coalminer to sharing Bond films with his father to how his acting career developed and was perceived by his friends and father. The fact that the room only holds 16 people, and was half full made this a particularly personal experience where he often sat on the stage and told his stories as if in a conversation. As we approached the end, it became apparent that a second interpretation of the title referenced his deep feelings for his father.	Greenside @ Riddles Court	2024	3

29	Influenced (****) A shy young fellow finds his place in the world as a political influencer. As he tells his tale we see him blossom, and then learn of his own misperceptions of the world. His revelation serve as a good reminder of the power and naivete of such people now.	Greenside @ Riddles Court	2024	9
30	Italians in England by Action Theatre (Italy) (****) A young man connives to have a tryst with the young wife of a rich old man by arranging a dinner at the villa of a shared old doctor friend. From an abused fool to a cowardly captain to the rich cuckold, all of the elements of Italian commedia dell'arte are here, and performed perfectly and exuberantly. The bawdy jokes, broad humor, and ribald plot form a perfect blend.	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	13
31	Shellshocked – An Explosive New Play (****) During World War I, a young, fragile veteran applies for an apprenticeship to an artist. The play moves slowly, but this reinforces the sense of underlying cunning of the painter. The soundtrack and late twists keep the show taut throughout.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	21
32	Out of the Blue (****) The twelve guys from Oxford are back with their great harmonies and fun choreography. I didn't enjoy the song selection as much as I use to because they are selecting newer songs. However, their final medley of older rock songs got the crowd and me really going.	Assembly George Square	2024	26
33	Slash (****)' This murder mystery has three friends accidentally meet in the bathroom at their high school reunion only to find a fourth friend murdered. The plot evolves nicely; as the facts are revealed our suspicions shift to each friend. The plot twists are fun, except that the "solutions" never explain how they came to be in the bathroom at the same time.	Bedlam Theatre	2024	8

34	Rogues So Banished (****) We heard this story of the travails of three escaped convicts in the jungles of 19th century New South Wales penal colony right after we saw “Bonding”, and it was also in small room with only eight audience members. Unlike in “Bonding”, the actor did not break the fourth wall, but the small crowd made it somehow like a group around a campfire hearing a ghost story—except this seemed like an absolutely true story of deprivation and resourcefulness. The text, his bare chested visage, and his movements made the story come alive with nary a dull moment.	Scottish Storytelling Centre	2024	3
35	Jive Aces (****) This hot band, complete with a horn section, delivers what it promises—jive. The rhythm section keeps a toe tapping beat, and the vocalists do a serviceable job with the lyrics. When the pianist has solos, you can see Jerry Lee Lewis’ influence.	Pleasance at EICC	2024	18
36	Sex Lives of Puppets (****) The show lives up to its title. Puppets without genitals nor breasts have all sorts of sexual encounters with humor pervading them all. Debbie loved the orgy finale, while I liked the straightforward talking old couple.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	11
37	Every Brilliant Thing (****) When six years old, to combat his mother’s depression, the playwright/actor began making a list of the brilliant things in the world, and then kept at it. As we entered he gave each of us a slip of paper with a numbered item from the list, and during the show he would call a number and the member holding that item would read it out loud. There is a building momentum of joy as we learn of his life as the list grows, so it is hard not to enjoy this show. Note: I saw this show in 2014, when it was 98th out of 165, which is evidence of nothing in particular.	Roundabout @ Summerhall	2024	5

38	Olga Koch Comes From Money (****) As the title indicates, Koch explores the impact of coming from a wealthy family had on her life. She successfully mined many different effects for humor. My poor hearing often interfered with my understanding her fast talking, and much of her pop culture references were lost on this Yank. Note: This was a preview, which by their very nature are a bit rough and humorless at some points.	Monkey Barrel 3	2024	-30
39	The Sound Inside (****) An English Writing professor at an Ivy League university has an unexpected visit from one her freshman students with whom she shares articulate and knowledgeable views on a variety of books. Though there is an undercurrent of need, is their love of words that really drives this story. It is the lyrical choice of words that makes this show both engrossing and challenging	Traverse 1	2024	6
40	A Singular Deception (****) Two actors portray Dr. James Barry, who revolutionized 19th century military medicine, and his manservant as Barry held posts throughout the Empire. From carrying out the first successful Caesarian births to developing treatments of sexual and mental diseases to challenging the medical quality of the British establishment, Barry was at the forefront of medicine, but made a lot of enemies along the way. From the opening scene, it is apparent that a woman is playing the lead, but she hides her gender well, as did Barry.	The Royal Scots Club	2024	9

41	Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu 1) (****) The premises of the five short plays are: garden gnomes discuss whether they should leave the garden; two super heroes, Blunt Woman and Captain Polygraph, go out on a date; a pompous actor pontificates to his understudy; a woman who plays role playing games plays chess for the first time on a date; and a TV game show host encounters his ex-girlfriend as a contestant. This menu is the lightest and most fun of the three. The gnomes skit is a great start, and the RPG woman's approach to chess is perfect.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	12
42	Masquerade Mask (****) Three performers from Bologna, one of whom spoke perfect English, introduce the traditional characters of the Italian Commedia dell'arte using that very style. The combination of education and meta demonstration proved quite winning. It was fun to see the antecedents of MacBeth's witches, Shylock, and Shakespeare's many fools.	C ARTS | C venues | C aquila	2024	1
43	Kev Campbell Was He (****) This one man show has a young working class Glaswegian crosses paths with a gay ,erudite college student who is impressed with his insights into "The Great Gatsby". I was impressed by the surprisingly subtle approach the story took in dealing with conflicts encountered as the protagonist deals with his possible enlightenment. This is a Glasgow of words and feelings, and not violence.	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2024	2
44	Why Did I Crush My Balls? And Other Tales from the Generation of Too Much (****) A man seriously argues that nis need to have his balls squeezed to achieve orgasm is like any other fetish. This sounds like a premise for a zany, sex-oriented show, but it is not. While it is somewhat surreal with squirted blood pelting him, the plotting and his character are quite serious. His life's story and interactions with his girlfriend are gripping.	Bedlam Theatre	2024	8

45	Dick (****) The play starts with a discontented fellow at his 26th birthday party asking his four friends for their strangest sexual experience. As the play continues the interesting conversations reveal over time that two of the friends seem to have their lives together, and the other two are still trying to find themselves. I found the final advice to "do the work", didn't sit well with me as much "learn to be thankful for what you have" would have, but I'm 71.	Paradise in The Vault	2024	23
46	Little Deaths (****) Two childhood best friends grow up sharing all aspects of life. While I couldn't always understand them, I never doubted the depth of their friendship. Though they both love to dance, they differ in health, family, and career paths which causes some fiction, but mostly was lovingly shared between them.	Summerhall	2024	16
47	Conspiracy (****) Based on real documents, this play recreates a meeting in Berlin of 14 German military and civilian leaders that determined the best way to deal with Jews. The discussion is chilling, and pragmatic with the need for forced labor workers arguing against execution. Though their anti-Semitism was universal, they used the word "evacuate" when they knew it meant to put Jews on trains to death camps.	Hill Street Theatre	2024	19
48	Ruby Carr: ebae (****) Ruby is a bright, gentle soul who has worked card to create this comedy routine based on her obsession with e-bay. She found humor in everything from auctioned unwanted gifts to Victorian collectibles to losing an auction. Her show proves that a good comedian can mine anything, and find laughs.	Underbelly, George Square	2024	13

49	Sleepover (****) Three tweens have a sleepover with the appropriate childish concerns and behaviors. Whether its telling the 8-year-old sister that menstruation is bleeding from her butt, or gasping about a celebrity divorce their portrayals of the girls' naivete was perfect. While I was originally put off by a bizarre dream or look inside a young mind, I came to appreciate how it tied into the earlier imagery of the girls.	Greenside @ George Street	2024	17
50	Breathe (****) Three puppeteers populate a miniature forest where an oak seedling roams both above and below ground until it finds the perfect spot to lay down its roots. Beside the seedling, there are insects, birds, leaves, worms,, and roots that come alive. While the large video screen facilitates us imagining his world, watching the camera work deal with the many miniature sets was fascinating.	Pleasance Dome	2024	12
51	27 (****) The "Glasgow Three" are three twenty something men who met at drama school, and now live together going nowhere while they hold dead end jobs. Though we hear how one earned his nickname, and how the group initially met, the meat of the play is how all three now deal with one of them planning on committing suicide at the party the night before his 28th birthday to garner noteriety for the other two. While there are a couple scenes of drunken parties, the explicit demonstrations of caring raise this above your typical frat boy show.	C ARTS | C venues | C aurora	2024	2
52	The Glasstown Conspiracy (****) This appropriately young cast portrays the Bronte children as they each develop their own style of character for their literary creations. Each must deal with unruly characters the demand their author's attention, with Charlotte at one point finding herself surrounded by a mob of her characters. I reveled in the unexpected quality of acting of the tween and younger cast.	Space on The Mile	2024	19

53	Edgar Allan Poe: The Murders in the Rue Morgue (****) In 1841, a private detective and friend try to solve how a woman could be murdered and stuffed into a chimney inside a room that has its windows nailed shut, and its door locked from the inside. I could not but help but notice served as the original template for modern detective stories. The explanations of precise deductions of the detective are closely echoed by Sherlock Holmes.	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2024	23
54	Screen Test (****) In 1935, an ingenue arrives in Hollywood from England, and starts out at the bottom of the stardom ladder with a lineless part until an anvil drops on the girl with two lines. That sets the stage for a comedy of screen tests with one liners, slowly growing arts, and a few dance numbers. It is all good fun with a seven year plot that touches on all the expected scenarios, with only the macabre ending out of place.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	24
55	Per-Verse (****) A sexually confident woman offers doggerel on many aspects of dealing with men. The rhymes are fun, but her disdain for the ineptness and affection of her pursuers makes her seem heartless. I was reminded of my age by her seemingly now acceptable lack of interest in emotional ties.	C ARTS | C venues | C aquila	2024	16
56	Fire Ignites (****) This short show has an Iranian you woman demonstrate in several scenes the plight of lesbians and women in general in Iran. The scenes run from a hidden lesbian's homelife to songs of protest written by actress to her burning her hajab in public and then suffering beatings and imprisonment. Each scene has a searing sincerity with an occasional real tear.	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	23

57	Planetarium Lates: You are Here (****) This live astronomer narrated show starts with an aerial view of the building, and then slowly zooms out to Earth, then Solar System, and on until we see the observable universe of innumerable separate galaxies. He id a great job without a script. I'd seen this when I was young, but it was a good reminder of our place in reality.	Dynamic Earth	2024	21
58	Will Pickvance: Wonky (****) Pickvance tells of his life playing the piano while giving examples of his expertise. His initial, classical piece demonstrated his virtuosity, and the range and blending of his medleys was impressive. I wish he had fewer songs in his medleys so they could be longer.	Summerhall	2024	11
59	Tones: A Hip-Hop Opera (????) This rating is simply a place holder. We had to leave after five minutes because I simply could not understand enough of his words with music masking them from my hearing aids. I just wanted to have some historical note for myself. Please ignore this.	Roundabout @ Summerhall	2024	5
60	History of Paper by Oliver Emanuel and Gareth Williams (***) A man and his wife go through a box full of papers they found in his recently deceased father's house. Each paper makes a touching contribution to a picture of a the man's life. The script is wonderful, but the music and lyrics leave a lot to be desired.	Traverse 2	2024	10
61	Highly Suspect Murder Mystery – The Great British Bloodbath (***) A woman is found dead in her dressing room for a TV baking contestant, and the groups in the audience must figure the who and how of the murder when given a folder of clues. This is an escape room quest adapted into a play. My wife and I had a good time solving the various puzzles, but failed to figure out the how.	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	16

62	Naomi Grossman: American Whore Story Naomi tells of her love life, and the wide range of jobs she held until she became a star on the American Horror Story TV show. Whether she is tending a lover in a coma, teaching Spanish as an Argentinian native, or driving a Red Bull Mini this overachiever finds something funny to say about it—even if she never was a prostitute. Nonetheless, her love life pales in comparison to her employment.	Gilded Balloon Patter House	2024	23
63	MacPlebs (***) Two actors, who play messengers in “MacBeth”, take on the whole play when the rest of the cast are killed in a “tram related accident.” By asserting that they have never read the play, they permit the show to veer off the rails in wonderful ways. All of the plays highlights are here, with even a few key lines, but their twist keep it all fun and yet within the bounds of a good farce.	theSpace on the Mile	2024	12
64	Casual Encounters (***) A middle aged couple decide to try wife swapping to solve their marital troubles by inviting a couple from a swapping website into their home. Thing go quite awry in the invited couple are not what they expected. The plot is well crafted to have a variety of scenarios to mine for comedy. The other couple provided a great contrast to the staid homeowners.	Hill Street Theatre	2024	23
65	Jeromaia Detto: MUSH (***) An almost mute fellow involves the entire audience step by step in a series of fun tasks. He masterfully guides individuals to behave in a given manner through sometimes subtle gestures. He worked hard to successfully turn the entire audience into an orchestra that he could conduct.	Underbelly Cowgate	2024	22

66	Planetarium Lates: Pink Floyd's Dark Side of the Moon (***) This is a 2023 animation that was combination of the first visit to the moon and a psychedelic trip that I saw last year, and joined my wife this year. It was well done, the music has held up over time, and I gave it four stars last year. There is one scene of an approaching sandstorm that again had me on the edge of my very comfortable seat.	Dynamic Earth	2024	21
67	Love's a Beach (***) A gay couple are influencers in separate spheres who try to deal with a public separation when one agrees to work in Dubai for a month. The initial ad for incontinence underwear confused me, but once I understood the theme of a loving couple that panders to their followers and sponsors, I could appreciate the bitter sweet satire. The ending is a perfect recapitulation of the story.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	
68	State of Grace (***) An actor portrays the Australian prostitute Grace Bellavue who made a name for herself advocating for sex worker rights. Between her sex work, social media, singing, and writing magazine articles shw was very busy. There was a quick portrayal of a day in her life that was quite informative, but the play pretty much ignored the depressive side of her bipolar disease that caused her suicide.	Assembly Rooms	2024	23
69	Dead Mom Play (***) An 18-year old man barely tends his dying mother in last weeks while the grim reaper makes several appearances. This fast moving, self-conscious play is a too witty approach to his denial. The technique of quickly alternating, almost overlapping, soliloquies was impressively acted, but I found that it forced me to concentrate on one actor at the expense of the other, which as dissatisfying.	theSpace @ Niddry St	2024	15

70	Eric's Tales of the Sea – A Submariner's Yarn (***) A real submariner tells of his career in the silent service, and his great friendship with sailor. Whether talking about his harrowing experience with the practice emergency dive tank, or the antics of he and his friend, he made it all come alive. His encounters with sharks, particularly landing on one with his bare feet are particularly memorable.	Just the Tonic at The Caves	2024	21
71	Daughters Of Roisin (***) In the 910s, a seventeen-year-old unwed Irish girl is pregnant, and her family has such disdain that they refer to the fetus as the illness. The play wants to draw our attention that many such girls are still sent away, and their babies whisked away right after birth. Though touching, she often spoke too softly to be understood by my wife and me.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	24
72	Outpatient (***) This true story has a thirty-something decides to write an article on dying by interviewing people who are dying, but then finds out she may be. The excerpts from the interviews provide the range of approaches taken, and provide a reference for her own approach. She handled the acoustics of the circular room pretty well, but I still missed many of her words.	Summerhall	2024	25
73	Negare (***) This short physical theater piece has a mute clown stuff towels in his shirt to become fat, and then present a beautiful, skillful interpretative dance. It wasn't until now that I realized that the carrots that we and he eat may symbolize a diet that allows him to lose the towels and then transform into a slender, sleek, golden godlike figure. This is one of those works where I really appreciated the artistry of the performer, but didn't enjoy the piece as much as others because it was short, and I missed the text of regular theater.	C ARTS | C venues | C aquila	2024	12

74	Heartbreak Hotel (***) A woman discusses the physiological aspects of the phases of heartbreak with a a backdrop of her own break-up with a man. The couple's interactions were right on point, and the science interesting. However, the musical interludes were a waste of our time.	Summerhall	2024	11
75	Birdwatching (***) After hiking five miles from the legal campgrounds, three young women pitch their tent in a remote clearing. As night approaches they play a variety of games that reveal the fragility of their relationships as well as their fears as little sounds in the dark portend ill. I found their acting superb, and the devolution into horror legitimate though unnecessary and unexpected on my part.	theSpace on the Mile	2024	4
76	Sisyphean Quick Fix (***) Two Maltese sister, one of whom lives in London, must care for their alcoholic father. The play does a good job of exploring how the share responsibility can impact the sibling's relationship. They each reach their breaking points in different, but dramatic ways with one by stealing his shoes.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	24
77	Is There Work on Mars? (***) A young Chinese woman applies to become a worker on Mars for a Elon Musk company by participating in a semi-automated application process in a room with only two chairs. Though the process is supposed to be neutral to cultures and neurodiversity, she soon finds that the job she wants actually has cultural requirements. The her final disposition is appropriately chilling.	theSpace on the Mile	2024	22
78	My Mother's Funeral: The Show (***) An impoverished playwright must write a new play in two weeks to pay for her mother's funeral. As her artistic director keeps imposing his vision on her developing play, the stress of the situation builds at the same time she and her brother deal with their different experiences with their mother. She conveys her desperation perfectly, while the ending seems valid.	Roundabout @ Summerhall	2024	5

79	Shroud Maker (***) An old shroud maker in present day Gaza retraces her life from being a daughter of a Palestinian who lives with a British couple until the British leave in 1948, then becoming a U.N. refugee in Gaza, and finally a shroud maker. Her young life, and that of her adopted son provide two different takes on the privations of the Palestinians. The play is a bit wearing, but that may well be because of the depressing subject.	Pleasance Dome	2024	19
80	Cosmologist's Guide To Life and Love (***) Using a well-crafted multi-media PowerPoint presentation a cosmologist explores competing views of the universe, with a minor diversion to love. All the big names are there—Einstein, Shrodinger, Hawkings, and Sagan, but in a very accessible way. There was lots of laughs, and mental light bulbs lit.	Greenside @ Riddles Court	2024	4
81	VL (***) This has two high school seniors work out strategies for one to lose his VL (virgin lip) status. This raucous two-hander is fun, and yet touching at times, as we are introduced to several characters from their school. The misapprehension of one and his coming out are the keys to making it so satisfying.	Roundabout @ Summerhall	2024	5
82	So Young (***) To the dismay of his two closest friends, a recently widowed middle aged man falls in love with a self-assured twenty-year old woman. The play makes the source of the wife's displeasure pretty clear early on, but that didn't help me enjoy seeing her misguided treatment of the lovebirds. Nonetheless, her final solution to the roiling disagreement is well plotted, and brought tears to my eyes.	Traverse 1	2024	6

83	Ambiguous Proposition (***) This one woman show has a human resources arbitrator step in to defend her son against sexual harassment charges. Her constant restatement of "My son would never do that" started to ring hollow as she does not produce the real evidence that may have been available. The ramifications to her own career seemed a bit of a stretch.	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	20
84	Confessions of a Teletubby (***) A woman who played a Teletubby for six years recounts how she got the job, and life inside and outside those huge and cumbersome costumes.. She is a delight, and has the personality and squeaky voice you would hope for. If found it fascinating that the Teletubbies costumes had to be so large so that their proportions would match that of a 3-year old, and that the films on their bellies always repeated so that three-year-olds would feel empowered whey they could predict what would happen.	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	8
85	My Mother Doesn't Know I'm Kinky (***) A happily married middle aged woman finds that something is missing from her life, and decides to dip her toe into the BDSM scene without her spouse. Her slow exploration was perfectly suited to here cautious temperament. On the other hand, her graphic description of her encounter with a dominatrix perfectly suits that latent side of her.	theSpace @ Niddry St	2024	18
86	Sun, the Mountain, and Me (***) To address his artist's block, a seemingly bipolar fellow looks at books for inspiration, and finds that the tale of Icarus resonates with him. Besides Icarus the story of an escaped World War II Italian POW in Kenya is introduced with little justification. Both the Icarus and POW tales are beautifully told, but have tenuous lessons for the painter, and use time better spent on his mostly ignored depression.	Underbelly, Cowgate	2024	21

87	Did You Mean to Fall Like That (***) A 38-year old poorly hands a trial separation from his wife that she had sought. The actor does a great job of subtly differentiating the many characters he meets The play works well except that the crucial meeting with his wife was way too short and belied all that had led up to it.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	22
88	The Scot and the Showgirl (***) Frances Ruffelle and Norman Bowman combine to sing show tunes, love songs, and a few Scottish oldies. They both have great voices, and chemistry to burn. As it happens, I didn't know many of the songs, and their style of prolonging the last word made it difficult to understand many of them.	Pleasance Dome	2024	26
89	James Whale: Beyond Frankenstein (***) A single actor creates more than twenty characters to tell of the life story of Whale, who directed "Frankenstein", "The Invisible Man", and "Showboat". Though the many characters proved breadth from the his English childhood to directorial experiences to retirement life, they were also confusing because the scenes were not in chronological order. I thought the scene of Whale directing the young girl and Karloff's Frankenstein at the lake was the best at showing Whale's personality and generosity.	ZOO Southside	2024	16
90	Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu 3) (***) The five stories for this show are: NASA attempts to gin up support by sending celebrities into space; a gay woman chooses to marry a gay man; an unfamiliar daughter returns from college for Christmas; two foreign airline baggage clerks give a customer a hard time; and a fortune cookie predicts the death of a diner. Though a little darker than in the past years, most are skits are fun. The plot twist at the end of the returning daughter added a lot.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	11

91	Until the Next Wedding (***) A handsome man and a large woman are surprised to meet other at a wedding after having not seen each other for five years. At the same time that they alternately draw closer and move physically apart we learn what attracts them to each other, and, more importantly, what seem to be insurmountable differences. The final scene is both touching, and well justified.	Paradise in Augustines	2024	3
92	Buckets of Blood - Fairy Tales Not for Kids (***) A storyteller presents the original Grimm's tales with all their original gore. I was surprised how many stories involved chopping people up and cooking them in a big pot. I found the storyteller wiining, and his discussion of various versions of the same fairy tale enlightening.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	-31
93	Beach Boys Sounds (***) Three strings and two vocalists gave their renditions of the pop group's hits. Their performance was workmanlike, and definitely entertained the crowd. The lack of a keyboard, and attenuated vocals did detract from out enjoyment.	Le Monde	2024	18
94	A Montage of Monet (***) Monet sits with a projection screen behind him to describe his life, and display the works of him and his friends. His tale is clear, informative, and full of little tid bitts that make him come alive. In particular, I had not known of his repeated dependence on his stepdaughter/daughter-in-las.	Greenside @ George St	2024	17
95	Lies Where It Falls (***) The Ulster actor, Downton Abbey's Ruairi Conaghan, tells of his roles, focusing on a play about the Brighton IRA bombing, and "Hamlet". Though for the bombing play, sitting across from the pardoned bomber was vexing for him, dealing with a sudden case of fibromyalgia that sapped his strength for one hundred performances of "Hamlet" had a much greater impact. He seemed to need to prove his thespian chops by repeatedly yelling at the top of his lungs in our small room.	C ARTS | C venues | C alto	2024	15

96	It's the Economy, Stupid! (***) A fellow explains economic theory of Thatcher's privatization, and the later Clinton/Blair approaches while his partner offers more conservative interpretations as well as magic tricks. They work together well to present understandable critques without getting buried in jargon. I learned how the plan to have renters purchase their social housing made economic sense until the money didn't go to building more housing.	Pleasance Dome	2024	12
97	Jobsworth (***) A woman holds three jobs to make ends meet, including supporting her snake obsessed, alcoholic father. While the plot was well fashioned to fit the post-Covid Zoom employment opportunities, her consistent failure with her dog watcher seems out of character. The outrageous actions by her philandering boss make him look more stupid than he would be.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	20
98	Behind the Curtain (***) A large, very young cast take on the roles of the back stage crew as well as the diva for whom they are preparing. What they lack in volume and talent they make up for with their exuberance. The music and lyrics are mundane, but audience composed of family members didn't care.	C ARTS | C venues | C aquila	2024	9
99	The Billie Joel Story (***) This four piece rock band produced a workmanlike tribute to Billie Joel by covering all of his hits and providing bits of his personal history as well as snippets from his interviews. The whole band played and sang well, but it had the feel that it was the end of the Fringe, and they were happy it was over. The young bassist/occasional keyboardist in particular never cracked a smile.	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2024	25

100	Main Character Energy (***) A bit-part actress decides to create a show to demonstrate her self-professed talent. The whole audience really got into supporting her decidedly average efforts at singing, acting and dancing. Though not a classic beauty, in the last act her sexiness really showed through to us.	Roundabout @ Summerhall	2024	5
101	Adequate Abridgement of Boarding School Life as a Homo (***) As the title suggest, we follow a gay young man through his time at a boarding school. The show depicts a wide range of his activities from his initial hazing to classroom learning to his lovemaking. His long term relationship allowed the story to have more depth than I had expected.	Just the Tonic at The Caves	2024	3
102	Momma Drama presents Stretchmarks! (***) We follow three women with Mother Nature advising them,, through their pregnancies and the first three years of their children. Mixed with the many complaints and a few joyful moments are some sage advice. The last, in particular, seemed very important: “If mommy is not happy, then baby is not happy—find time for yourself.”	Greenside @ Riddles Court	2024	4
103	Wallace (***) A shackled Wallace tells of his battles, capture, and execution. His stories are appropriately grizzly for his time. I wish he had softened his brogue so I could better understand him.	Hill Street Theater	2024	15
104	Plotters (***) A company of four grave robbers banter while going about their business in the early 19th century. Despite having had a cup of coffee this show failed to hold my attention. The plot was just too thin, and the characters one-dimensional.	Assembly Rooms	2024	18

105	Same Team (***) Five homeless women form a team to play in an international football tournament in Milan. The variety of their backgrounds and physiques provided many opportunities to explore their lives, and approaches. In many ways, this was your typical "team" show with the pulling together and overcoming obstacles, but for me my hearing made the many loud football games difficult to understand, and repetitive.	Traverse 1	2024	6
106	In Two Minds (***) A daughter must deal with her visiting bipolar mother. While the mother's portrayal of mania and depression were spot on, and the daughter's reactions seemed appropriate, the lack of new insights or information disappointed. The shared dancing to her manic mother's tape seemed to be the one time we see a real link of love instead of just filial obligation.	Traverse 2	2024	1
107	Nation (***) An actor stands in the middle of the stage and says something like, "Now, the speaker stands in front of the audience…", which establishes that we are supposed to be aware of our place in the world. As his story continues, we learn of a dead body in a little town and how the townspeople react to the events that led to it. The unusual approach to storytelling served the moral of the story well.	ROUNDABOUT @ Summerhall	2024	5
108	And They Played Shang-A-Lang (***) Four tween boys and four tween girls must figure out how to deal with the opposite sex while their understanding teacher often looks on. From a boy bragging a girl let him see tissue filled bra to single sex songs at a school dance to dates negotiated by friends the show feels well attuned to the stress of early sexual interactions. I was impressed by how much the British audience sang along with the many pre-recorded songs—not something I'd see in the USA.	Hill Street Theatre	2024	23

109	Surrender (***) This solo show has an incarcerated woman trying to explain to her estranged daughter the events that led to her conviction. The actress does a good job of portraying a mother who doesn't handle the challenges of rasing a child well. Her character seems real enough, but I grew weary of her whining—even if it was in character.	Summerhall	2024	11
110	How I Learned to Swim (***) A woman, who had always feared the water, finally decides to learn to swim for deeply personal reasons. Her scary interactions with water, both as a child, and adult convey the phobia perfectly. The plot is a bit thin, and the final scene relies on an uninspired literary device.	Roundabout @ Summerhall	2024	5
111	Camile O'Sullivan Loveletter (***) The passing of two close friends this year has Camile devote this concert to their music with a constant undercurrent of melancholy. Since many of the songs were new to me, I had trouble understanding the lyrics, and her repeated straying from the microphone didn't help. One song in particular was way out her vocal range, and just sounded like yelling a screeching.	Assembly Roxy	2024	-31
112	Last Incel (***) A Zoom group of four incels must deal with a woman who has had a one night stand with one of their members. The intial interaction among the group and later with the woman seem true to form, but her lie is dismissed too easily. The use of metal rectangles as monitors for dance worked well, but the show would be better served with more character development, and less dancing.	Underbelly, Bristo Square	2024	-31
113	Addict (***) After receiving a reply to a very popular text that threatens to rape his girlfriend, a man plots his revenge. As his texting plot evolves, we learn how texting can be abused. The story is fine, but he repeatedly lowered his voice which made much of what he said impossible for both of us to hear.	theSpace on the Mile	2024	16

114	Bucket List (***) This show has a young man announce that he is dead to his girlfriend followed by many, many short scens of them catting. While the two characters are incredibly likable, and each interaction enjoyable to watch, the show as a whole was a mess. We cannot easily tell when he is a ghost, if it is before or after he is dead, and, more importantly, what are his ghostly physical characteristics—eating, sex?	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	14
115	What The Veck? Songs in the Key of Strife! (***) A personable former primary school teacher takes up his guitar and sings short songs about such things as dumpster diving and people's self confessed embarrassing moments. He creates a friendly ambience that reminds us of the simple, non-judgmental joys of childhood. He had one song that is a collection of questions his four year old son asked, and another of incomprehensible jokes from his friends kids that put the wonder back in our structured adult world. .	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	2
116	Four More Short Plays Loosely Linked by the Theme of Crime (***) Three actors perform four humorous plays with the following premises: a pair of wild West train robbers trying to figure out what to do with an usual cargo; a pair friends trying to decide whether to help their friend commit a crime; a spiritualist hippie tries to convince his conventional wife to commit a crime to fulfill the prediction of three witches; and two thugs extorting money from a butcher constantly confusing their statements with Cockney rhyming slang. I found the first and last play quite amusing, but the middle two seemed uninspired and weak. In particular, the cargo of the first story was both realistic and fantastic, and its three characters each keenly drawn and novel	theSpace on the Mile	2024	3

117	Garrett Millerick Needs More Space (***) Millerick is pessimistic about the UK's current and future condition, and offers fanciful solutions with a bit too much ardor, and volume. His proposal for a new space race to mimic the effects of the Space Race of the 1960s based on the many parallels was creative. I had hoped that he would tie in his daughter's humor to that of Apollo 8's plumbing problems, but he didn't. Note: This was a preview, which by their very nature are a bit rough and humorless at some points.	Monkey Barrel-The Tron	2024	-30
118	Beyond Krapp (***) The spirit of a recently deceased 15-year old Catholic man looks back with regret at not being able to plan his own funeral. While pathos permeates the show, it still has a light feel as he tells of oa living mother and estranged girlfriend. In the end, his imagined funeral of strippers and bands must lose out to his mother's ritualized one with her euology.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	-31
119	Dara O Briain : My Entire Life is a Work in Progress (***) O Briain is clearly a well established stand-up comedian who talked about a variety of subjects including snow skiing and trying to find his birth mother. Most of the time he spoke so fast I couldn't understand him. However, his tale of finding his birth mother has a nice twist.	Assembly Rooms	2024	19
120	MILF and the Mistress (***) A married, middle-aged lesbian was happily married but found something lacking, and looks into BDSM. It is an interesting story with nudity and sexual recreations, but, oddly, not arousing. Her matter of fact approach to the subjects makes it all the more real, and more an exploration than exploitation.	theSpace @ Niddry St	2024	12

121	John Wayne Gacy, the Killer Lown: Born Evil? (***) An actor assumes the role of Gacy arguing that he was innocent of all charges. He plays the psychopath perfectly with his sincerity being all the more disquieting because we know he is lying. It was a great reminder that I cannot tell when someone is lying.	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	14
122	Tartan Tat (***) An Edinburgh souvenir shop suddenly becomes an internet sensation when its stock worker inadvertently makes a pro-trans statement. This show is a slice of retail store life mixed with ridicule of media frenzies. Without more character backstory, the workers are just stereotypical stand-ins for which we don't care.	theSpace @ Niddry St	2024	14
123	Plenty of Fish in the Sea (***) For this physical theater piece has a shipwrecked man awakes to find that he is being attended by a French nun, and her aid. With some French, and a little English, he learns to fish, and of passion. I never really understood what was happening, but maybe fishing, eating, and then indulging was all there was.	Assembly George Square Studios	2024	14
124	Tom Lawrinson: Buried Alive and Loving it (***) Lawrinson is engaging and obviously enjoys interacting with the audience. He pokes gentle fun at his family, recounting the time they spent as expats in Spain. Tales of schooldays, being the only brother to three sisters, and, later, having to meet all their boyfriends makes for an entertaining hour. Note: due to my poor hearing I had real trouble understanding much of what he said so I had my wife write this review, but we agreed on the rating.	Underbelly, Cowgate	2024	7

125	Go to Your Womb (***) A mother with her actual teenage daughter as an assistant cover motherhood from trying to have the perfect birthing to raising a child who is happy with their upbringing. The initial scattered clothes across the stage reflects the range of approaches used by the performer. Though at times fun, the general shambolic nature left me cold.	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	8
126	Little Beast (***) Lady Caroline Lamb pursues Lord Byron, and then is jilted while her modern day counterpart deals with the same fate. One of those plays that left little impression on me. I just didn't care about either woman.	theSpace on the Mile	2024	7
127	Sara Pascoe: I Am A Strange Gloop (WIP) (***) Pasco was definitely in the early stages of developing her act, and made use of that fact as a source of humor. She spent much of her time complaining about the hard work of raising two young children. While the children's antics provide some funny stories, her repeated whining wore on me. Note: This was a preview, which by their very nature are a bit rough and humorless at some points.	Monkey Barrel 2	2024	-30
128	Loose Ends (***) A shoplifter invites a man to stay at his flat after the fellow inadvertently helped him. This sparse show centers on the talkative shoplifter with the taciturn fellow providing a fine contrast. The songs of Roy Orbison offer a haunting backdrop the shoplifter's fragile mental state.	theSpace on the Mile	2024	7
129	Caged: The True Story of Isabella MacDuff (***) The woman who crowned Robert the Bruce stands in an outdoor cage for four years where travelers could abuse her. She is unrepentant, and tells of the Scottish events that led her to being there. The actress delivers her tale with the courage and bite of a dangerous revolutionary.	Hill Street Theatre	2024	19

130	44 Sex Acts In One Week (***) A website publisher hires an author to implement the 44 sex act in a sex guru's book. The actors stayed fully clothed for the dozen acts they demonstrated with fruit often involved. Besides a sex book we have the sex guru promoting her lifestyle, and an animal rights warrior involved in concurrent stories that create too much zaniness for me.	Pleasance Dome	2024	15
131	Whisky and Tales (***) A fellow leads the tasting of four whiskies, and provides the background of whiskey and the four regions represented. He is personable, and made the two hours fly by. It was all could hope for from a simple whiskey tasting.	Hot Toddy	2024	26
132	Iain Dale: All Talk with Miriam Margolyes (***) A substitute for Dale interviewed the Jewish Scottish octogenarian comedienne/actress., and then posed questions from the audience. My wife liked her directness and self-confidence, but I, who knew little of her, found little of interest. Though I did find that her dealing with other celebrities, particularly Maggie Smith, did catch my attention.	Pleasance at EICC	2024	9
133	Margolyes & Dickens: The Best Bits For my second encounter of the day with Margolyes she started by reading passages said by her favorite Dickens characters, and then for the second half she answered questions from the audience. I'm sorry to say that most the accents she adopted in her readings made her unintelligible to me. For the second time in the day, I heard her tell of the story of her crossing the Edinburgh Meadow late at night, and helping a soldier in a tree relieve his sexual tension.	Pleasance at EICC	2024	9

134	Psyche (***) In the early 19th century a younger sister is raped by the husband of her older sister as that sister is giving birth which sets her on a path of promiscuity. Despite her frequent sexual encounters described in the show, her icy tone keeps the whole story dark and dreary. She tells much of the tale while lying in a bathtub which I'd guess may have represented a desire to cleanse herself, but was never clear.	theSpace on the Mile	2024	8
135	One More (***) Two men repeatedly try to make time with two women, and fail. The show does not differentiate the characters whey they are suppose to be different people in some scenes. On top of that, one of the actors rarely changes characterization throughout the show which adds to the confusion.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	13
136	Fear and Misery of the Third Reich (***) This well intentioned show about the life and times of the people of Germany during the 1930s has a large cast that just couldn't fill the huge hall with intensity of the experience. Each aspect of the tale was broken into several parts that were then mixed with the parts of the other tales which made for a chaotic feel to the whole show—which may have been the intention. Presenting excerpts of text on white sheets on a clothesline was acceptable, but having three people reading/singing them contributed nothing.	Central Hall	2024	4
137	Traditional Tales from Scotland (***) A woman combines traditional tales from different parts of Scotland with short songs in a pleasing fashion. She accompanied herself with a Scottish squeeze box that was set to a single long note for sections of a tale. All in all it was an enjoyable, if not memorable, hour.	Scottish Storytelling Centre	2024	25

138	Psychobitch (***) After her lover accuses a woman of crying four times during the yearlong relationship, she prepares a PowerPoint presentation explaining each of the four. Her reasons are varied, and permit the play to comment on a range of issues. The character was too polished for me to care about her tale.	Summerhall	2024	15
139	Shakespeare for Breakfast (***) This version sets Shakespeare's "The Tempest" in a small contemporary university on a remote island. With a smattering of Will's words, the transfer is less zany, and less witty than I have come to expect from this franchise. I did find the cast personable and capable, but they just had a dull script to perform.	C ARTS | C venues | C aurora	2024	1
140	My English Persian Kitchen (***) An Iranian woman cooks a traditional Iranian dish, ash, while providing short snippets about her life in Iran and London. The food smelled great, but the brevity of the text failed to engender much sympathy with her plight. For example, she never said how her husband abused—just that he had.	Traverse 2	2024	1
141	At Home with Will Shakespeare (***) Pip Utton tries to apply his talent for impersonating celebrities to William Shakespeare, but it didn't work well because, unlike Hitler and Dylan, the author does not have a recognizable public persona. Instead, Utton just dons an Elizabethan costume and spends most of his time reciting from the Bard's works. The most memorable aspect were quotes that sounded like Shakespeare, but were from the likes of Ben Johnson and Marlowe.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	22
142	Evolutionary and Inescapable Rotting of Girlhood (***) This university production has three girlfriends supported by three fellows explore the issues adolescent girls confront. The issues ranged from wishing for "boobs" to bemoaning rashes from thongs to dealing with boys. The entire production felt very amateurish, but very sincere.	Greenside @ George Street	2024	15

143	Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu 2) Five of the plays were: an attempted armed robbery goes wrong; an urban couple laments moving to the suburbs; a bride is polled about her certainty on her wedding day; a first time parachutist is joined by a woman without a chute; and a man discovers there are people living in his attic. The first and last were fun, but, on the whole, the show seemed much darker than their usual fare. Having a cold blooded murder, a discussion of suicide, and lamentation of the death of son is not what I had expected early in the morning.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	10
144	4 Girls The First Letter E (***) Four tweens play a strange video game in a room that is in a vacant building. By mixing hallucinated voices with an evil voyeur this tale is either spooky, or non-sensical. With interactions among the girls being realistic for their age, I found the blend of real and unreal confusing.	Greenside @ George Street	2024	14
145	Zelda and Hadley: Together at Last (***) Two women assume the roles of Hadley Hemingway and Zelda Fitzgerald putting on a radio play based on one their famous husbands' books that is chosen by the audience. Their gin from glasses sloppily refilled by an assistant transforms a potentially biting critique of "The Great Gastsby" into a sophomoric farce. The two leads seem to have fun, but I tired of their unneeded hijinks.	Paradise in The Vault	2024	8
146	The Selkie's Wife (***) A nice young woman talking about seal/women who are captured and turned into slave/wives. She tells a couple of tales, plays violin, and sings ballads all in a less than riveting fashion. Her talent, and the script are just too thin.	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	7

147	BATSHIT (***) An Australian woman attempts to show how her grandmother, and all women, have been differentially diagnosed with mental illness throughout history using a wide variety of evidence. The show brough out the debater in me, and I found the much of her evidence inconclusive whether excerpts from 1960s TV interviews of pedestrians, or her grandmother's mental treatment record. From her opening gagged song, to her contrived moving uterus, to its final list of demonized women the show was quite creative, but didn't prove its thesis.	Traverse 2	2024	1
148	Dream of Being a Madame (***) A money hungry woman wants to marry a man who will spend money on her repeatedly meets with her friend to complain about her plight. I really didn't like her, and her friend's life was given just cursory time. So, I had little interest in either woman's tale.	theSpace on the Mile	2024	7
149	Rita Lynn: Life Coach (***) This slice of life of a cocaine addict who finds that assuming the role of a life coach permits her to maintain her drug dependent life. While she portrays her cocaine addiction well, her character has 90% of the lines, and we see no interesting development of the character, nor plot. Without more character development, I grew bored with the hyper antics of her and her addicted secondary characters.	Pleasance Dome	2024	-31
150	Mark Nelson: Getting Better Man (***) Nelson is an edgy comedian who is not afraid of presenting offensive opinions and ideas. Regretting Trump's assassin's poor aim is a hidden thought of many, but suggesting a law to permit him to shoot his son in his face was particularly humorless. On the other hand, his story of taking his son to the Euros was both funny and heartwarming. Note: This was a preview, which by their very nature are a bit rough and humorless at some points.	Monkey Barrel-Hive	2024	-30

151	Badger (***) An administrative assistant holds the whole office together as a badger disrupts a wedding on the lawn. When an actor enters the office in the first scene wearing a badger mask, I knew I was in for a zany show, and, unhappily my fears were confirmed. I rarely enjoy farces, with their penchant for way too over the top antics and situations, and this one was no different.	theSpace on the Mile	2024	7
152	Michael Odewale: Of Mike and Men (***) Of the five comedians I saw the first day, Michael's set seemed the roughest, and unmemorable--even the same night. Note: This was a preview, which by their very nature are a bit rough and humorless at some points.	Monkey Barrel-Hive	2024	-30
153	Cherry (***) A young woman who is unsure of her sexuality asks almost everyone for advice. The whole play seems like it sole purpose is to educate her, and us, how to be comfortable with such confusion with a tilt towards lesbianism; it is like one of those films you would see in a high school health class, but with swearing. In particular, her willingness to reveal problem to virtually everyone she meets seemed quite unrealistic.	theSpace on the Mile	2024	21
154	Signalman (***) This Dickens story has a railroad signalman respond to an apparition that appears before and after a terrible passenger train derailment. I don't know what it was about his delivery, but this ghost story never gripped me, and I repeatedly dozed. I do know that he repeatedly yelled at the top of his lungs which my ears could not bear.	ZOO Southside	2024	16
155	Catafalque (***) A civil celebrant is tired of her job giving eulogies for strangers until this one. While her reason for caring is deep, the play spends too much time showing us why she is bored. The final scene with the coffin is touching, but has too much drivel with little movement before it.	Summerhall	2024	11

156	Leni's Last Lament (***) This one woman show has her portraying the German actress/filmmaker, Leni Riefenstahl, trying to put a positive light on her affiliation with Hitler and the Nazis. On a large screen behind her we see photos her with many Nazi leaders, and scenes from her propaganda films include “Triumph of the Will”. Her efforts to cleanse her record falls flat, as does the play.	Assembly Rooms	2024	18
157	Apricot (***) Two 18-year-old girls deal with apricot sized fetuses induced when one girl has repeated abortions. From an inexplicable mitre, to a sudden childish demand for a plea for mercy to her waiting slightly longer each time, the show treated abortion with a disconcerting lightness that the topic doesn’t deserve. If the goal of the show was to show how childish 18-year old girls can be, then they missed an opportunity to provide a counterpoint when the young father complains that he wasn’t consulted, but, instead he was dismissed out of hand.	rotheSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	4
158	Any Day Now (***) After the death of a childhood friend, a young woman has more encounters with death. With hospice experiences at the center of this story, it is not surprising that this piece is fairly downbeat until the end. I suppose that hearing of the revelations of a twenty-something is pretty tame for someone like me who has repeatedly dealt with cancer.	Greenside @ George Street	2024	9
159	Sardines (***) William Wordsworth drunkenly agrees to accompany Samuel Coleridge on a 500-mile voyage in an inflated life raft to Germany. The premise is crazy, and so are there non-sensical experiences. Some loved this show, but its general incoherence left me cold.	Paradise in The Vault	2024	8

160	SOS BRN (***) Three friends try to help a fellow who feels guilty for contributing to his best friend being in a coma. Their efforts are misguided, and the introduction of ghosts is a cheap trick to allow us to hear his thoughts. Why they would cast a woman to play the role of his male best friend is beyond me.	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	21
161	Suzette (***) On the downside of her career a silent screen star is invited for an audition that takes a surrealistic turn. The actress carries off the challenging role with great skill, except that she spoke so softly most of time that neither of us could hear her, and we were sitting in the first row! I was impressed with how she bent down on one stiletto heel and then slowly swept her other leg around without losing her balance.	Greenside @ George Street	2024	10
162	I'd Like a Job Please (***) A woman repeatedly tries out for jobs, and gets involved in a scam. Her mother's unexpected participation in a company getaway adds humor to the otherwise depressing story. While searching for a job is rarely fun, this slice of life didn't provide much new.	Paradise in The Vault	2024	7
163	Peep (***) Two women stake out the apartment of the man who jilted them both. Their uneasy relationship feels right, but is not worth spending most of a play on it. Unhappily, the naïve actions of one of the women at the end of the play makes no sense.	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2024	21
164	Sammy Blew Up a Toilet (***) A large cast of university students play a kindergartner class and their teacher. They did a fair job of playing a chaotic group of kids during recess with only the antagonist overplayed and too loud. The teacher had a tinny voice that was difficult to understand, and the interactions with the antagonist were as false as his characterization.	theSpace @ Venue45	2024	21

165	Knowledge from the Future (***) A young Chinese woman repeatedly consults a fortune teller for advice on how to try to improve her life. The show moves so slowly that I lost interest half way through. Just not much there.	Paradise in The Vault	2024	8
166	Importance of Being... Earnest? (**) I generally think audience participation is a waste of valuable dramatic time, and from the start this version of Wilde's play has an abundance of audience participation. By the final scene five members of the audience had speaking roles on stage. The show was so poorly constructed that the show ran longer longer than was promised.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	19
167	Gwyneth Goes Skiing (**) Six years after having a skiing accident Paltrow was sued by the other skier. The show uses several audience members to help recreate the day of the accident and the trial. The show tries to derive humor from the audience participants and ridiculing Paltrow's persona, as well some forest creature characters, but it wears thin quickly, and runs way too long.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	22
168	Greatest Musical the World Has Ever Seen by Randy Thatcher (**) An insecure 21-year-old fellow presents his own musical that is set on two alien planets. He's a very mice guy, but I am sorry to write that the story, lyrics, and his singing are pretty weak. The music is mediocre with it all sounding similar.	Pleasance Courtyard	2024	24
169	Elizabeth I: In Her Own Words (**) Just as the title states, Queen Elizabeth I stands in front of us and recites words she wrote or said during her reign. By having the actress stay in unmoving, regally staid character throughout, the play is doom to be boring. Only her speech to rouse the crowd before the battle wit the Spanish armada did she offer anything other than a monotone talking queen.	theSpace @ Surgeons' Hall	2024	13

170	Journey to Long Nose (**) It starts with a boy asking her why she has a big nose, and another person asking her for her race. From there, her very personal search for identity follows a circuitous route through her different cultural heritages just put me to sleep. Between songs without melodies and her “revelations” this came across as a classic Fringe vanity project, except that she is a middle aged woman instead of a twenty-something woman.	Greenside @ George Street	2024	14
171	Why Do We Lie (**) This show has a large number of short scenes of examples of when people lie. Few are funny,, and few are instructive which leaves the play with almost nothing worthwhile. It was a bad idea poorly scripted.	Greenside @ Riddles Court	2024	22
172	Love's Concordia Bar (**) The audience enters a bar full of scantily clad actors who are supposedly couples, including a half man/half woman. Their dance numbers are well choreographed and performed, but their social interactions are too broad to be believed. The “Cinderella”, and little girl screamed so loud we wanted to leave, but we were on the other side of the room from the exit.	C ARTS| C Venues|C Aquila	2024	24
173	milk teeth (**) A young Black woman carries a Black baby doll with her on the advice of a counselor. I was tired, and this show failed to hold my attention. Two days later I have no memory of it.	theSpaceTriplex	2024	23
174	Verbal Diary (**) A new housemate keeps a diary for a year that his three housemates constantly secretly read. This low budget show has broad acting and poor songs. There just is nothing worth watching here.	Greenside @ George Street	2024	17

175	Loft Clearance (**) Just as the title states, this is simply a description of what a woman found when she boxed up her loft. If you are about to clear you own, and want to know how to dispose and consolidate your stuff, then this is the show for your, otherwise skip it. It was interesting to see the board games that her grandfather created on large pieces of paper just for her family enjoyment.	Greenside @ George Street	2024	17
176	Yes, We're Related (**) Two sisters plan a party for the one year anniversary of their mother's death. Actors wearing squirrel masks, throwing her ashes, and splattering trifle all happen in this shambolic mess. The final reproachment seems like a cheap feel-good ending.	Greenside @ Riddles Court	2024	17
177	Refugee! (**) This mostly mute physical theater piece has four actors portraying the experiences of four refugees—I guess. I understood none of it.	Roundabout @ Summerhall	2024	22
178	Loose Lips by Lucy Frederick (**) Two office workers make video calls, catty comments, and spread gossip as quickly as possible. Between a death, and charges of interoffice adultery there was plenty of gossip to keep the office interested, but not us. The short, initial audience participation section served no purpose except to put non-volunteers on the spot.	Laughing Horse @ 32 Below	2024	13
179	Waitin' 4 Gaia (**) I came in five minutes late to this adaptation of "Waiting for Godot", but from that start it seemed that it had all the meandering and seemingly interminable dialogue as the original. The arrival of a third character didn't help clarify the mess. In the end, it seemed to be 50 minutes of nothing—which, in a way, was the theme of the original.	theSpace @ Niddry St	2024	12

180	Lynn Faces (**) A woman who cannot play guitar gathers three other non-musical women together to form a rock band, and then put on a concert for us. The four have no talent, and their songs are worthless. I am guessing the idea is to see how bad a band could be, but, to me, it was a waste of my time.	Summerhall	2024	11
181	Natalie Palamides: WEER (**) Palamides plays a person whose left side was a woman, and the right side was a man who think of each other as completely separate people She mined the possibilities of the situation for more than it was worth. This should have been a half sketch instead of a piece that repeats ideas, like the characters of the death scene of Romeo and Juliet re-animating four times, until each idea was beaten into a boring gag.	Traverse 1	2024	6
182	Bellringers (**) Two men in a bell tower during a lightning storm wait to ring the bells to cause the storm to magically end, and die doing it. That is much of this play that either my wife, or me could fathom. There are snippets of the friendship that make sense, but, on the whole, the story was incomprehensible to us.	Roundabout @ Summerhall	2024	5
183	Tycho: Mankind's First Hotel on the Moon! (**) A teenager falls asleep, and dream that he is a special guest in the first motel on the moon described in one of his comic books. Though the bulk of the set in the hotel it seemed that nothing happened there that was relevant to the final reveal. My wife didn't like the show, and I kept falling asleep from boredom (and not lack of sleep).	theSpace @ Niddry St	2024	4

184	A Series of Apologies (in Response to an Unfortunate Incident in the School Lavatories (**) The title perfectly describes this play performed by twelve high school girls. Initially, the various ways the school administrators and politicians try to duck responsibility for their previous apologies are biting and sometimes funny, but the one trick show quickly becomes boring. The large cast performs well, but they cannot overcome the repetitive nature of the script.	C ARTS C Aquila	2024	3
185	Disco Dick (**) A daughter is caught in bed with her girlfriend by her mother just before her grandmother was due to arrive for dinner. This sophomoric farce is rife with inexplicable behavior, including a father who suddenly delights in wearing a discovered strapon, an actress who doesn't move a muscle for ten minutes, and an instruction sheet that flies from a bedroom to a dining room. It seemed that playwright took some funny parts from other farces without providing the accompanying backstory to justify them.	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2024	2
186	Addiction: The Truth (*) A former alcoholic argues that alcoholism is a moral issue, and not a disease. As with "Divine Invention", his absolute sureness in his opinion grated on me. Many of the things he asserted as absolute facts, differed from my understanding of the world.	Laughing Horse @ Bar 50	2024	12

187	Divine Invention (*) A playwright warns us that he is going to simply sit and read 30 short treatises he has written about love. I quickly tired of his self-referential stories and assertions using absolutes like “only”, “must”, and “always”, often combined with unpleasantness like “pain”, “trapped”, “death”, “suicide”, and “loss”, along with some false dichotomies. What made this particularly unenjoyable was that I was sitting in the front row, and I couldn’t bear to publicly walk out and disabuse him of his sincerely held opinion that his opus was of great service to his audience.	Summerhall	2024	2
188	3 Couples, 2 Breakups, 1 Barbie and The Berlin Wall (no stars) I really cannot tell you what this about because it is only the second Fringe show I have ever walked out of. From the beginning it was loud, with a bass saxophone playing loudly whenever someone spoke. Then, seemingly to overcome the saxophone, the actors started to scream into microphones so loudly that it hurt both Debbie and my ears, and we left.	C ARTS | C venues | C aquila	2024	3
Rank	**Review**	**Venue**	2023	**Date**
1	Strategic Love Play (*****) A man who is all about pleasing has a first date with a confrontational woman who demands honesty. As the title suggests, their date is a series of pointed verbal battles as they try to different approaches to find a lasting resolution. While she is given the bulk of biting logic lines, he gets those based on emotional social experience, with the final result surprisingly satisfying.	ROUNDABOUT @ Summerhall	2023	18
1	Scherzo (*****) Five multi-talented musicians play every imaginable instrument in a compilation of antics that amazes the audience with their diversity. From a pair parroting the Marx Brothers mirror scene to a all five doing a rhythmic dance routine using plastic cups to tap dancing with an array of footwear everything is superbly executed. Their creativity and skill is a wonder to behold.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	24

3	In Loyal Company (*****) After the blitz of Liverpool, a young man joins the army, fights in Singapore, and becomes a Japanese POW in a "Bridge Over the River Kwai" camp building a railroad in Thailand. The actor proves up to the task of blending the roles of the soldier, narrator, and a few secondary characters into a powerful whole. While the privations of the POW camp take up much of the play, it is his tales of the air attacks on his transport that stand out for me.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	7
4	Mirandolina (*****) This updated version of the 18th century Italian play has smart, beautiful innkeeper manipulating two older suitors and a misogynist to teach each a lesson. I marveled at how each male character has a comedic touch without going too far toward farce for me, and the innkeeper was sexy and sly without coming across as conniving. We remain on her side throughout as she deftly keeps her roomers interested but unrequited.	Hill Street Theatre	2023	16
5	England & Son (*****) Mark Thomas plays a bum accused of killing a man recounts his life with a hard father, lovely foster mother, and tough best friend. Thomas maintains a consistent character as he move from hard to soft to hard environments. His early ad hoc quips broke the fourth wall which was fun, and then they stopped as we are drawn into the taut story.	ROUNDABOUT @ Summerhall	2023	18
6	Deuteronomy (*****) A beggar sitting on the side of a remote road has a series of philosophical arguments with a dirty man pulling a coffin. For someone like me, who loves debating, their aimless arguments with their many logical parries and thrusts were a delight. I loved watching their intellectual and emotional relationship grow from what was clearly one sided to become that of respected equals.	ZOO Southside	2023	7

7	Standard Short Long Drop (*****) In the 1880s, a young horse thief, and older, thoughtful man are on death row not knowing what day they will be hanged. The naivete of the illiterate thief serves the play well as it invites his world weary cellmate to voice his criticism of the penal and industrial systems of that time. He even receives a book by an executioner that he reads out loud that describes the three ways to hang a man, including the "standard short long drop".	theSpaceTriplex	2023	21
8	Four (*****) The manager of a veteran string quartet made up of older men finds a female Julliard grad student to replace a departed first violin player. What a wonderful mix of short musical excerpts and vignettes exposing the strains and joys of having a new member. It was interesting to see how well the show functioned with only two real musicians.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2023	14
9	A Year and a Day (*****) After a young Irish thief is struck by an alien particle that makes each of his days a year later for the rest of the world, he must learn to cope with his fellow thieves and lover. This tale is not for every everyone, but I loved how the story deftly explores the ramifications of this curse. Though there was no set, his straightforward acting easily allowed me to picture each scene.	theSpace on the Mile	2023	4
10	Breaking the Castle (*****) As an Aussie drug addict goes through rehabilitation in Malaysia he recounts both his experiences with drugs and the family life that led him to drugs. The actor is facile with accents to differentiate a whole host of characters with every description firmly grounded in reality. I left feeling that his sister's ailment confused the story, but in hindsight I realize that there often would be many factors that would contribute to a life path to drugs.	Assembly Rooms	2023	4

11	ADULTS (*****) A teacher visits a brothel for his first time, and must deal with a former student, a baby, his sexual identity, and learning what he really needs. The play gives each of the three characters time to flesh out their own, unique concerns, both personal and professional. While I liked the play yesterday, it was only this morning that I realized how wonderfully constructed and balanced it was, with no wasted time.	Traverse Theatre	2023	9
12	1984 (*****) The play brings Orwell's dystopia to life with all its terror, trysts, and demands for psychological fealty. With sparing use of videos, the three actors keep Winston's life hopeless and isolated the way I still remember the whole book 50 years later. The torture scene where he must see five fingers when there are four epitomized was perfectly wrought.	Assembly Roxy	2023	20
13	Appraisal (*****) When the competent head of a department meets with her pedantic HR supervisor for her yearly review, the meeting does not go as she expected. The meeting evolves at a properly slow pace that demonstrates her strengths and his weaknesses. I must admit that part of my enjoyment of the play derived from her catching him lying and misspeaking.	Assembly George Square Studios	2023	3
14	Strays (*****) During a worldwide zombie epidemic, four young men who have been hiding in a secure basement for a year must deal with someone stealing from their locked storeroom outside their house. This has less to do with zombies, and more about the interactions between the four after being cooped up with each other. With a violent leader, a weak younger brother, a fellow with a secret, and a big caring fourth guy, the play has plenty of opportunities for interesting character development.	theSpace on the Mile	2023	5

15	Oat Milk & Honey (*****) A keyboardist and a gymnast/contortionist collaborate to create a blend of music attuned to her movements. As she rolls, stretches, and twists his music punctuates and/or swoops. Sometimes she would entwine herself around him, and other times she would treat him as a catatonic puppet that she would move with her body parts.	Summerhall	2023	18
16	Bill's 44th (*****) Bill is a two-person mute puppet who finds that, despite all his preparations, no one shows up for his birthday party. Amidst all the Fringe drama, this is a welcome venture into well executed creative silliness. Just when you think they have exhausted the concept, another joyous event occurs—maybe a simple carrot stick!	Underbelly, Cowgate	2023	20
17	Everything Under the Sun (****) A British U.N. peace keeper is sent on a mission to a remote base across the Sahara in Mali with an native interpreter who helps her better understand how the locals (and many other Africans) think about peace keepers. The pair confront situations that demonstrate how they care for Mali, but can be frustrated. The disturbing decision by the U.N. to leave Mali in June, and be replaced by the Russian Wagner mercenary group makes this tale all the more relevant, and heartbreaking.	Army @ The Fringe	2023	16
18	Brief Candle (****) A 15-year old girl tells of life in the 4-level vaults under the Edinburgh South Bridge where hundreds of people lived before the three-day fire in 1824. She does a wonderful job of conveying what life would be like when your family lives in total darkness without candles, and doesn't see the sun for months at a time. The necessity of using a rope to get to her level really struck me.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	17

19	James Rowland: Piece of Work (****) The easy going Rowland tells of his younger brother's life of wandering around the world, and of Rowland visiting the places of his childhood. Rowland is a sweet man, and his stories are bathed in a love of people and place. His use of a homemade map of a hamlet of his childhood lent a sense of a simpler time that reminded me of my father's childhood in the 1910s.	Summerhall	2023	24
20	Locusts (****) A gay man must deal with a his former pastor who had tried to convert his sexuality. This four-hander delicately deals with this topic in a way that allows each character a chance to express their motivation and emotional states without being preachy. The Christian protagonist does a great job of being tender, and conflicted.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	24
21	Soldiers of Tomorrow (****) An Israeli ex-pat who fulfilled his obligatory service in the Israeli army tells of his experiences there, and his take on the Israeli/Arab relationship and history. His experiences in boot camp and on patrol demonstrated both the danger and tests of morality for Israeli soldiers. I was touched by his regret that by aiming his rifle at a Lebanese child he may have caused deep psychological damage.	Summerhall	2023	23
22	OommoO (****) Lulu creates wonderful music with catchy rhythms using looping, a computer, and her pure voice. She brings her exuberance to every piece and her comments. My ears couldn't handle the constant reverb that interfered with understanding her words, hence the four stars, but the crowd would give her 5 stars.	Summerhall	2023	23

23	Grandfathers (****) These excerpts from army boot camp demonstrated how eight recruits are prepared physically, socially, and psychologically to be a fighting unit. The initial battle justifies their training by showing us a situation that may lie in their future. While their physical training is obviously needed, the examples of team building, both official and incidental are well chosen.	Hill Street Theatre	2023	21
24	Paddy Englishman, Paddy Irishman and Paddy...? (****) What starts out as a typical frat house buddy story, complete with a mislead cute woman, takes a turn into a exploration of hard choices as the IRA interrupts their carefree lives. The fact that they are such close friends allows the story to spend less time on polemics, and more on decisions based on individual lives. While initially she seemed like fluffy eye candy, the woman becomes an integral part of the whole conundrum.	Paradise in The Vault	2023	4
25	Groomed (****) Accompanied by a saxophonist who provides little breaks, a man explores pedophilic grooming initially by taking on the role of a sly primary school teacher. His manipulation of a child's mother was a wicked reminder how insidious such people can be. The section in which he has his pedophile defends himself by placing the blame on society weakens the power of the play.	Pleasance Dome	2023	12

26	Irrepressible (****) This musical has a modern day journalist commissioned by Lady Hamilton to return to the 1700s to watch her life so the journalist can write an article to correct the poor public opinion of Nelson's lover. The show does portray her as having been a prostitute early in her life, but justifies the choice as reasonable for poor, pretty, single woman at the time, and argues that she should not be judged by modern standards. The music was tuneful, the lyrics clear, appropriate, and occasionally witty, and most of the singing was strong, particularly that of Lady Hamilton.	theSpace@Niddry	2023	14
27	Manchester Anthem (****) An actor depicts the night a working class Manchester fellow celebrates being accepted to Oxford by sharing a beer with his close friends, and then attending an upper class party with some classmates. The show provides a good comparison of the different British social strata while avoiding being too judgmental of the upper class. The dance scene at a club when he finally accepts the gentry is particularly effective.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	8
28	Perfectly Average Glimpse into a Perfectly Average Day (****) This show is composed of five independent solo plays: a best man savages his abusive father; a swimming instructor bemoans not receiving credit for her student's Olympic gold medal; an actor worries about his audition, and is jealous of his former girlfriends success; a neighbor peeping tom has an odd relationship with his neighbors; and a young woman escapes her strict Baptist parents for a wild night out. The acting is top notch, and the stories well written. This seems to be a dramatic version of comedic Bite-Size Breakfast shows.	ZOO Playground	2023	27

29	Burning Down The Horse (****) Odysseus has to deal with a revolt inside the Trojan Horse. From the imperious Odysseus to the carpenter strike leader to drunk without a sword, each of the six characters spread throughout the room contribute to the plot and fun. I was called upon as a drunkard, and I generally find audience participation a waste of valuable comedic time, in this case it took less than a minute, was funny, and served the purposes of the plot well.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	10
30	Brief Life & Mysterious Death of Boris III, King of Bulgaria (****) In 1943, the king of unoccupied Bulgaria had to capitulate to Nazi pressure to deport its Jews to concentration camps in Poland. Interspersed with songs, the show portrays the efforts of the humane king to minimize, but not stop the killing of Jews. The character of the king is beautifully portrayed as good man placed in an untenable situation forced to appear antisemitic, however the actor playing his prime minister yells constantly in an ill-considered attempt to lampoon Hitler.	Pleasance Dome	2023	20
31	Let the Bodies Pile by Henry Naylor (****) During the height of the Covid pandemic, after suspecting that her brother had their mother euthanized, a nurse is confronted with ethical situations at her hospital. The play does a good job of highlighting the subtle problems caused by a shortage of funding for the NHS. In particular, the system puts her in an untenable situation where she either endangers one person or endangers many.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2023	28
32	Shadows of Angels (****) Set in 1930s Melbourne, this play follows four chronologically sequential characters through one day starting with a policewoman investigating an old woman abortionist. Each character is finely drawn, and their lives portray different aspects of the dingy side of Melbourne. I loved it until the final plot twist that didn't make sense to me.	Greenside @ Infirmary Street	2023	19

33	Rewind (****) This show honors the Latin American human rights activists that have been murdered, and the forensic anthropologists who exhume their bodies from unmarked graves and work to identify them. With the initial looped soundtrack and blackouts, I thought it was going to be just another chaotic devised piece, but instead this is a well planned piece that alternates between the procedural path of bones found, and life of one victim. The guitar and trumpet serve the piece well both during a lively dance, and as a solemn requiem at a mausoleum for the victims.	Summerhall	2023	23
34	Collie's Shed (****) Four old men each has a different view of the long, violent, unsuccessful coal miner's strike in their town forty years ago. The play wisely uses four younger men to recreate the events of the strike, but it took a while to figure out who was who in the past. The play does a good job juxtaposing loyalty to the group with loyalty to family, and the realization that coal mining was economically doomed.	Gilded Balloon Patter Hoose	2023	19
35	Interrogation (****) An experienced detective is assigned to do her first solo interrogation in a serial murder case. The suspect is a cool customer, and many of her ploys fall flat. The tension is enhanced by having a video screen above the stage that an off-stage director uses to switch between five cameras, including two under the table showing their hands when in their laps, to show their more subtle reactions.	Summerhall	2023	23

36	Ice Hole: A Cardboard Comedy (****) A seemingly Icelandic man who speaks gibberish lives in our world except that it is represented almost entirely by cardboard objects manipulated by another hard working fellow. As the protagonist searches for the mermaid he has saved we are treated to a panoply of cardboard objects running from clothing to stores to clods, and anything else you could imagine. The show has a number of running gags that are funny at first, but by the fourth time they weren't, so the show would benefit from cutting about 10 minutes of them.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	26
37	Out of the Blue (****) The twelve guys from Oxford are back with the great harmonies and fun choreography. I didn't enjoy the song selection as much as I usually do, and I was disappointed that they left out the traditional "The Lion Sleeps Tonight." I did enjoy the return of the battle between their vocal percussionist and their tap dancer, but was surprised that they didn't mention that this was the last concert for this group of men.	Assembly - George Square	2023	28
38	Maureen (****) A fellow plays a feisty 92-year old woman who regales us with tales from her life. As much as anything this a tale about a remarkable approach to life that won her many friends. He does a remarkable job of transforming into her right before our eyes with a minimal costume change, but a completely different, scratchy voice, accompanied with aged movements.	House of Oz	2023	25
39	Ed Byrne: Tragedy Plus Time (****) The comedian decided that rather than talk about his children again he would talk about having his younger brother die last year. True to form he finds ways to honor his brother while mining his life for humor. There is pathos in that they didn't speak for a year, but they reconciled in time for Ed to make a foolish, but loving, mistake at his deathbed.	Assembly Rooms	2023	21

40	Ginzel's Little Cordoba: A Double Bill (****) This show has two independent stories: a story about two young thieves in 1522 venturing to London who cheat and steal all the time; and a modern story of a singer and a pianist who discuss their dissatisfaction with their jobs. I had a coffee, to which I am quite sensitive, so my enjoyment of putting together a perceived puzzle of quick cuts may well be its product. Nonetheless, the shared comradery of the two young men in both plays immensely warmed my heart.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	6
41	Paved with Gold and Ashes (****) We get a taste of the lives of five young immigrant women who work running sewing machines in a 1911 garment factory before its horrendous fire. Even though two are sisters, each life outside the factory is quite different from the others, and allows the play to provide an expansive view of life as a poor immigrant in New York City. Since the fire is the source of inspiration for this play, it was gratifying to see how they could provide many of its details within the framework of the play.	Greenside @ Infirmary Street	2023	25
42	Kerouac: And All That Jazz (****) With jazz music from the 1950s in playing in the background, the Beat Generation poet/novelist Jack Kerouac repeatedly visits his literary friends and their women. The show does a good job of recreating his life style with its open relationships, its music, his ever supportive mother, their shared literary approach, and his never ending search for life. Throughout the piece the cast occasionally reads his current work to maintain its literary atmosphere.	Greenside @ Riddles Court	2023	12

43	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast, Menu 1 (****) This show has five sketches: their boss pits two office workers against each other for a single promotion; the ghost of her lover watches a woman meet a new man; two sisters, one married and one single, prepare for night clubbing together; a nerd calculates all the possible outcomes from his meeting with a romantic interest; and two environmental protesters glue themselves to the stage of the wrong building. With five instead of six sketches some of these stories have a chance to delve deeper, and have a richer comedy. I think my favorite sketch from the three menus is this menu's promotion battle because it has time for several plot twists.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	8
44	NASSIM (****) This day Christopher Eccleston was the actor who took on the task of performing a script alone without having seen it before. I shan't give away anything more about the play except to say that we all learned a little Farsi. The play is fun, not just a little because Eccleston is good natured, and a good sport.	Traverse Theatre	2023	22
45	It's a Woman's World (****) This show follows three movie actresses, a 15-year old ingenue, a 29-year old who as aged out of her youthful roles, and a dancer as they try to renew their contracts with Louis B. Mayer of MGM in the 1930s. Because each is at a different point in their careers the play can demonstrate how each woman was abused differently by the system. I love old movies, and this story resonates with the Golden Age, except that the reporter uses a handheld recorder!	theSpaceTriplex	2023	14

46	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast, Menu 3 (****) This show has six sketches: a husband reminds his wife of their anniversary; a husband likes counting events; jealousy pervades a lunch; a bike deliveryman has some bad news; a woman sees an ornithologist about her strange arm; and a bored couple go to extremes to overcome it. Each of these work well, and find humor even in dark situations. I was impressed that all of the actors could project enough to reach the back of the packed room without seeming to be shouting.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	7
47	Asexuality! (****) Robert's tale of his life as an asexual man who must endure a society obsessed with sex caught my heart. His use of a pre-recorded video of three versions of himself as advisors seemed trite at first, but was used to great effect. I was impressed how he was careful to ensure that his recent revelation did not diminish the message of acceptance of his piece.	Gilded Balloon Patter Hoose	2023	7
48	Five Short Plays Loosely Linked by the Theme of Crime (****) A trio present comedic plays about: bandits splitting the loot; a married couple sailing in a small boat to Cuba; a polite novice loan shark debt collector having to collect from an old school mate; an anxious gay couple preparing to rob a bank; and an extortionist and his simpleton enforcer trying to threaten a pub owner. Each is well done, and humorous in parts, with the final blackouts very well timed. This reminds me of the very professional Big Bite-Size Breakfast shows, but without the croissants.	Greenside @ Riddles Court	2023	17

49	Olga Koch: Prawn Cocktail (****) For my first show of the Fringe, Olga was all that a 70-year-old would expect from a 30-year-old single comedienne. Though she often used modern references that eluded me, she presented a witty, well-rehearsed, consistently funny routine focused on her dating adventures with a frequent sexual slant. Unique to her show is her humorous discussion of her Master's thesis that asserts that people now treat celebrities as friends because the celebrities reveal parts of their lives on social media that previously only their real friends would be privy to.	Monkey Barrel Comedy	2023	-31
50	SCOTS (****) A proud Scottish toilet spills forth a cast that celebrates the history of Scotland with cheery songs and whimsical testimonies to the achievements of Scottish women, and Scottish liberalism. The talented cast takes on a huge array of characters easily to maintain the fun throughout. The first character out of the toilet is that toilet itself played by a tall, lean guy doing a great imitation of Jim Carey as he lauds Scottish plumbing and attends to the rest of the cast.	Ghillie Dhu - Auditorium	2023	16
51	Jacob Storms' Tennessee Rising: The Dawn of Tennessee Williams (****) A slick haired actor assumes the role of Tennessee Williams relating his life story. His Southern drawl and eloquence along with the fairly chronological presentation gave me a satisfying sense of the playwright's life. It was fun how he would occasionally speak of someone he met that later would appear as a character in one his plays without ever alluding to that fact.	Assembly Rooms	2023	4

52	Baron and the Junk Dealer (****) After their passenger spaceship crashes, a man and an alien with an elephant's nose marooned on a planet learn how to deal with each other to promote their survival. A variety of situations allow this play to blend humor and drama in a touching way while leading to a striking revelation. A bottle of piss is a nice prop that serves both as a focus for their conversation and to reinforce the aura of an alien situation.	Assembly Roxy	2023	2
53	Gold! (****) A loving senior couple must deal with an expensive bridezilla for a daughter, and his criminal past. I was recently married, and I must admit that I reveled in the couple's playful love instead of laughing at such antics as I would have before discovering Debbie. Despite the added danger, the way they deal with their financial problem was fun and light hearted, but a Las Vegas wedding flashback unnecessarily disrupts the continuity and feeling of danger of the show.	theSpace on the Mile	2023	5
54	Île (****) This light show has a young woman choosing to spend her gap year at her mother's small homeland island in Mauritius to try to escape her battles with her mom, and relax. The personable girl enjoys imitating the various animals of the island, and rejoices in learning about her inbred relatives and their odd ways. From plucking roadkill to having two-week old corpses in family photos her stories are certainly fun to hear.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	19
55	The Man Who Thought He Knew Too Much (****) A French ad copyrighter who works in New York City suddenly becomes a secret agent when his office is blown up. From there, like in many modern spy movies, he roams around the world, and repeatedly encounters a woman in red. His gymnastics and the show's creative physical theater are wonderful, but the show could have one locale cut with nothing novel lost.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	8

56	Tragedy That Befalls the Dastardly Crew of the Kakapo (****) I rarely find farces funny, and maybe my cup of coffee had something to do with it, but I could somehow accept this goofy tale of an incompetent pirate captain and his crew of three misfits who steal a gold chest from the king of pirates and then pursed by him. The mix of quirky personalities and absurd antics worked well together. I was impressed when there was the addition of a female pirate the sexual talk was minimal.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	6
57	Planetarium Lates: Pink Floyd's Dark Side of the Moon (****) I had imagined that this would be some laser light show, but instead found a 2023 animation that was combination of the first visit to the moon and a psychedelic trip. It was well done, and the music has held up over time. There is one scene of an approaching sandstorm that had me on the edge of my very comfortable seat.	Dynamic Earth-Planetarium	2023	1
58	Lash A Pulsating New Play About Going Out! (****) A 19-year-old fellow presents a lyrical description of his one night of clubbing that changed his life. The conveys his youthful enthusiasm by occasionally bounding about the room while continuing to paint word pictures of the club scene with occasional rhymes that resonate with rap music. His painting subtly prepares us to accept the events that lead to his revelation.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	2
59	Mythos: Ragnarok (****) Odin of Norse mythology and his various relations repeatedly wrestle to determine who shall rule the nine worlds. While I would have never attended a WWW professional wrestling match, I am so happy I was exposed to the skill of these people live. I was amazed at how a huge man (or woman) can be thrown from great heights without harming them, the thrower, nor the person they might land on.	Assembly Roxy	2023	2

60	After the Act (A Section 28 Musical) (****) Using verbatim texts as sources, four actors backed by two musicians explore the impact of Section 28 of 1988 which prohibited the promotion of homosexuality by local authorities, particularly schools. They chose the stories well so that covered legal, political, and personal ramifications. Most touching was a teacher who had to shun a student asking questions about her sexuality for fear of losing her job.	Traverse Theatre	2023	11
61	JM Coetzee's Life & Times of Michael K Three men control a ¾ size puppet of South African man to tell his story from birth to youth to a quest with his puppet mother to his death. I marveled at how the puppet came alive to do a variety of activities. The two hour tale does seem too long with repetitive encounters with violent people.	Assembly Hall	2023	17
62	In/Outside: Visible Things (****) First, she uses a series of half steps to slowly propel a small, 5' cubicle around the stage in ever smaller squares, then she performs a slow dance, and finally she paints slowly disappearing calligraphy on a large sheet of paper. Even though she performs using three modalities, somehow they all fit together as a coherent whole that seemed like a nice, slow, quiet way to start a day. The swooping of her arms with her fingers curved backwards gave many of her movements a wonderful grace.	C ARTS | C venues | C aquila	2023	9
63	Looking for Fun? (****) A young gay prostitute deals with johns, drugs, HIV, Grindr, and a lack of romance. From medical appointments to waiting in a client's room for an Uber to dancing in a club, each is gritty and real. While I was impressed by his whole performance, the understanding nature of the counselor in the pre-recorded medical clinic really hit home.	Bedlam Theatre	2023	6

64	The Good Dad (A Love Story) (****) A woman plays many family members in a true story about a twin sister who has four children by her father. This powerful story does a good job of delving into the group denial and personal abuse that allows such things to happen. The twin sister character demonstrates how even un-abused person can be affected.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	8
65	Insider (****) We listen on headphones to what a man inside a plexiglass cube hears as he is being questioned about a tax evasion scheme that cost EU countries 50 billion pounds. He explains the financial side of the scheme to us well, and clearly re-enacts business and family meetings too. In hindsight, I realize that the cube and headphones give us a feeling of being virtually trapped like he experiences as he is caught between the police and his scheme superiors.	ZOO Southside	2023	12
66	Lie Low (****) A woman who hasn't slept in two weeks after being sexually assaulted by a man in a duck mask enlists her brother to help her. The plot seesaws their trust and mistrust in clever ways. However, the ambiguity of the final act left me, and others, dissatisfied.	Traverse Theatre	2023	3
67	Pieces of Us (***) A woman assumes five very different American characters to illustrate different takes on American life. From a defensive West Virginian redneck to a strong daughter of a holocaust survivor to a proud New York City man each is a fine example of their particular characteristic. I found the story of how a woman's mother chided a man for hitting his 4-year old, and then sits calmy through his verbal assault particularly good example of positive modeling.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	14

68	Beautiful Evil Things (***) This is a tour de force by the actress who plays Medusa reviewing the powerful women associated with Battle of Troy. She never stops talking, using a microphone stand as weapons, and making sweeping gestures for the entire 75 minutes, and that's the problem. While the range of women, from monster to fighter to queen to soothsayer, is enlightening, the action is non-stop and too loud to the point of being tedious and boring.	Pleasance Dome	2023	22
69	The Magic of Terry Prachett (***) A personable fellow follows the entire life of the author Terry Prachett, and talks a little about some of his key books with the assistance of a large video screen. While the bulk of the audience were Prachett fans, he tailored the show to be accessible by us ignorant folks. I was impressed that he arranged to handout free copies of four never before published Prachett short stories, but I was not happy with him running 10 minutes too long.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2023	28
70	Draining the Swamp (***) This show follows the political career of Oswald Mosely who formed the British Union Fascist party in the early 1930s, and chose to make it anti-Semitic in 1935 to attract more people. Besides being a tremendous orator, he was quite a philanderer. The show seems to get some facts wrong by providing a later date for the Jewish policy change, and oversimplifying the Battle of Cable Street.	C ARTS | C venues | C aquila	2023	27
71	Psychic Tests (***) A personable psychic debunker tells how he chose to inhibit his skepticism, and found that psychics do have something to offer to some people. He has many amusing anecdotes to share, and tells them well. I appreciated that he left the result of his own visit, in true P.T. Barnum fashion, as a "big reveal" at the end of the show.	C ARTS | C venues | C aquila	2023	21

72	Chokeslam (***) A young woman tells how she came to love pro-wrestling, and then vividly describes famous bouts. She and her friends hold parties to watch wrestling, and her wedding had a wrestling theme with a ring announcer. Her enthusiasm is infectious, and her indiscrete confessions surprising.	Paradise in Augustines	2023	25
73	Wiesenthal (***) Simon Wiesenthal, the Nazi hunter, tells of his private efforts to track down Nazi war criminals after the war. During the show he both tells of the criminal acts of some he caught, and conducts his last investigation over the phone. The story is powerful, but there are personal touches, like phone calls from his wife that are superfluous and interrupt the flow of the show.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	24
74	Distant Memories of the Near Future (***) Set in the near future we see TV ads for services that will help you find a compatible lover, and companies that will buy your memories and voice. The fellow sits and tells stories of searching for love and building several versions of an AI to solve the problem. The show seems to have too many similar stories, and its final moral seems garbled.	Summerhall	2023	23
75	Salty Irina (***) Two women attempt to solve two murders of immigrant shopkeepers by infiltrating a right-wing festival. The first half was a mundane amorphous dating dance of little value, but the infiltration really came alive. The more mild manner woman has just the right amount of hesitancy as they deal with their interrogator.	ROUNDABOUT @ Summerhall	2023	18

76	Ctrl Room (***) Seven of us were ushered into a room with a combat simulation computer (VICTUS), and a map of an hamlet on a table where we must quickly agree among ourselves what actions a group of soldiers there should take at critical moments as the mission proceeds. The whole set-up works pretty well to give us a feeling of urgency and incomplete information that may confront command and control centers now. As a fellow who plays untimed strategy games, I definitely felt the time constraint that they enforced, but the amount and timing of information could be improved upon, and a short discussion afterwards would be a great addition.	Army @ The Fringe	2023	16
77	Cowboys and Lesbians (***) Two young women who won't acknowledge that they are in love with each other concoct a story where one is a rugged cowboy and the other is the woman he is smitten with. The two actors slide easily between the story and the authors as their cowboy story slowly reveals their love. It was fun to see the gender changing personality of the cowboy/woman character.	Pleasance Dome	2023	15
78	Alan Turing - A Musical Biography (***) A fellow plays the mathematician and computer scientist Alan Turing, with an actress playing all of the women in his life. The show does a very good job of revealing his breadth of interests as well as the significant events in his life. I particularly like how it took the time to explain how the Fibonacci series applies to pine cones.	Paradise in Augustines	2023	12
79	Last Bantam (***) A short World War I soldier tells of the Bantam battalions formed of men from 5' to 5' 3" when the UK was in desperate need of recruits. As a war history buff it was interesting to learn that the German snipers focused on tall English soldiers because they were more often officers, and that the Bantam soldiers were often used in the cramp tanks. The actor paused after each sentence, which caused the whole show to move at a crawl.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	25

80	Grand Old Opera House Hotel (***) A fellow arrives for his first day at work at an old opera house that has been converted into modern hotel full of quirky staff and guests, and maybe the ghosts of two opera singers who died in its fire. What starts out as a series of quick comedic sketches evolves into an homage to opera. My companion absolutely loved the show with its many subtle, and not so subtle references to operas.	Traverse Theatre	2023	9
81	Further Misadventures of Martin Hathaway: Shipwrecked Off Heramathea's Cove (***) This show's long title is misleading for the show's content, but appropriate for its length. The large, young cast create a fantastic steam punk world in which an incompetent Martin and the captain of an airship are in love from the beginning and go on an adventure together. The costumes were great, and, surprisingly, the good-hearted production kept my interest.	Greenside @ Infirmary Street	2023	10
82	Manifest Destiny's Child (***) A former campaign manager of Jill Stein's presidential campaign in 2016 tells of his activist efforts before and since then. I found it quite interesting to hear of the inside machinations of her campaign as well as his unsuccessful effort to launch various digital activist entities. However, his assertions and view of politics, particularly that Jill's entry on the ballot didn't hurt Hillary, taint his well produced effort for me.	Assembly Rooms	2023	16
83	Good Morning, Faggi (***) A middle aged gay man reads from his many diaries, and sings songs based on the entries. At first he reads many sunny entries, but later finds others that call for sadder songs. The original music, played on a keyboard by its composer, is consistently beautiful, but his voice is only suited to some of the songs.	Summerhall	2023	23

84	WONDER DRUG: A Comedy About Cystic Fibrosis (***) A young man explains what cystic fibrosis is, and all the treatments he has used throughout the years while trying to develop a relationship with a woman. At one point, he goes through all the many, many steps necessary for him to take antibiotics, and then learn that he had to do it three times a day. It is very informative show, and it is heartening to know that a recent drug alleviates many of his symptoms, but is not a cure.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	24
85	Luke Wright's Silver Jubilee (***) For the first half of the show he talks about poetry throughout his life, and the second half he concentrates on being adopted. Throughout he presents his witty, and occasionally touching poetry. He is a brash fellow, but that suits the high quality of his poetry.	Pleasance Dome	2023	15
86	Dark Noon (***) Six South Africans recreate a history of the American Wild West based on the westerns they saw on TV as they were growing up. As they go through their history they actually build a huge movie set town that serves as a backdrop for many classic Western interactions that have been updated to highlight their violence and racial prejudice. As a man from the West who taught American history, I was disturbed by some presented events that have no foundation in Westerns nor history.	Pleasance at EICC	2023	15
87	Chicken (***) An actor in a great rooster costume recounts her life from egg in an industrial poultry farm to becoming a well paid movie actor. The show does a remarkable job of blending aspects of a chicken with celebrity and protesting. I marveled at her ability to mimic a chicken's quick head movements.	Summerhall	2023	12

88	Good and Gaslit (***) This show within a show has a daughter directing her mother in a show about gaslighting. Not surprisingly, the daughter is gaslit during the performance, which is a little too convenient. It was good that the daughter points out to her mother how her mother's puts down of her acting was a form of self gaslighting.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	24
89	Tennessee, Rose (***) Tennessee Williams and his mother don't know what to do with his sister who has horrible temper tantrums. This version of Tennessee Williams emphasizes his drinking while the version in "Jacob Storms' Tennessee Rising: The Dawn of Tennessee Williams" emphasizes his homosexuality and Southern politeness. The final solution to the Rose problem leaves Tennessee feeling more guilty than ever before.	Pleasance Dome	2023	15
90	Tony (The Blair Rock Opera) (***) Great music and good lyrics, but I couldn't hear many lyrics, and I was ignorant of many of the politicians. Brits I spoke with afterwards would give it four stars.	Pleasance at EICC	2023	15
91	Mark Thomas: Gaffa Tapes (***) In much of this show the lefty activist vents his anger for Tories and the police. As a Yank, I did not know of many of the Tories mentioned, but still found many of stories based on them funny. Despite his distaste for the police, two of his stories place some of them in a good light. (The rest of the crowd clearly loved the whole show, and laughed throughout it.)	The Stand Comedy Club	2023	13
92	OTMA (***) The four daughters of Tzar Nicholas II have to deal with being held by the Bolsheviks. We hear of their family's past, their current conditions, and of each of their dreams for the future. I assume that they didn't leave diaries of their confinement so much of the play is just conjecture.	theSpace on the Mile	2023	26

93	Bangers (***) A young man and woman each must decide whether to become singers or move on with their lives. Despite the addition of a DJ, the plot seemed simple like a 1930s musical that just provides an excuse for the two to sing. Both had great voices, and the songs catchy, but since I couldn't understand many of their lyrics it meant that I missed much of the show.	ROUNDABOUT @ Summerhall	2023	18
94	Pilot (***) A Black man who thinks of himself as Brown, not Black, enlists the audience in developing his TV pilot about a Black superhero who can fly. I rarely find audience participation efficient, and this show confirms my opinion that they are often a waste of valuable time, and in this case, made the story more disjointed that it already was. Towards the end, he spent five minutes speaking so quickly that I could not understand him.	Summerhall	2023	23
95	Sean and Daro Flake It 'Til They Make It (***) Two friends buy a Mr. Whippy truck, and deal with ebb and flow of such a business. The vicissitudes of their business allows the show to explore their friendship under many conditions. Unhappily my poor hearing and their Scottish brogues did not mix well, and missed important chunks of their conversations, and I would have enjoyed it much more.	Traverse Theatre	2023	11
96	Slash (***) Starting as Betty and Veronica from the Archie comic, two women offer homoerotic tales of famous pairs such as Lennon/McCartney and Holmes/Watson. From there the pair apply their sexual twist on a wide range of social activities. I know I enjoyed it all, but its diversity didn't lend itself to my remembering it.	Summerhall	2023	12

97	The Father (***) This play show many short scenes of a daughter and/or her lovers dealing with her father who suffers from advanced dementia. The show presents the scenes out of chronological order and uses the same undifferentiated set despite having two locales to convey the confusion of the father. Though that does make it more difficult for the audience to detect the progression of the disease, but, as the son of a mother who had Alzheimer's disease I thought all of the portrayals of the care givers failed to indicate any of them understood that his short term memory was gone and his long term memory was unreliable.	Greenside @ Infirmary Street	2023	21
98	Bad Teacher (***) A drama teacher has three goals for the day: 1) get a raise; 2) have her regular talk with a troubled student; and 3) not cry during parent-teacher night. As the day proceeds we meet her disagreeable superiors, learn of the underhanded way the Tories cut the art budgets, and for comic relief have two pictures of penises figure prominently in the plot. As a former teacher, I have a special appreciation for plays about teaching, and this one is well done.	Underbelly, Bristo Square	2023	13
99	Quality of Mercy: Concerning the Life and Crimes of Dr Harold Frederick Shipman (***) The doctor who used morphine to kill pain ridden patients as well a few troublesome ones tells his professional history, and asserts his right to kill them. To me, except for a couple cases, it seemed like his decisions were motivated from kindness and the fact that euthanasia was illegal. I spoke with actor afterwards, and found that Shipman treated underlings very poorly, and was less considerate of others than he was portrayed.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	22

100	Horizon Showcase: Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World (***) The playwright of Iranian parents tries to put the murder of an Iranian singer in perspective for us by exploring the gulf between the Iranian and British cultures. His introduction, and following podcast are well written, and the multimedia presentation gives the proper feeling of the meshing and collision of the two cultures. However, the sound tech made the background percussion music loud I, and others, couldn't hear most of the words when it was played. (This was a preview so it may have been addressed now.)	Traverse Theatre	2023	15
101	Alison Skilbeck's Uncommon Ground (***) The actress sets about sequentially portraying seven very different characters from a hamlet that have encountered some of the other characters along the way. It is too apparent that Skilbeck wrote the piece to highlight her own versatility. It is a snapshot of a community with little plot.	Assembly Rooms	2023	4
102	Optimistic: Elizabeth Holmes (***) The engineer behind the medical testing company that promised more than it could achieve describes the growth and demise of her company. The first half of the show is well organized and presents information well, but I think the show unnecessarily chooses to have her become more frantic on stage and the presentation less lucid as things start to come apart. I thought the show would be better served by throwing things around less and spending more time exploring her sexual/love relationship between her and the CEO, and explaining how the machine succeeded and why it did not succeed with other testing.	ZOO Southside	2023	22
103	Looking for Giants (***) After learning a combative discussion style from her terse university tutor, a young woman becomes enamored with him. I thought seeing the style of debate developed interesting, but was ill, and cannot remember much more.	Underbelly, Cowgate	2023	13

104	PLEASE LEAVE (a message) (***) Four actors explore the problem of leaving a message about a radioactive storage facility that will make sense for 10,000 years. The show tries to demonstrate the many ways a message can be obscured using both physical and linguistic impediments. The ideas are good, it just seems that the show strays a bit far afield, particularly with its dancing.	Underbelly, Cowgate	2023	11
105	Shakespeare for Breakfast (***) This version of the Fringe mainstay has four people in street clothes update and severely abridge "A Midsummer's Night Dream." While the changes are as radical as ever, they don't let the comedy get too broad. The final ditty was a perfect ending.	C ARTS | C venues | C aurora	2023	13
106	Call Me Elizabeth (***) Elizabeth Taylor talks about her life starting from her childhood movies up until marriage to Eddie Fisher. She does cover all of her husbands up to Fisher, and a fling or two, as well her penchant for gay men, but the choice to leave out her later life with Burton left the play feeling very incomplete. That's not to say that there weren't a lot of nuggets along the way, including that she went through the graduating ceremony at a high school she had never attended.	theSpace@Surgeons Hall	2023	25
107	Bitter Lemons (***) A professional football goalie, and a rising businesswoman alternately tell of their lives after both learn that they are pregnant at six weeks, and must decide whether to have the two pill abortion. The first part, when they are trying to make the decision, works well, but the goalie's choice to play in a game, and the businesswoman's blow-up seem out of character. The choice to stop alternating and start talking simultaneously diminishes the power of each tale at a crucial juncture.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	10

108	Self Actually (***) A clone and original have an hour to decide whether to push a button that will kill the cone and release the original, or have both stay in the room for eternity. The two actors do a good job of duplication each other's movements while trying to discover who is the clone, but the choices are ill conceived by the playwright. An eternity in a room would be my definition of hell, moreover, a fact revealed midway also makes it completely unacceptable for them both.	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2023	14
109	Blood of the Lamb (***) A pregnant woman whose fetus has died is stuck in a Texas airport being interviewed by a woman. The play plainly wishes to convey the absurdity and cruelty of the new Texas abortion law that treats a fetus like a full citizen, but loses much of its power by painting the interviewer as more of a villain than a rescuer. Another big flaw was that interviewer never answers the explicit question from the mother as to who or what she represents that could give her the power to legally control the pregnant woman's life.	Assembly Rooms	2023	4
110	Gusla (***) This is an interpretation of Polish pagan rituals using Polish changes and foot stomping style choreography. Since it was in Polish, I my lack of hearing didn't frustrate me, and took up the challenge to try to divine the meaning from the inflections and movements. The costumes were amazing and added to the primal feel, but I did look at my watch with ten minutes to go.	Summerhall	2023	23

111	Jane/Norma (***) This show explores how the woman who was the Roe in Roe v. Wade became a spokesperson for the anti-abortion movement by having two actors portraying numerous real people involved in her life. Despite consistent costume changes to indicate specific people speaking, the actress was tasked with too many for us to keep track of without something more explicit to identify them. Nonetheless, her portrayal of Roe's girlfriend, and his portrayal of two church leaders conveyed their key characters well.	theSpace on the Mile	2023	5
112	No Love Songs (***) Two musicians fall in love, and then deal with the events of family life with the added pressure of his touring. My hearing really hindered my understanding of the lyrics of the many songs. The play does a really good job of describing the effects of post partum depression, but others agreed that the scene where he returns leaves the audience with an inaccurate impression that really disrupts the story when it is corrected later. I should note that many others that I polled gave it five stars, but two women gave it only three stars.	Traverse Theatre	2023	3
113	Shadow Kingdom (***) A pair control shadow puppets and scenery to tell a story of a little girl who ignores her father's admonishment to stop looking at her phone and to sleep only to find that she dreams of a fantastic world ruled by a young sleepless tyrant. To create the many locales and characters they use close to 100 cutouts that have slots with colored film to create a fully colored tale. The show succeeds in reinforcing its moral that people should not sacrifice sleep for messaging.	Assembly Roxy	2023	14

114	Dirty Words (***) Two actors explore a series of words besides just dirty words, including cliché, pressure, and lies. The explorations run from videos of interviews of regular folks to personal experience to wide ranges of examples. I loved her imitation of a coach's rah-rah speech to her team that had all the inflections of encouragement, but really said nothing intelligible.	Pleasance Dome	2023	12
115	Wasteman (***) A former drag queen resolves to win a drag queen contest, but he has songwriter's block. As he tells of his life we learn of his first encounters with women's clothes with his best friend, and other people's reactions to when he is in drag. The fellow is winning, and his ditties cute, but I've grown tired of tales of clubbing and persecution this year.	Assembly George Square Studios	2023	12
116	Stuart Laws? Is That Guy Still Going? (***) Laws is a congenial fellow with a light, clean who is rarely hilarious, but nonetheless keeps the crowd amused. While telling stories covering three topics (cheating, his vasectomy and grief), he made some quite witty tangential asides. I liked his observation about the unavoidable danger of closing one's eyes when sneezing while driving.	Monkey Barrel Comedy (The Hive)	2023	1
117	Stark Bollock Naked (***) When a woman discovers that she is pregnant she finds her sense of a biological clock and medical staff make dealing with an abortion quite difficult. While the topic is certainly serious and important, what makes this piece standout is the presentation that combines a naked woman, video, song as well as drama. While having a woman standing naked at the beginning of the show is catching, using her as a video screen to map different clothes or images of paintings of nudes on her was used to great effect.	Assembly Roxy	2023	2

118	Buff (***) A self-acknowledged fat gay teacher presents only his words from of a variety of conversations with his roommate, his fourth grade students, his dates, and his supervisor. His vulnerability permeates the conversations as he frequently comments on bodies and gay issues. Every conversation had the ring of truth, including his interactions with his students.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	3
119	Playing Latinx (***) A Latin fellow with a fake accent teaches the audience hot be Latin with lots of voluntary audience participation. The whole show was good natured fun teaching us how to create "Latin" names, body language, and personal histories, among other things. Unlike most of the shows with audience participation, it is an integral part of the show's fun, particularly when we were waiting for someone to volunteer to sit in a char on the stage to continue the show.	Summerhall	2023	23
120	Awake, Gay, and Writing a Play (***) A gay man explains how it took 30 years for him to leave the Jehovah Witnesses of his family in spite of their rejection of homosexuality as a major sin. He addresses the topic with many techniques, and his movement toward self-acceptance is in fits and starts. I originally though his game of musical chairs using audience members would be a waste of valuable time, but later it served a good purpose in his tale.	PBH's Free Fringe @ The Street	2023	26
121	Tom Moran is a Big Fat Filthy Disgusting Liar (***) Moran asserts that he has been very popular in life because is/was a people pleaser whose winning smile and lying have fooled people all of his life. He even went so far as letting doctors remove his appendix rather than admit that he had successfully fooled them into thinking he had abdominal pain. Though he seemed as sincere in his new found self acceptance as the fat gay fellow in "Buff", I was left with a feeling that he may well be lying to himself this time.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	7

122	Rosenberg/Strange Fruit Project (***) In a play that reminded me of the old James Burke TV show "Connections", an actor promises to show how the famous Russian traitors, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg had an important connection to jazz. In this case, the actor portrays a variety of disparate characters ranging from the Rosenbergs to the man who adopted their children to the Black leader W. E. B. Dubois. The problem lies in the fact that is easier, and more satisfying, to see technological links than to celebrate the three degrees of separation of certain individuals.	Assembly Rooms	2023	4
123	Wallace (***) We first see the Scottish rebel leader in jail awaiting his execution where he describes the battles he fought, and how he was caught. Not surprisingly, the actor speak with a fairly strong Scottish brogue which meant that my poor hearing could only decipher some of what he said. As a war game player, I did appreciate the tactical details of his victory where 5,000 Scots overcame 40,000 Englishman.	Hill Street Theatre	2023	26
124	Shit-faced Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet (***) With the promise that a random member of the cast will be drunk off their ass by the time the play start, upon her entrance it was obvious that Juliet was the night's chosen one. Besides her sloppy movement, and despite her wedding ring, she tried to kiss many members of the cast, and repeatedly got down to some serious snogging with Romeo. Unhappily for me, many of the laughs came from what she said, but I couldn't understand her slurred speech.	Pleasance at EICC	2023	22

125	The Court (***) I was on the jury to determine if a woman who had suffocated her cancer ridden mother with a pillow was guilty of murder or manslaughter. The testimony provided by the woman and her accusing sister was succinct and addressed almost all of the significant issues. After their testimony we were allowed to question the sisters, but I must admit that I changed my vote at the last moment based on the judge's instructions.	Hill Street Theatre	2023	21
126	Julius Caesar Must Die (***) A large cast gives their abridged version of Shakespear's "Julius Caesar". I am not that familiar with the play, so I can only say that this one had Shakespearean wording, and three acts: laying the conspiracy, killing Caesar, and retribution. A couple of the actors frequently spoke too softly for me to hear them which detracted from my enjoyment.	theSpace on the Mile	2023	26
127	Sherlock Holmes The Last Act (***) A much older Holmes recounts is life including meeting Watson, and Holmes' faked death. Last year there was a similar play from Watson's perspective, that also suffered from a lack of action on stage. The first time he uses cocaine on stage it has no visible effect, and the second time he doesn't wrap his arm with the necessary tourniquet.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	24
128	For Better, For Worse (***) In 2014, a recent widow is starting to date while her two children constantly argue about impending Scottish independence referendum. The constant bickering overshadows the more interesting growth of the mother. The play might have worked in 2014, but has a lot of wasted time now.	C ARTS | C venues | C aquila	2023	20

129	Lady Dealer (***) A young woman brags that her gender makes her unique in the drug world, and repeatedly avers that she is happy with her life. Her experience with her downstairs neighbors and clients suggest that her life is not as rosy as she paints it. While the drug dealing side is somewhat interesting, a young woman sad about being alone is not.	ROUNDABOUT @ Summerhall	2023	18
130	Cruelty (***) A gay prostitute literally laughs at the violence in his neighborhood, and then goes clubbing, but he cannot escape the violence. His acting was great, but the music in the club scenes was way too loud to hear him even though he was yelling. This Fringe I have grown tired of all the depictions of twentysomethings clubbing, particularly with directors almost always choosing to make their plays “naturalistic“ by playing very loud music.	C ARTS | C venues | C aquila	2023	13
131	Serpent's Tooth (***) A long lost sister helps a woman deal with the fact that her daughter has prevented her from seeing her granddaughter for twelve years. The story is touching, but never explains why the grandmother lost her job. I think that the repeated breaking of the fourth wall is unnecessary, and weakens the impact of the story.	Paradise in The Vault	2023	19
132	Hive (***) The previous show ran late, and I missed the first seven minutes of this show. Surprisingly, I never could figure out what was going on! The audience liked it, but I shan’t post a review, and just have this table row to jog my memory in the future.	Assembly Roxy	2023	14
133	Molly (***) Molly is a simple woman who works as sandwich maker at Gregg’s and has a crush on a handsome customer. She does a great job of portraying this unhappy woman, but much of the plot is predictable. But maybe making the play somewhat mind numbing, like her life, was one of the playwright’s goals.	Underbelly, Cowgate	2023	13

134	Mark Twain's The Stolen White Elephant (***) Told in Mark Twain's dry style we learn of an English detective, Inspector Blunt, who does everything in an over-systematic fashion to try to find an elephant stolen from a boat in the middle of England. The absurd tale is fun, but with little stage movement, I found I dozed occasionally.	Paradise in The Vault	2023	25
135	Conversations We Never Had, as People We'll Never Be (***) With thirty minutes to decide whether their four-year relationship will be erased from their memories by a drug, a lesbian couple review the highs and lows of their past together. The drug is never explored and just serves as a flimsy excuse for the play to force them to speak honestly and succinctly. I thought there approaches to children would have settled the issue, but that was ignored by the playwright.	C ARTS | C venues | C aquila	2023	21
136	It Won't Be Long Now (***) A Hong Kong man speaks in Chinese with English supertitles, and then a British man speaks in English of their detention in the Japanese concentration camp on Hong Kong in World War II. They do a reasonable job of presenting their privations. However, the play "In Loyal Company" at the Pleasance does a much better job of portraying life in a Japanese POW camp.	Army @ The Fringe	2023	16
137	Nevernatal (***) Five women attend a baby shower, and each has a different approach to having a baby, with one clearly choosing to be childless. I appreciated that each of the different views was accepted. The brought by the childless woman that had a bloody baby's head emerging from a vagina cannot be ignored by them or me.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	14

138	How To Rob a Millionaire (In Five Easy Steps) (***) A large cast has a mastermind gather five misfits to steal an iconic teddy bear from its unscrupulous promoter, a la Mission Impossible. Some of the story is quite fun with a series of plot twists. However some of the plot twists placed heroic characters in a bad light, and I became less invested in the outcome.	Greenside @ Infirmary Street	2023	26
139	Mrs. President (***) Matthew Brady, the famous 19th century photographer, repeatedly has President Lincoln's wife, Mary, sit for her portrait. He wants to create photos that will have emblematic feeling to them (complete with halos), whereas she wants an image of her real self as she thinks of herself. The problems with this play is that they continually restate their positions, and he is yelling most of the time.	C ARTS | C venues | C aquila	2023	20
140	Trials of Galileo (***) Galileo talks about the charges against him for writing the sun was the center of the universe, and why he chose to recant. He argues that no one actually read his book, and just rejected his assertion because it challenged church dogma. There didn't seem to be enough facts presented to fill this play, but I think it worth noting that even Galileo didn't realize that the stars were suns.	Greenside @ Infirmary Street	2023	19
141	Bullring Techno Makeout Jamz (***) Nathaniel tells the tale of preparing for a date with Beyonce including finding the right barber. I smiled, but the jokes were for a much younger audience. In one routine, he responded with quips to a series of snippets of current songs (most of which a woman in the audience could lip sync to), which reminded me of the novelty records of the late 1950s that used sippets to create funny stories.	ROUNDABOUT @ Summerhall	2023	18

142	Drop Dead (***) This farce has six people gathered together for a practice funeral while the "dead" man lies sleeping in the coffin. While this show has the elements of a farce, including greedy characters, a cramped bathroom scene and a misconstrued "kiss", it never seemed to gel for me—too many things didn't make any sense. However, the rest of the audience loved it, and laughed at the high jinks throughout it.	theSpace @ Niddry St	2023	11
143	The Poor Rich (***) An oddly made-up woman interacts with the audience as she asks for tea and acts as a banker. She assumes complete control of the show from the beginning by being incredibly unhelpful with the tea, and only permits it be served on her own terms after three failed attempts by the audience. I just couldn't see the humor in her bizarre autocratic behavior, but the rest loved it, and gave her a standing ovation.	Assembly Roxy	2023	14
144	Twenty People A Minute (***) We follow the simultaneous treks of four disparate refugees to their common goal of Waiting Island in the middle of a sea. The play has the characters speak in unison whenever more than one of them has a common experience. The frequent use of loud background sounds and the actors taking quick turns speaking added to a feeling of frantic chaos, but also made it difficult for me, and others, to understand what they were saying, particularly the quiet actor.	theSpace on the Mile	2023	5
145	Call Mr. Robeson: A Life, with Songs (***) Tayo Aluko portrays the actor, singer, and Black activist, Paul Robeson recounting his life and singing parts of his many famous songs with a piano accompanist. This long show takes the time to flesh out the many aspects of his life, including his many lovers and his long fight to overcome the restrictions placed on him because he was a communist. While Aluko's powerful, deliberate delivery matches that of Robeson, it does give the show a slow, ponderous feel.	C ARTS | C venues | C aurora	2023	11

146	Saturn Return (***) The daughter of Pakistani immigrants debunks her auntie's astrological predictions by recounting her life experiences. This smart, well organized, financially successful woman uses PowerPoint lists of expected goals for a Pakistani to highlight how her real life has diverged from her parent's. Her ease at spending money somehow belittles her personal troubles for me.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	8
147	Super (***) A shallow man who makes a living wearing a Batman costume on Hollywood Blvd., and thinks of himself as a mentor other super hero imitators, alternates taking the stage with his former lover who provides a different view of his life. It was both fun and heartbreaking to her his rosy take on life juxtaposed to her realistic one, particularly when it came to their dating. The career of their mutual friend who initially wore a Robin costume provides a galling example of career advancement that eludes Batman.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	8
148	Split Lip (***) A fellow portrays an insane patient suffering from a form of split personalities that by perfectly lip-syncing pre-recorded characters as interact with each other. His lip synching and facial expressions were so perfect that initially I thought he was actually speaking until a voice was from a movie I knew well. However, the plot is thin, so the show was pretty much a one trick pony.	Assembly Roxy	2023	2
149	All is Pink in West Berkshire County (***) A daughter brings her boyfriend home to meet her opinionated parents. The play slides smoothly from verbal abuse to the macabre. I think the excessive behaviors, particularly that of the roaring father, detracted from the darkness of the comedy.	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2023	17

150	The Booth (***) Four actors with different approaches to acting put stage a modern radio play with the guidance of two unhelpful directors. The radio play itself is unimportant as it serves only to provide material for the satiric commentary on dramatic techniques and those who advocate each. Both the radio play, and the actual show end abruptly without any sense of closure.	Bedlam Theatre	2023	6
151	Avital Ash Workshops Her Suicide Note (***) The key to understanding this show is to note that she titled it as a workshop. She makes notes throughout, and has an audience member jot observations as she explores her depression and life growing up in an Orthodox Jewish household after her mother fell or jumped off a building when Avital was only one. While she often told touching, funny stories from her life, the show is punctuated with her sincere tears as her depression is triggered in the telling.	Monkey Barrel Comedy (The Tron)	2023	1
152	Mark Nelson: Bits & Pieces (***) Nelson happily covers the topics that you might expect from a veteran professional comedian who is happily married with a with a wife and two kids. His topics range from politics to a bath with his young daughter to old age sex. His mushroom enhanced Las Vegas trip with fellow comedians serves as a source of many crazy and hilarious stories.	Monkey Barrel Comedy (The Hive)	2023	1
153	Not Our Crime, Still Our Sentence (***) The unemployed wife of a man sentenced to 14 years in prison is severally depressed and deals with the pressure of raising two kids by blaming herself and sleeping a lot. The show does a good job of conveying her experience of futility as interacts with her close friend and family. I though the nightmare sequences with her mother as a bewigged judge worked well at conveying her sense of inescapable self-blaming.	Gilded Balloon Patter Hoose	2023	2

154	Kravitz, Cohen, Bernstein and Me (***) A senior comedienne tells of her life growing up in a Jewish household, and meeting Jewish celebrities while offering an occasional song and joke. Her meetings with Leonard Bernstein are quite a tale to hear. The final montage of photos her reminded me of just how much of this show was devoted to her, somewhat like the vanity Fringe shows put on by twentysomething women.	Assembly Rooms	2023	26
155	Bad Blood: A One Man Musical (***) A young man tells of visiting his father on his deathbed in the ICU for almost three months. He is a talented composer and keyboardist with the earlier songs being catchy and well sung. Later, darker songs don't work as well, and his father's obsequious aide's role needs to be clarified.	Greenside @ Nicolson Square	2023	24
156	Beatles Were a Boyband (***) Three young women are deeply affected by the news of another killing of a woman on a street. The podcasting influencer gives voice to her anger, while the event hits close to home for one of her roommates. I liked how the reaction to the podcast affected them all, but the show seemed a little too preachy.	Gilded Balloon Patter Hoose	2023	21
157	Please Love Me (***) A young pole dancer explains how her need for affirmation caused her to repeatedly return to her first lover. Her current girl friend played the keyboard, sometimes sang with her, and usually was looking at her with caring eyes. The show is a sincere autobiography, but could use more family background to help explain her low self-esteem.	Pleasance Dome	2023	13
158	Auto-Engrain: A One-Woman Show (***) A young woman tells of her trouble dating men. The aircon was so loud that I could rarely hear her. When I did hear her, it seemed like there was nothing in the play that I hadn't heard many times at the Fringe before.	Hill Street Theatre	2023	15

159	Salome (***) A large cast recreates the Biblical story of John the Baptist, King Herod II, and the sensual dance of Herod's daughter. Though they changed the tale slightly to make Salome the arch villain, the play properly portrayed the Judean political situation at the time of Christ. With such a large cast, I was pleased to be able to hear almost everything, but the king and queen seemed to yell too loudly even for me.	Bedlam Theatre	2023	6
160	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast (Menu 2) (***) This menu had stories about: a police interrogation of a man who that he was a gander; two older, high society, single women at a party; office workers dealing with a new, stricter management; a beginner learning improv with an uncooperative partner; and competing buskers. Somehow only the goose man sketch had the lightness of the previous years. When talking with others we all agreed that the new, open set with props along the back wall failed to focus the scene the way the small stage of the previous years had.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	6
161	Half Moon (***) A Belfast teenager finds her life stifling, and moves to Florida. This was another play with a strong brogue , this time Irish, so strong that I could not understand her often enough to work out most of the critical facts. The rest of the audience loved it though.	Pleasance Dome	2023	27
162	In Everglade Studio (***) A pop singer, her keyboardist, and producer are in a recording studio when they are interrupted by a Black singer/songwriter the producer has hired to add a new sound to the album. Only the pop singer has full blown character, albeit obnoxious at times. Most of the songs they sing are very good, but the last part of the play veers too far from reality no matter what drug is involved.	Assembly George Square	2023	28

163	Ghost of a Smile (***) A 19th century fellow relates a tale told by his drunkard uncle of a lady, two villains, and a horse drawn carriage. This slight tale has elements of a ghost story, but without the ghosts. The main problem is that the entire show lacks a destination as the actor spends a lot time describing his uncle, but then portrays him in the tale as a simple drunkard.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	20
164	Strongest Girl in the World (***) A 26-year old woman celebrates the joys of eight years of summer camp, and her wonderful father who died of cancer. I liked that the summer camp seemed to empower her in the way her school life did not. Frequently repeating her name, and hearing of summer camps, Greek cruises, child psychiatrists, and ski trips all would lead one to believe that she may be spoiled, but hers is not a story of woe, but fond memories.	Greenside @ Nicolson Square	2023	19
165	Polko (***) A young fellow whose life is going nowhere now deals with a pretty former classmate who has returned to town to live with her mother, and a man who made an inappropriate marriage proposal to the classmate's mother. His relationships with both do slowly evolve, but there is no satisfying progress. Despite the good acting, the play just seems to plod along without purpose.	ROUNDABOUT @ Summerhall	2023	18
166	Portrait of Ludmilla as Nina Simone (***) With an accompanying guitarist, Ludmilla covers bits and pieces of Simone's life while spending the bulk of the time reprising her songs. While I enjoyed some of her songs, with my poor hearing I had great difficulty understanding what she was saying between songs. The "hour" show committed the unforgiveable sin of running twenty minutes past its expected end time.	French Institute in Scotland	2023	11

167	The Mitfords (***) By simply changing her voice, an actress tries to portray many members of the Mitford family who became famous in the 1930s for the political views with two daughters becoming quite pro-Nazi. Without a previous background in the family nor any introduction to the family members, I was at a loss as to who she was portraying. As the story went along I could differentiate most, but still don't know for sure whether the deep voiced person was a sister, brother, or father.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	17
168	Teacher's Pet (***) A high school girl who thinks herself much more mature than her classmates has an affair with one of her married teachers. The dancing and singing are good, and the scene where he rejects her seems perfectly written to reflect the thoughts and feelings of such a young woman. However after seeing the horrific true story of serial pedophilia in "The Good Dad (A Love Story)" the night before, the joyous song about pedophilia (with the young women around me singing along) made me angry with the playwright, particularly when the fact that the girl is pregnant was just mentioned, and then ignored for the rest of the show.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	9
169	Tales of a Jane Austen Spinster (***) After hours, in a Jane Austen museum installation, one of her minimally describe young women suddenly appears, and must deal with 21st century dating. The actress was very likable, but the script really seemed to ignore how an early 19th century woman would perceive our modern world except in the most perfunctory ways. While I appreciated the character's complaint about her literary and feminist plight, her acceptance of a short skirt and quick understanding of a mobile phone and Tinder inexplicably ignored her background.	Greenside @ Nicolson Square	2023	7

170	Happier Daze (***) A five-piece rock band's drummer has died, and been replaced by his sister who is not an experienced drummer. The death raises different issues for each of the band members that arise willy-nilly among the many rehearsals and performances of their original songs. I enjoyed some of the tunes, albeit most were too loud, but only understood the lyrics of one which detracted a lot from this music heavy show.	theSpace on the Mile	2023	22
171	West End vs Broadway (***) Four singers present popular songs from select musicals. This was a great example of where the sum was much greater than the parts as most of the solos were weak, but their chorus work was great. Unhappily, my poor hearing many of the lyrics unintelligible, but others thought the show great.	theSpace on the Mile	2023	5
172	Raising Kane (***) A fellow plays Orson Welles talking about his life for the first 40 minutes hour of this short play. After that he removes his make-up and costume and explains why he chose to produce this play. I would rather have heard of Welles' life after "Citizen Kane" than of the actor's psychological issues.	Assembly George Square Studios	2023	28
173	Declan (***) A fellow is first enamored with a male friend, and later becomes his victim when his friend becomes a vampire. Though the initial scene with the attack by the vampire is captivating, the rest of the play is so low key that I lost interest and nodded off.	Underbelly, Cowgate	2023	21
174	Why I Stuck a Flare Up My Arse for England (***) A lad becomes a celebrity for ticking a flare up his arse before an England football match because he thought it would fun and his friends would find it amusing. I wasn't tired, but somehow, I couldn't stay awake for this show. It just didn't interest me.	theSpace @ Niddry St	2023	19

175	Lady of the Loch (***) A real estate developer and his lover are visiting Loch Ness to complete the planning for housing around the lake when Nessie, in the form of a woman, confronts them in their hotel room. I was offended that, despite the two men explicitly asking her to speak slower, Nessie often spoke quickly with in a strong Scottish accent that was rarely intelligible to my weak hearing. The play is confusing as magic only sometimes appears, and the plot twist at the end seems inconsistent with the long friendship depicted earlier as well as preachy.	Greenside @ Infirmary Street	2023	6
176	Meat Boy (***) A fellow that was given "Meat Boy" as a nickname by an abusive teacher much later takes advantage of an opportunity to poison him. The teacher is too loud throughout, and the plot twist is as you expect it. I found it banal, but the rest of the audience loved it.	theSpace on the Mile	2023	19
177	Runaway (***) A runaway girl drifts from job to job, roommate to roommate, and lover to lover. She spoke at an incredible speed so that it was like hearing two plays for the price of one. Unhappily I have seen too many similar stories at the Fringe so that I found little novel here.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	17
178	Hot as Hell (***) A high school freshman has made a deal with a demon that gives her an exceptional singing voice. The singing is pretty good, and the demonic horror aspects are classic, but she is such an unappealing character that I just didn't care about her despite her backstory. It didn't help that the German heartthrob's bona fides are challenged in the middle of the play for no reason.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	8

179	Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind (30 Plays in 60 Minutes) (***) With a list of 30 plays supplied to the audience, a large cast was going to execute each play as the audience randomly chose them. I watched the first two, and thought they would probably do a credible job, but the room was hot, and the air conditioner was so loud that I could rarely hear them, and decided to leave.	Greenside @ Infirmary Street	2023	10
180	Terrence the T-Rex (***) An actor playing a T. Rex in a one-man children's show is unhappy when he is suddenly joined by a woman who will play a Triceratops with him. Though good natured, this show really goes nowhere new with its blossoming romance being totally predictable. This seems like a show for children, but isn't.	Bedlam Theatre	2023	6
181	Enquiry Concerning Hereafter (***) After seeing Charon, the ferryman across the river Styx, David Hume has a last conversation whit his great friend Adam Smith. Since they agreed much more than differed, most of the play was just a celebration of their close friendship. All three actors did a fine job, I would have preferred more philosophical discussions than Hume saying he never denied the existence of God, and Smith saying he never advocated laissez faire.	Panmure House	2023	27
182	Prick (***) Prick explores the Scottish witch trials with testimony from three witches, puppetry, and other dramatic effects. The director's notes explain that they chose to use puppets for the torture scenes to avoid showing a woman tortured on stage, and to depict the lack of control and dissociation of such prisoners. I felt that the play spent too much of its time on superfluous tasks, including scenes with a 21st century producer and animating models of ravens, foxes and cats.	theSpace on the Mile	2023	5

183	Heaven by Eugene O'Brien (***) A married couple return to their hometown for a wedding 25 years after they were married take the opportunity to revisit people from their past. The two actors never interact, and alternately describe their events after the wedding. Though their stories are well told by the actors, the staging is so static that my mind drifted away at times.	Traverse Theatre	2023	3
184	My Dad Wears a Dress (***) Until she was 19 a 26-year-old woman avoids revealing that her dad wears a dress. I found it wearing to watch her go through each of her years from 4 to 12 with only a few references to her father. In the end, I was left wondering what a “transvestite lesbian” is—a male transvestite, or a trans woman.	Underbelly, Cowgate	2023	13
185	Assemblywomen (***) Six women steal their husband clothes, and pose as men at a city’s assembly meeting where they convince the assembly to put women completely in charge of the city. While the redistribution of wealth gets some time, the bulk of the tale is devoted to working out how all men and all women will get their fair share of sex. Toward the end, one randy husband throws incredibly hurtful insults at an “old” woman, and “ugly” woman for no purpose other than to demonstrate how uncivil and selfish he can be when that is already quite clear.	C ARTS | C venues | C aquila	2023	13
186	O Tusitala: Tellers of Tales (***) The Samoan playwright reads and sometimes sings her story about when Robert Louis Stevenson came to live and die in Samoa. The script has 17 characters, and she barely tries to differentiate them, so most run together into an amorphous mess. The show was supposed to be an hour long, but took an interminable 90 minutes, and I missed my next show!	Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh	2023	27

187	Scent (***) This one of those shows that is so unmemorable that two days later I cannot remember much about it. I have the sense that it was another Fringe play by a young woman about her life.	Greenside @ Infirmary Street	2023	25
188	LATER (***) Reminiscent of late-night TV interviewing shows, the hostess had a cellist and singer to interview. To give the show a relaxed ambience, she offered two glasses of wine to volunteers in the audience, and said we could leave at will. While her interviewing skills were fine, and the musicians tuneful, the show had little to merit charging admission.	ROUNDABOUT @ Summerhall	2023	18
189	May Contain Traces of Nuts (***) Four friends hangout in a living room discussing their impending departure from their hometown. Not much happened in the first twenty minutes, and then the sound tech set the music volume so loud that it would damage my chemo-poisoned ears that I decided to leave the show.	theSpaceTriplex	2023	17
190	Four Cut Sunflowers (***) The sister-in-law of Vincent Van Gough must contend with the artist and his ill, but supportive brother. I already knew of Theo's efforts for his brother, and found little new here. The lead spoke breathily, and so quietly that I could rarely hear her.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	14
191	The Last Show Before We Die (***) Two "dead" women awaken to create physical theater with virtually no discernible plot for me. Their show seems to be all about creativity. Since I prefer wit, intriguing plot, and smart prose, it left me cold.	ROUNDABOUT @ Summerhall	2023	18

192	Unforgettable Girl (***) A Thai mail order bride appears out of a cardboard box, spends the first ten minutes polling the audience, and then proceeds to her character as a starting point for a series of esoteric performances. While I sort of could see how it all held together, and could appreciate her creativity, it didn't seem to have a plot. As usual, most of the audience interaction seemed a waste of dramatic time.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	17
193	The Return (***) A Croatian immigrant describes her life in Croatia in the 1990s, and how the Yugoslav and Ukrainian war impacted her. Because of the small audience she immediately broke the fourth wall, and sat with us. The staging is minimal, and she clearly has a lot of pent-up anger from dealing with both UK and Croatia governments.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	10
194	Reflected (***) A young woman tells her counselor that she really knows how to play the romance game, and just hasn't found someone who really loves her. As the play presents vignettes from her love life it makes it so obvious that she is a self-centered person with low self-esteem so that her confrontation with that fact is anti-climactic. Close conversations were often difficult to hear, and the counselor often spoke too quietly.	Greenside @ Infirmary Street	2023	9
195	Yoga with Jillian A New Comedy (***) A yoga instructor invites five audience members to join one senior "student" already on stage for an hour of yoga with humorous asides. I generally don't like shows with audience participation because it usually wastes dramatic time, and this show takes it to the limit. The asides and mistake prone student are slightly funny, but no consolation for spending a large part of an hour just watching people doing yoga.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	7

196	Babs for Life (***) A drag queen plays Babs Romance, an MP from her own Preservative Party. She mixes sexual acts and innuendo with political commentary. Her sexual hi-jinks seemed to titillate the crowd, but this Yank found that he did not know many of her political references.	C ARTS | C venues | C cubed	2023	8
197	Eugene O'Neill's Thirst (***) Two men have been stuck on a life raft with half the body of a dancer for many, many days. Only one talks, and has little of interest to say. Though there is a little action at the end, the bulk of the show is boring.	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2023	25
198	Pretending to Fly (***) During Covid, two roommates journey to the roof to discuss their lives. Due to a show running a little long, I arrived five minutes late, and never could figure out what was going on. They seemed to pluck episodes from their past randomly.	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2023	25
199	Funeral for My Friend Who Is Still Alive (***) A Hong Kong woman provides scattered snippets of a friend's life as well as hers in Hong Kong. While sincere and touching in places, her broken English hindered my understanding of much of the play. I couldn't understand why she silently re-enacted three times him getting in and out of a coffin to act as his own pole bearer.	theSpace @ Niddry St	2023	10
200	Break the Chains (***) An ex-addict created this show about his fight with addiction to help addicts kick their habit. While he is quite sincere, and his tale uplifting, the production is pretty rudimentary. I was impressed that he had kicked the habit for twenty years, and then returned to it after building a thriving business.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	10

201	Alba (***) In 2014, eight Scottish high school students learn of Scotland's early battles for independence, and prepare for Scotland's vote for independence. Because of their strong Scottish accents made the songs and the protagonist almost impossible for me to understand, I found this play overlong and boring. On top of that, many of the songs were quite repetitious.	Gilded Balloon Patter Hoose	2023	2
202	Graveyard of the Outcast Dead (***) In Shakespearian times, three dead prostitutes, and a lover tell their tales. Despite the cast speaking loud enough, my poor hearing made it so I missed significant parts of each story. Others said they really enjoyed it.	theSpace on the Mile	2023	5
203	Shakespeare Up Late: A Right Royal Visit (***) The four cast members take on MacBeth with broad humor and a few songs. This show trades the wit of "Shakespeare for Breakfast" for the chaotic buffoonery of a farce. The show had too much mugging, slapstick,, and low brow humor for me.	C ARTS | C venues | C aquila	2023	27
204	Great Ruckus (***) Backed by macabre video drawings of the characters they are currently playing two sisters must deal with their wretched family at their mother's funeral. Despite my telling her that I had hearing problems, the usher insisted that I sit in the rear back corner of the theater despite the front row being nearly empty. I was pissed when I could barely hear, and understood almost nothing when the too fast-talking sister spoke or the other when she used a squeaky voice for one family member. After the show, I found out that the usher was following the seating specifications of the show itself, and that other people loved the show.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	22

205	Murder in the Cathedral (***) A large cast reads the verse drama “Murder in the Cathedral” about four men assassinating Archbishop Thomas Beckett under the orders of King Henry II. I was disappointed because I had thought this was going to be play about a murder mystery, and not a reading of an historical drama. Due to the fact that the entire cast was reading from books, the staging was minimal, and the entire show slow and pretty boring.	Old Saint Paul's Church	2023	28
206	Goodbye Uncle Fudgey (***) An actor plays a boy who was sent to boarding school against his will by his parents and laments how it hurt him. For the initial ¾ of the show Fudgey interacts with the audience using childish behavior both as an adult and schoolboy that quickly becomes tedious. The last third is touching, but too late.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2023	22
207	Swan Song (***) Two acting friends are scheduled for the same venue time slot, and agree to only do half of each of their shows. While the concept could be interesting, the unconvincing snippets and banter just seem to fill the time, and go nowhere. In the play, they say that they are much more actors than writers, and it shows.	Greenside @ Infirmary Street	2023	10
208	Scaredy Fat (***) A fat fellow who loves horror films must deal with his own horrific alter ego while talking about his experiences, and those of overweight people in the films. Though it was clear that a lot of time went into the video aspects of the production it was just way too loud for me. His character was too broad and antic for me to really care about his battle with his alter ego.	Pleasance Dome	2023	10

209	Tomorrow's Child (***) After putting on blindfolds, we were led into a room to hear an adaption of Bradbury's tale of how two parents deal with their baby born in the fourth dimension. I am not sure whether I fell asleep or not, but it seemed to be almost entirely a sequence of loud sound effects with few words. So for me there wasn't much here.	Assembly Checkpoint	2023	20
210	Edmonds (***) An actor plays Noel Edmonds and selects an audience to play "Deal or No Deal" by repeatedly selecting one of 22 boxes each of which contain references to Edmond's career, and not money. As a Yank who knew nothing of Edmonds, nor "Deal…", I found most of the show boring. Now that I have researched the two, I still think that the show has little to offer.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	8
211	Otto & Astrid's Joint Solo Project (***) The guitarist and drummer satirize rock bands, and their childish disagreements. Though the music had a good beat, and I had the sense the lyrics were somewhat witty, it was just too loud and not particularly tuneful. The whole "this is my side of the stage" shtick quickly grew tiresome.	Assembly George Square Gardens	2023	12
212	Until Death (***) This one-woman show (with a little help) mixes together bats, a hospital, Marilyn Monroe, and stripper without a plot, nor premise, and ends up a mess. The ideas are so disparate that it could be a fever dream. One memorable sequence, based on Marilyn Monroe's exhaust grate scene, has her wearing a white dress, and trying to have an orgasm by blowing progressively larger fans up her dress.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	26
213	Ay Up, Hitler! (**) Hitler and his three henchmen didn't die, they took up residence in Yorkshire. This show once again proves that only Mel Brooks could make a funny show about Hitler, and get away with it. Anytime you are trying to make a joke involving the Holocaust you should know you are way too far afield.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	20

214	How to Drink Wine Like a Wanker (**) A woman talks about her transition from top level executive to winery counter person while discussing the attributes of six wines offered to taste for 10 pounds. There is no script, she just talks mostly about her life at the expense of talking about the making of the wines, in particular, she never explained why we would be drinking a white wine with a 2017 vintage, nor why a vintner would choose to release a cloudy wine. Besides there being no script, and there is an unannounced extra ten pound charge for the tasting that is integral to her presentation, the show ran 10 minutes long.	Summerhall	2023	25
215	Take The Bins Out (**) A businessman who is going blind has serious marital problems, and spends most of the show calling his wife complaining about her and his plight. Even though he does end up talking with a counselor on the phone, by then his constant self-centered whining had grown so tiresome that I didn't care. There was a white cane prop leaning up against a wall, but the actor made no real effort to maintain the illusion of his blindness.	Greenside @ Nicolson Square	2023	7
216	Breaking Up with Jesus (**) The comedian starts off by saying "fuckin'" more than ten times in the first 30 seconds, and then goes on to treat his relationship with Jesus as a form of extended dating with three betrayals by Jesus. While the premise is sort of funny initially, it cannot sustain the whole show. Towards the end, I was just looking at my watch wishing time would move faster.	theSpace on the Mile	2023	5
217	My Father's Nose (**) This absurdist show has a woman help a man she finds on a park bench to overcome his misconception that his thumb is the nose of his recently deceased father. With forgettable family songs about banal subjects, this show just goes nowhere I found interesting.	Assembly Rooms	2023	4

218	Wildcat's Last Waltz (**) A drag queen wife invites the audience into her home where she reminisces about her life with her husband. In most cases I find audience participation a waste of dramatic time, and this show does it twice. First we all invited to have some coffee, tea, and cookies, and then she and three audience members do a whole calisthenics routine twice for five minutes.	Assembly Rooms	2023	4
219	Lost Soles (**) At the beginning of the show a professional actor tells of how his tap dancing was most informed by his grandmother, a man in Chicago, and a man in Cuba, and then proceeds to re-create each event with its resultant tap dance. The huge problem here is that he spends 75% of his time silently moving props to create each of the three scenes. On top of that, he often cannot be heard by people with normal hearing, and in Cuba he silently repeats a dinner scene four times with little explanation.	Assembly Roxy	2023	2
220	Importance of Being... Earnest? (**) I generally think audience participation is a waste of valuable dramatic time, and from the start this version of Wilde's play has an abundance of audience participation. By the final scene five members of the audience had speaking roles on stage. The show was so poorly constructed that the show ran more than twenty minutes longer than was promised.	Pleasance Courtyard	2023	7
221	Dan Tiernan: Going Under (**) Tiernan is not a witty man; he seems to believe that louder is funnier that only produced courteous chuckles from the rarely amused audience. He often runs up to an audience member until he is inches from their face, and then yells at them. He started his routine by saying "fuckin'" in every sentence, and then proceeds to talk about his poor looks and beans until his notes prodded him with a new topic.	Monkey Barrel Comedy	2023	-31

222	Report to an Academy (*) As best as we can tell, an old man tells a scientific academy of his captivity when an ape. His performance is so full of artifice and cryptic descriptions that the people I spoke with afterwards just shook their heads in disbelief. It didn't help that he had the habit of dropping the ends of his sentences into unheard whispers.	ZOO Southside	2023	9
223	Escape Velocity (*) This is not a play about dealing with sex addiction with a script, it is a man talking about all the sexual encounters he had until 2006. It is telling that though the tale ends there, he then asserted that he is still trying to stop his behavior now. He comes across as a stand-up comic who thought he could make some money bragging about how handsome he is, and easy it is to seduce women.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2023	10
1	Oedipus Electronica (*****) A pregnant playwright with writer's block is tasked with writing a contemporary "mythological" play. She doesn't set out to write Oedipus Rex, but this intense, occasionally loud, play revolves around it. With its acting, writing, and production values of the highest caliber, this is the best play I have seen in years. Arrive early so you can sit in the front row to experience its full intensity.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	22
2	Eowyn Emerald and Dancers (*****) This is a single, ingenious jazz pas de deux with an incredibly diverse mix of music and moves. Even when there is sorrow, her love of life comes through. Her extremely tall partner does an fine job of shadowing her quick, precise movements.	Greenside @ Nicholson Square	2022	20
3	Love, Loss and Chianti (*****) This two hander is actually two pieces that have an older book editor in common. In the first he morns his recently deceased wife, and in the second he arranges a dinner with an old flame. The lyrical prose and her sharp style make this an elegant piece with every word and move precisely conveying the subtlety (and lack of subtlety) of the two characters.	Assembly Rooms	2022	24

4	The Choir of Man (*****) This musical is set in local tavern in which the men chose to sing rather than form sports teams. This is classic revue that mixes upbeat singalong songs with dance with solo ballads with audience members invited on stage to be the center of attention. I saw this show in 2019, and the vibe was just as great this time, as the audience joyfully joined the pub men.	Assembly Hall	2022	4
5	Mitch Benn: It's About Time (*****) Benn mixes poignant stories from his life with observations about spending time wisely with well written, short songs in a way that I just loved. Whether it is dealing with his dying mother during Covid, or railing against the politicians, his humanity and wit are always plainly evident. I particularly appreciated his reminder that rather than repeating itself, events are often similar, but each is an opportunity for change.	Underbelly, Bristo Square	2022	5
6	Police Cops: The Musical (*****) The energetic and talented cast of six young people smoothly perform the songs, choreography, and hi-jinx of this send-up of rookie cop movies. Though I missed a few lines because of my poor hearing, what I did hear was clever and tuneful. It was joy to watch each of them tackle their many roles so effectively.	Assembly George Square Studios	2022	9
7	Little Women (*****) This musical adaptation of Alcott's sentimental novel about four sisters growing up in the mid-19th century has everything you could ask for in a musical: strong voices, fun choreography, evocative well played music, and a story that pulls at your heart. The show revolves around Jo, the oldest sister, and the actress nails the role with both her voice and spirited personality. The various ways of presenting the signs to indicate the location and date were a delightful little way to start each scene.	Assembly Rooms	2022	23

8	Intelligence (*****) In the basement of the United States State Department, three women take turns enacting meetings between an envoy and a leader of an Islamic terrorist organization. The writing is taut, and the evolution of the three characters intriguing. A date/time clock above the proceedings adds a subtle urgency to the proceedings.	Assembly Roxy	2022	11
9	Joshua (and Me) (*****) A young woman relates the true story of how growing up with an autistic brother influenced her and her normal brother. This is not a simple tale of an undervalued daughter, but rather of how her brother's improvement impacted her over the years. Though I found her looped background difficult to understand with my poor hearing, it was an effective way to convey the changing atmosphere of the house.	Pleasance Dome	2022	11
10	Feeling Afraid as if Something Terrible is Going to Happen (*****) Samuel Barnett plays a 36-year old gay comedian who finally falls in love, but has trouble coming to terms with this new feeling and monogamy. Barnett characterization and comic timing are so perfect that I thought he was really a comedian doing a Fringe show. His loving but suspicious description of his American lover hones his confusion and self-doubt throughout the play.	Summerhall	2022	22
11	Camille O'Sullivan: Dreaming (*****) I see Camille every time she comes to the Fringe. Even though she was very loud at times, she was still great. A force of nature in the mold of Janis Joplin but without the drugs.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2022	16
12	The Girl Who Was Very Good at Lying (*****) A girl tells tall tales about her town to a handsome stranger. Well structured, well acted, and just plain fun. I was surprised how well the ending suited the story.	Summerhall	2022	17

13	Still Floating (*****) Shon Dale-Jones combines a visit to his mother on the Isle of Anglesey with his tall tale of the island suddenly coming loose and literally sailing around the North Atlantic. From a swimming vest of oranges to a demonstration of disorientation using a cardboard box this is a wonderful, whimsical story told by a master. I gave the original "Floating" five stars in 2006, and this version didn't let me down.	Summerhall	2022	20
14	Ruckus (*****) Based on real stories, a woman tells of how her relationship with her lover very slowly evolves into one of abuse. Him driving them at scary speeds was an example of how a lover can exert control over their spouse that I would never thought of, but Debbie had experienced. Because of my hearing impairment, at times I could not understand the high pitched voice of the actress, and would give this four stars, but Debbie thought it was worth five.	Summerhall	2022	21
15	We are Traffic: An Uber Adventure (****) A real Los Angeles Uber driver combines a tale of how ride sharing has changed over the years with that of his marriage and personal growth using photos and video. This former New Yorker brings an openness and clarity to the subject that is at once disarming and fun. His thesis about how his passengers have become less like friends over the years was thought provoking.	Assembly Rooms	2022	18
16	Out of the Blue (****) The thirteen Oxford men are back with their smooth acapella and loose choreography. I always make time to see them each year, and they again brought tears to my eyes with their harmonies and camaraderie. Normally I give them five stars, but this year's selection of songs had fewer songs that I knew than ever before.	Assembly George Square	2022	10

17	S.O.E. (****) Based on a real spy, this two-hander has a woman officer of the World War II Special Operation Executive debrief a woman wireless operator after her assignment in occupied Paris. The officer's concern is palpable, and the spy's tale is thrilling. A description of the varied purposes of the four pills hidden in a matchbox highlights both the subtlety and danber of her mission.	Assembly Rooms	2022	27
18	Kevin Quantum: Dark Matter (****) Kevin starts off successfully guessing drink an audience member is thinking of, and from then on continues with a polished show of patter and new magic. I am reluctant to use the word "tricks", because my cynicism took such a beating. While Breck and I could figure out some of the magic, there were some that left us astounded.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2022	6
19	Changing the Sheets (****) Always standing six feet apart, and facing the audience, a man and woman repeatedly meet for sex, and maybe little else. Though we little of their motivation, the few tidbits from their past we do hear is enough to explain their interactions. Even during the scenes that took place in bed, the staging was remarkably effective.	Assembly Rooms	2022	28
20	Candy (****) A fellow finally falls in love with someone but that person doesn't fit with his vision of himself. This story of coming to grips with his discovery of love and its attending internal conflicts is well written, and well acted. The revelation about his aunt's life proves to be an excellent device.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2022	18
21	Happy Meal (****) Two people meet playing an online video game, and begin to share their lives through social media. The story draws us in as they reveal more about their difficulties with their sexual identities. Though the final scene has a meet-cute feel to it, the rest of the story feels real, and tender.	Traverse	2022	14

22	The Final Approach (****) Through a combination of two webcams, an overhead projector, and a voice synthesizer a fellow presents a bizarre story of sleep deprivation and corruption in his high school. We watched it all on a single screen while he masterfully switched between webcams and voices to create a unique, smooth presentation. The way he was able to gather the offbeat threads of the story together into a coherent conclusion amazed me.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2022	19
23	Fanboy (****) A thirty something nerd whose life revolves around Star Wars et al, interacts with his 8-year old self on a video cam, and a mysterious being who resembles the Emperor, as he deals with his own world view conflicts. On the first day of the Fringe, with Breck choosing only comedy shows, only this piece brought tears to my eyes because of its sincerity and depth. Despite the low budget, and maybe because of the low budget, the multi-media worked surprisingly well to convey the pureness of childhood.	Pleasance Dome	2022	3
24	Card Ninja (****) This is not a magic or sleight of hand show, a man who can throw cards with amazing speed and power. Though he is a one trick pony, his skill, his Ninja persona, and his interaction with the audience were wonderful. Breck stood out as a participant who finally caught a thrown card, and then counted how many cards were thrown at him in ten seconds.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2022	3
25	Cassie and the Lights (****) When their mother abandons her three daughters, her 16-year old daughter takes over rearing her two younger sisters until the system gets wind of it. Debbie, who worked in Children Social Care, and I were very moved by the tale. We did find the music accompaniment too loud though.	Underbelly Cowgate	2022	13

26	Love Them to Death (****) A mother and a school counselor battle over whether her young son is really as sick as she says, or is a victim of Fabricated or Induced Illness. Like a good mystery, new evidence keeps us guessing while we pity the poor child throughout. While the demanding mother is not likeable, it is a tribute to the play that I could not help but understand her supposed plight.	Underbelly Cowgate	2022	14
27	Fantastically Great Women Who Changed the World (****) This very professional musical has an eleven-year old Black girl wander into a restricted part of museum dedicated to accomplished women of the past. The cast, particularly the girl, are all top notch with strong, upbeat songs, and fun choreography. As each famous woman, particularly Rosa Parks, comes alive, they serve to bolster the girl's resolve to be special and her awareness of her own self-worth.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	22
28	The Actress (****) After Charles II decides to allow women to perform on stage, a surprisingly well educated common girl, and a renowned prostitute vie for the role of Desdemona. The play clearly presents the producer/director's dilemma between tutoring the sensitive commoner on how to act, and just accepting the marketable sexy woman. The problem for this Fringe play is that actress playing the whore is just too tall to ever believe that she would be acceptable to the actors of that era.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2022	19
29	Starship Improvise (****) With the audience only providing the title, initial emotion, and starting location on a starship, this show has a predefined structure that gives it a big leg-up on other improvised shows. The pre-filmed credits and introductions tell us who their characters are within the Star Trek well defined command structure. With this as a starting point, the actors easily slide into their well worn roles to exploit the seams of fun in the given premise of the day.	Pleasance Dome	2022	7

30	Ari Eldjárn: Saga Class (****) Eldjarn populates his stand-up routine with comments about Covid, his native Iceland, and his two young daughters. His gentle humor warmed my heart throughout his show. Imagining an Icelandic man trying to cook some ham on a new lava flow only to see his expensive skillet melt is something I will never forget.	Monkey Barrel 4 Blair St.	2022	8
31	Sap (****) This one woman show (with an occasional assist) has her telling the audience how her bisexuality proved troublesome for her, and both her male and female lovers. The play is filled with evocative soliloquys with a touchstone of trees throughout. I was surprised to find that because of the playwright's heavy reliance on similes, I became conscious of their use.	Summerhall	2022	21
32	Something About Simon (****) As a solo performer, Gary Edward Jones, gets close to matching Paul Simon's voice and guitar skills. His renditions of Simon's classics and tales from Simon's early career evoke fond memories. I wish he had spent a little more time on Simon's later life, and included "One Trick Pony" at the expense of another Simon and Garfunkel tune.	Assembly Rooms	2022	15
33	Christopher Bliss: Captain Words Eye (****) Bliss assumes a character who is a confident author exploring different forms of writing. Meanwhile he invites audience participation in a variety of literary exercises. His reading of the first chapter of his sexy and comic novella had us all laughing after each paragraph.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	13
34	Sandcastles (****) When her best friend since childhood decides to move to New York City, a young woman lamenters her absence. From their initial meeting in sandbox to their frequent misunderstandings, their emotional bond permeates the play. It all resonated with my own relationship with my best friend of almost 50 years.	Assembly Rooms	2022	27

35	Eglantyne (****) An actress suggests how her life paralleled that of Eglantyne Jeb who was the founder of Save the Children. As we follow Eglantyne's circuitous route to charity founder we learn how both she and her sister were a powerful team advancing many causes. Hearing of the actress' life added little to the play, but learning of Eglantyne's life was worth it.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2022	29
36	Rebel (****) With a David Bowie imitator as ring master, an Australian group play Bowie songs while different musicians perform circus acts. The acts range from juggling to aerial work with drapes suspended from the tent's ceiling to a clown trying to extricate themselves from a chair. The final act with a performer stacking chairs at odd angles and climbing on top of them was quite amazing.	Underbelly Circus Hub	2022	24
37	Are You Being Murdered? (****) Arthur Bostrom beautifully executes this one hander about a murder that takes place on the set of the old Brit sitcom, "Are You Being Served?" The acting, staging, pacing, and murder tale, are all top notch. Besides Bostrom's winning characterization, I appreciated how the playwright had given nicknames to the supporting characters so we could easily keep track of them.	Pleasance at EICC	2022	6
38	Pip Utton as Dylan (****) As usual, Utton dons a character, and uses his research to allow us to present him as a real person rather than just a celebrity. In this case, we are treated to a man who is first, and foremost a singer/songwriter who has no desire to be an icon of a generation. I found it most telling, that he spent many days at Woody Guthrie's bedside as he died of Huntington's disease.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	7
39	Pete Firman: Bag Of Tricks (****) With his likable persona, and smooth patter, Firman makes the most of his bag of well-worn magic tricks. Other than the first trick involving a chair in a carton that mysteriously turns upside down, I had seen all of the tricks before. Nonetheless, even from the first row, his sleight-of-hand was top notch, and a joy to watch.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2022	3

40	What the Heart Wants (****) Woody Allen and Frank Sinatra try to collaborate to write a film treatment starring themselves. Sinatra's excellent singing combined with their discussions of possible plot variations combine for a unique exploration of relationships. Unhappily, the last line of the play was so badly delivered that the power of its revelation was lost.	Gilded Balloon Patter Hoose	2022	6
41	In the Weeds (****) A Japanese marine biologist comes to Scotland to research a potential lake monster (not the Loch Ness monster). As he gets to know a strange local woman, the story becomes darker and more complex. The use of a small pool on stage emphasizes the unusual tie between the water and the woman.	Summerhall	2022	26
42	Foundations (****) A sixteen-year old starts working at a factory, and her curiosity leads her to meet a naïve young robot living in a completely unknown underground world. The robot puppets come alive nicely as the plot moves along at a good pace. Except for the sections involving lamps in hands, the choreography served well to highlight the similarities of the two worlds.	Underbelly Cowgate	2022	13
43	Diary for a Nobody (****) A mid-19th century senior clerk reads 18 months of entries from his diary. While many are mundane, they gave a vivid depiction of life in the Victorian age when the bourgeoisie were ever aware of propriety and class. His experiences at the Mayor's Ball highlight his own shortcomings and the misplaced sense of self-importance of he and his wife.	at theSpace on the Mile	2022	27
44	Closure (****) A couple arrive for dinner at one of her mates only to find that the man has a past with the cook. The plot develops nicely as we are not sure who is in the wrong until quite late. The cook's presentation of the dinner does not match the keen plot though.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	19

45	Wilf (****) A jilted gay man finds solace in a used car that “talks” to him, and his long term driving instructor/counselor. Much of the humor arises from his desire to fellate almost any man he meets. Though he does seem to become more grounded, his rampant sexuality becomes tiresome.	Traverse	2022	26
46	Fiji (****) A fellow secretly comes to a stranger’s flat for a weekend of sex, probing questions, and dining. Their interactions are cryptic initially, but grow increasingly intense as the weekend progresses. While the visitor has the right to keep his motives secret, such secrecy weakens the play.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	14
47	An Audience with Stuart Bagcliffe (****) This tale has a naïve, sickly teenager present an autobiographic Fringe show about his protective mother and his naivete. The actor is perfect at conveying his awkward awakening to the opposite sex, while dealing with his offstage mother. I loved his quiet, subtle performance until the director spoiled the atmosphere with a superfluous cacophony of light and sound to needlessly highlight the boys already traumatic experience.	Zoo Playgound	2022	7
48	Pip Utton is Adolf (****) Utton performs as Adolf Hitler alternating between wishing his household staff farewell in the Berlin bunker, and advising us how to lead people. The first section of the play was as great as ever. However, the last section doesn’t have the punch of his 2003 version (through no fault of his own.)	The Stand's New Town Theatre	2022	15
49	ALOK (****) ALOK covers a wide range of topics related to their transgender experience. I found their poetry wonderful. Their use of absolutes (“all”, “never”) when describing groups of people seemed hypocritical in the context of his message of acceptance.	Traverse	2022	11
50	Shelton on Sinatra (****) Richard Shelton has a passion for Sinatra, and has the talent to sing his songs well. His remarks about Sinatra’s life added a lot to the experience. The sound tech had the piano so loud that it hid many of Shelton’s quieter phrases.	Le Monde Hotel	2022	15

51	Two Fingers Up (****) Three young women review their own discovery of their sexuality, including education at school and masturbation. Though one of the women was more adventurous, she is less a leader more an inquisitor of her friends for confirmation. Despite its topic, the approach is more fun than sexy, with sexual pleasure portrayed with girlish wiggling rather than orgasmic moans.	Summerhall	2022	17
52	This is Paradise (****) An Irish woman recounts the history of her lovers and childhood friends. Her acting is superb throughout this long piece. This probably would be given five stars by everyone else, but we couldn't understand a lot because of her strong Irish accent.	Traverse	2022	18
53	Tim Crouch: Truth's a Dog Must to Kennel (****) Crouch dons an inactive VR headset, and while blinded, acts as if he is seeing himself as the Fool in "King Lear" in front of a different audience. I found his comments about the make believe audience quite funny, and those on the play thought provoking. He provided lighter moments by breaking up his "viewing" by telling a few jokes.	Lyceum	2022	25
54	Boy (****) Based on a true story, using stuffed animals as props, a Mennonite couple re-enacts events from their life with a child who was maimed at birth The toys take the place of the various people depicted in the sometimes violent real and imagined encounters. Since I fell asleep during a crucial short section,, I would have given the show three stars, but my wide awake companion thinks it deserves four.	Summerhall	2022	21
55	Bloody Harmony (***) After their mother's funeral three disparate sisters try to find her will in her attic. This felt like a well written chick flick. The three actresses create beautiful harmonies in the many songs in the piece, but the lyrics were difficult to understand and the tunes were too similar.	Traverse	2022	25

56	How to Build a Wax Figure (***) A teenage girl start to work for a neighbor woman who creates wax sculptures of human body parts. The play handles the slow evolution of their relationship well. I found the tentative efforts at kissing by the teenager particularly touching.	Assembly George Square	2022	25
57	Carnegie (***) Andrew Carnegie tells of his life from poor Scottish immigrant to the world to philanthropist. As we hear of his humane treatment of his workers but murderous strike breaking he becomes a complicated, real person for us. Later in life, when free from the doubtful morality of his business dealing, his efforts to bring peace to the world and education to his countries reveal how strong his underlying respect for workers was.	Penmure House	2022	28
58	Brown Boys Swim (***) Two dissimilar Muslim high school pals set out to learn to swim before a pool party. This mixes discrimination with two different approaches to life to explore many aspects of Islamic acculturation in the UK. Though the scene changes seemed too frequent, they were ably assisted by a sliding table that served as a multitude of objects, including the edge of a swimming pool, and a wall for graffiti.	Pleasance Dome	2022	27
59	Winston and David (***) The mistress of David Lloyd George narrates as two actors recreate the critical interactions between George and Churchill. I knew little of the Liberal Prime Minister George, and found the information about him fascinating. I've been to the Churchill Museum in London, and found his portrayal to be too self centered.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2022	29
60	Mark Watson: This Can't Be It (***) Watson spends time interacting with the audience, and giving his take on the lockdown. He uses a life expectancy table as starting point for assessing his progress in life. He was often funny, but too scattered for me.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	14

61	Bad Clowns: Invasion (***) This delightful show has three agents using an alien detector gun to find an alien in the audience who will disarm a ticking time bomb on the stage that will destroy the Earth in less than hour. Their frequent misuse of a memory washer straight out of "Men in Black" keeps the plot jerking along in a most amusing fashion. I was really impressed the complex Rube Goldberg bomb with its moving lights and elevating whatever.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2022	4
62	The Strange Undoing of Prudence Hall (***) This ceilidh has a conference an expert in Scottish ballads gets lost in the snow on her way to her bed and breakfast. The entertainment was immersive, intentionally low budget, fun, and professional. The interactions with the devil lent a real Scottish feel to it.	Playfair Library	2022	24
63	9 Circles (***) An uneducated, but surprisingly smart veteran is arrested after being honorably discharged for killing three Iraqis. As he deals with his sergeant, a pastor, two defense attorneys, and an army psychiatrist, we learn of his turmoil and the complex politics of his situation. While the acting was top notch throughout, his confusion and the ambiguity of his plight combined to make the play feel sterile.	Assembly George Square	2022	23
64	Arthur Smith: My 75 Years at the Edinburgh Fringe (***) The well travelled comedian covers the Fringe from its beginnings, and his shows there from 1977. His shows have varied from early zany comedy with plates crashed on people's heads to Leonard Cohen homages. His mix of laconic humor goes down well.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	11
65	The MP, Aunty Mandy & Me (***) The only gay in the village goes to work for the campaign of his local MP. From his fascination with trains his world view is changed with this new environment of politics and urban gay bars. A dog mask, and simple echo well convey the radically different druggy gay culture.	Pleasance Dome	2022	19

66	Mustard (***) This solo show has a young bar maid recounting her life after she ran away with a handsome, wealthy man. Though the development of their relationship is predictable, her quirky reactions keep things interesting. The later scenes with mustard have a wonderful cathartic feeling.		2022	
67	Eh Up, Me Old Flowers! (***) The 1970s TV comedian Charlie Williams talks about his life with an interviewer. As he detailed his life from coal miner to professional football player to singer to club comedian to TV star, my attention never strayed. As a man who lived through the 1970s as an adult, his defense against charges that he promoted racism rang true to me.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	29
68	Afghanistan is Not Funny (***) The comedian and playwright Henry Naylor starts with the success of play “Finding Bin-Laden”, and details trying to convert it to a film, and his trip to Afghanistan to verify its facts. The portion about the film is tool and of little interest, but his trip to Afghanistan had many thrilling events and touching moments. It was Naylor’s Afghani translator who seemed to finally impress the writer with the plight of the people after the allies withdrew their aid.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2022	27
69	Godspell (***) In a dystopian future, a leader emerges to restore their faith, and remind them of Christ’s teachings using parables from the Bible. Everyone in the cast has a strong voice, and the dances are frequent and varied. I just tired of the constant rejoicing.	Assembly Rooms	2022	24
70	Bloody Elle - A Gig Musical (***) A working class singer tells of her teenage friendship with a female co-worker at a chip shop who was from a wealthy neighborhood. Though the singer was personable and talented, this ends up feeling like a Traverse version of a Fringe show about a common teenage personal experience. I liked he staging with its guitars at different locations that occasionally picked up, and played.	Traverse	2022	24

71	Dragons and Mystical Beasts (***) A trainer of heroes asks the children for help at becoming a hero himself by completing six quests involving magical creatures. The beautifully made puppet creatures vary from a tiny fairy to a three-person dragon. The minions within the larger creatures made them come alive for the entire audience.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2022	5
72	Ode to Joy (How Gordon got to go to the Nasty Pig Party) (***) This raucous comedy has a straight laced fellow delving into the gay world in an effort to find himself. The big, both in personality and size, narrator keeps things moving along from one funny scenario to another. Because of its reverberations, the Demonstration Room is a horrible venue, but despite missing many words, I found their antics great fun.	Summerhall	2022	21
73	Caligari (***) This adaptation of the 1920 landmark horror film “The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari” has four musicians trying to deal with both the evil doctor, and their own tenuous grip on life. The production, including an appropriately bizarre cabinet conveys the macabre feeling of the movie perfectly. Their own ambivalence about their fate adds an extra dimension to the show.	Underbelly Cowgate	2022	12
74	Agent November: Indoor Escape Game – Murder Mr E (***) Ten of us were tasked to determine who of six suspects had killed Mr. E by solving seven or eight multi-level puzzles. Since the three of us worked on only one, I can only speak of it, and can say it required a mix of skills, and benefited from teamwork. On the whole it was a very satisfying puzzle solving experience.	The Stand's New Town Theatre	2022	8

75	Mischief Movie Night (***) Tasked with creating an action movie involving a grandma in a kitchen, the moon, and a dystopian future, the troupe created a story that was fun for the audience. I found the professional improv group a vast improvement over the cringe worthy amateurs at the Fringe. Nonetheless, I would only recommend this for people who can find ad hoc wit an acceptable substitute for a well written script.	Pleasance at EICC	2022	4
76	Pete Heat: Blimey (***) The Wee Room seems like the perfect room for Pete's casual, intimate approach to magic presentation. Using only small props like dice, cards, and soda cans, he still explores a wide range of magic tricks including mind reading, object creation, and object transformation. All in all, it was a lot of fun.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2022	6
77	Flo & Joan: Sweet Release (***) The musical pair combine witty songs, audience interactions, and humorous tales from their lives to create a delightful show for their audience. Though their personas are strikingly different, the two sisters clearly enjoy working together to create a sharp show. I must admit that I was too old for many of their pop culture references, but still had a fine time.	Assembly Roxy	2022	10
78	Matt Forde: Clowns to the Left of Me, Jokers to the Right (***) Forde is a slick professional comedian who concentrates on politics. His casual imitations of the various politicians were good enough to add to the humor of his critiques. As a Yank, I only knew enough about the UK politicians to appreciate about half of his work.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	19
79	Angela Barnes: Hot Mess (***) Barnes is another well travelled English comedian who knows how to find the humorous side of life. As expected, Debbie liked her better than I.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	11

80	Tiff Stevenson: Sexy Brain (***) Stevenson combines tales of her episodes of ADHD (Sexy) brain, with feminist observations. Whether it was thwarting her partner's marriage proposal with endless guesses, or society's backhand negation of women's concerns she keeps things light. My favorite was her mind bending revelations after smoking marijuana during her mid-life "crisis" ("breakdown" for women) in Los Angeles.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	8
81	Seann Walsh: Is Dead. Happy Now? (***) The comedian tells of his life since the newspapers published a photo of him passionately kissing his married Strictly Come Dancing partner outside a club. Whether it was dealing with the career crushing aftermath, the poop of his dog, or his heroin smoking father, he strove to create tales with an amazing mix of pathos and humor. I found myself alternating between empathizing with his plight, and laughing out loud with him.	The Stad Comedy Club	2022	3
82	Kafka and Son (***) The Czech author writes a letter to his overbearing father expressing his anguish. His acting, the use of props, and only occasionally overloud music all impressed me. However, the unrelenting dour tone needs an occasional uplifting moment—maybe from his courtships.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	4
83	Tim Vine: Breeeep! (***) The king of one-liners is still going strong after all these years mixing in in puns, visual gags, and ditties to create a clever mélange of humor. With my poor hearing, I did miss many of his quips, but those I heard were worth it all. The rest of the audience had a great time; like Laugh-In of the sixties, if you didn't like that joke, just wait a few seconds, and there will be another.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	3

84	Nic Sampson: Marathon, 1904 (***) Combining facts with his a bit of fictionalized backstory, Sampson provides a lively account of an real, bizarre Olympic marathon. He focuses on three racers, and their amazing obstacles including wild dogs, strychnine, and enforced dehydration. My one complaint was that he chose Breck without warning to participate at several points in the show without instead of asking for a volunteer. I should note that Breck acquitted himself admirably, and added a lot to the fun of the show.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	7
85	Shakespeare for Breakfast (***) Three actors do a fair job of presenting a severely abridged version of "A Winter's Tale" with a light touch. Even people unfamiliar with the story (most of the audience) could follow it. Two of the actors switched between characters easily, and often humoursly.	C Aquila	2022	28
86	The Transfiguration of Mrs Lamen (***) An aging, hard drinking, drag clown forgot some lines last night, and tonight a young admirer has been assigned to get him ready to perform. The juxta position of the jaded veteran, and the naïve young man powers the play. I found the later actions by the drunken clown and disillusioned man spot on.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2022	28
87	Caste-ing (***) Three Black women singers bemoan a entertainment system that judges them based on their looks instead of their voices. The singers had great voices, and even demonstrated their beatbox skill at times. I found their solo singing enjoyable, but my poor hearing made their trio songs unintelligible.	Summerhall	2022	22
88	The Queen's Cartoonists (***) A piece band adds accompanying music to a wide range of cartoons with particular attention to Wallace and Gromit. Both the zany music and the quieter melodic music work well for most of their cartoons. However, there were some cartoons for which the music seemed inappropriate.	Assembly Roxy	2022	17

89	Richard Hardisty: Silly Boy (***) A nice comedian with gentle humor, but nothing exceptional.	Pleasance Below	2022	10
90	Benjamin Alborough: Absolute Monopoly (***) Alborough polls the audience for rule changes that would allow Monopoly to be completed in an hour. I would expect this premise would rarely work as well as did this time. The two volunteer players, one a big relaxed guy, and the other a small, effete fellow interacted in wonderfully unexpected ways, including dancing together, and threatening the host.	Gilded Balloon Patter Hoose	2022	5
91	Spoons (***) A single marriage counselor tries to help couples while keeping detached from her own life. This dramedy mines its situations well, but doesn't cover any new ground. The main couple's portrayal has some nuance, but still seem like characters rather than real people.	Gilded Balloon Patter Hoose	2022	19
92	Silkworm (***) Two Ugandan lesbian lovers work through their British immigration petitioning process in slightly different ways. We are treated to both their loving interactions, and their repeated official interviews. After a while, the play seems to just rehash previously presented material.	Assembly Roxy	2022	14
93	In PurSUEt (***) An alcoholic twenty-six year old woman stalks the TV presenter Sue Perkins. It in engrossing learning how she was able to worm her way into Sue's presence, and then sabotage herself with drink. Whether justifying herself or drunkenly interacting with the world, the actress was on top of her game.	Underbelly Cowgate	2022	16
94	Sex Tips for Straight Women from a Gay Man (***) An exuberant gay man, with the help of a dowdy announcer and her studly assistant, gives graphic tips about how to touch a man's body. The whooping, drunk Saturday night crowd perfectly suited his hi-jinx, and the change of attire of the other two. The highlight was him teaching three blind folded women how to give a proper hand job.	Gilded Balloon Patter Hoose	2022	27

95	Helter Skelter (***) We follow a 16-year old runaway from her first job in a Los Angeles strip joint to her attempt at finding refuge in the desert commune run by the cult leader Charles Manson. Though there are most of the elements of the true story of Manson murderous cult, it lacks cohesion because the plight of the protagonist competes with the outsized personality of Manson. Following the plight of the runaway's female savior seems a red herring.	Assembly George Square	2022	22
96	The Trial (***) This adaptation of Kafka's novel of anonymous persecution is is set in a hospital with the protagonist being a patient. Despite the change of venue, the play successfully conveys the feeling of hopelessness and frustration of the novel. The large cast effectively obscured the persecution, but also made the tale chaotic, and more difficult to understand.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	12
97	Dreamgun: Film Reads (***) For this day, the invited actors read a re-worked "Breakfast Club". I found most of the edits amusing, and the occasional bloopers from the un-rehearsed readings by the capable cast to be fun. The disjoint of a bearded undercover cop playing a high school girl didn't work well, but the small woman playing a dumb brute had great lines throughout.	Underbelly, Bristo Square	2022	7
98	Half Empty Glasses (***) Three sixteen-year old students of color decide to try to educate their fellow students about Black accomplishments. The effects of the slow radicalization of the leader provide ample content for the play. The lack of differentiation between the multiple characters each actor portrayed made the play difficult to understand.	Summerhall	2022	25
99	Watson: The Final Problem (***) Tim Marriott portrays Doctor Watson talking about his military career, how he met Sherlock, and the events leading up to Sherlock's death. Much of the text is straight out of Conan Doyle's story, and is well told. It does suffer from a lack of movement on the stage.	Assembly Rooms	2022	9

100	Psychodrama (***) This solo An aging actress is hired by a renowned director to play the female lead in a remake of Hitchcock's "Psycho". While the actress did an admiral job with the script, I found that her just sitting in a chair for an hour quite dull. I misunderstood a crucial plot twist because it seemed to me that she had been drugged by a bartender.	Traverse	2022	23
101	Richard Stott: After Party (***) Stott tells of his personal experiences as both a person with a small, deformed hand, and a man in his mid-30s who is behind his advancing friends. He presents an odd mix of woe-is-me, and guilt about achieving so little. The best of his tales explored the definition of "disabled", and how he was clearly hindered by his hand and the mental issues arising from his treatment, but is not disabled enough to be used as "disabled" in films.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2022	9
102	Period Dramas (***) A very nice young woman walks us through the history of civilization's treatment of female sexuality. Whether being pelted with sanitary towels by the audience or demonstrating the boots and red petticoats used in Victorian times to hide the discharged she kept the presentation light and fun.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	18
103	The Last Return (***) As the queue for returned tickets grows, the interactions amon the desperate waiting people become more and more bizarre. What starts out as a enjoyable comedy of manners devolves into a misguided farce. The latter section mistakenly relies on excess violence to be funny.	Traverse	2022	26
104	The Endling (***) This two-hander explores the extinction of species, particularly ours, from a variety of viewpoints. While they despair such extinctions, the tone is light , and usually humorous throughout. One funny routine has them describing objects, from oceans to snakes, using over-generalized adjectives, e.g. "hot yellow curvy thing" for the sun.	Underbelly Cowgate	2022	13

105	How to be a Better Human (***) A fellow tells of his father dying. While it clearly affected him, this seemed to be just another Fringe show about a common personal experience that doesn't merit a show.	Summerhall	2022	20
106	Exodus (***) Great acting, but too much of a mash up. Killing a baby can never be funny.	Traverse	2022	16
107	Horse Country (***) Two men sit at a table, and carry on a "conversation" consisting of following tangents and returning to previous topics like they both were on an LSD trip. Both actors did a fine job with the dense script, but it went nowhere—and maybe that was the goal. By the end we were both bored and tired of the endless incoherence.	Assembly George Square	2022	29
108	Anthony Devito My Dad Isn't Danny Devito (***) After idolizing his father his whole life, when Devito was 18, he found that his father was a murderous member of the Mafia. While Devito is a stand-up comedian by trade, and injects jokes when he can, this is much more a story of the disillusionment of a wife and son. His stories about his two lovers did provide some levity and evidence of personal growth.	Just the Tonic: The Mash House	2022	27
109	Irvine Welsh's Porno (***) Their Irish accent was too strong for me to understand in most cases.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	14
110	Americana: A Murder Ballad (***) This show relies on a large cast and some pre-recorded songs to present information about ten mass murders in America. Much of the live music and speech wass too muddled for me to understand with my poor hearing so I left. Debbie stayed, and thought this young American group did a good job.	Assembly Checkpoint	2022	12

111	Witch? Women in Shadow and Flame (***) For this, we walked to a rocky storage room in a old house where a woman described the three witch panics in Scotland. While the description of the tortures used were gruesome, in general the stories were informative. Though the surroundings lent some sense of history, in general, this felt a little thin.	Old Police Box	2022	20
112	Any Suggestions, Doctor? The Improvised Doctor Who Parody (***) The audience suggestion of Tolkien's Middle Earth really screwed up this improv. An evil Gandalf time lord trying to kill the Doctor meant that the story was dominated by character's from Tolkien at the expense of almost anything from the Doctor Who series. It was further weakened by the Doctor actor who barely knew anything about the Tolkien stories.	Pleasance Dome	2022	10
113	Garrett Millerick: Just Trying to Help (***) Millerick is a passionate, often angry man who wants to share his take on topics ranging from Margaret Thatcher to Covid to the Queen. His slant on history is both funny and harsh. Though he held a microphone, it was unneeded because he shouts almost all the time.	Monkey Barrel 4 Blair St.	2022	8
114	Kathy and Stella Solve a Murder (***) Noisy, and of little interest to me.	Summerhall	2022	22
115	This Moment in America (***) Collection of excerpt was good, but text had no drama.	Underbelly Cowgate	2022	16
116	Foil Arms and Hog – Hogwash (***) Three fellows provided a few sketches interspersed with a lot of inconsequential audience interviews. It just didn't seem a good value for the high price we had to pay. The running gag about re-uniting long lost people fell flat for me, but their routine of two suitcases on an airport carousel did work.	Underbelly, Bristo Square	2022	7

117	Paddy Young: Laugh, You Rats! (***) Young presents stand-up comedy about a wide range of topics which were shortly forgotten by my two friends and me. We could only remember his long discourse on how Northerners are always portrayed as simple, dumb people in commercials. He just isn't exceptional.	Gilded Balloon Patter House	2022	5
118	Character Building Experience (***) Sasha acts as dungeon master for three fellows she invited to complete a quest in an hour. Their quest this day was to deal with a town in which the humans have been replaced with intelligent cows. As a weekly dungeon master, Breck offered many helpful suggestions to the novice adventurers as they whimsically journeyed through the weird world.	Laughing Horse@The Counting House	2022	5
119	Phaime Gow: Harp Originals (***) Amplified harpist instead of acoustic which made it too loud for my weak ears.	Acoustic Music Center @ UCC	2022	18
120	NewsRevue (***) Few laughs from us and the rest of the audience.	Pleasance at EICC	2022	17
121	Ellie MacPherson: Happy Birthday, Mr. President! (***) Great voice, and interesting information about the presidents, but we couldn't understand her lyrics most of the time, and when we did they were banal.	Underbelly Cowgate	2022	19
122	We Were Promised Honey (***) The writer/actor repeatedly lets the audience decide whether we should continue with the story that is composed of vignettes from centuries in the future. The vignettes are loosely connected and generally dystopian. The idea of giving the audience the choice to continue is nove, but I object to asking for volunteers without first telling them what they are volunteering to do.l	Summerhall	2022	25
123	Beg for Me (***) A January 6th insurrectionist explain his choices in life to an inquisitor. We can understand the effects of his early life, but halfway through the play his explanation for his "awakening" made no sense. The play conflates xenophobia with misogyny for no understandable reason.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2022	28

124	This is Not a Show about Hong Kong (***) Too cryptic for me.	Underbelly Cowgate	2022	17
125	Boris the Third (***) Sophmoric	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	13
126	Something About George (***) Lounge act.	Assembly Rooms	2022	15
127	Independence (***) In 2014, a family argues about the vote for the independence of Scotland with the two daughters for it, and the father and son against it. Though both give lip service to the germane facts, most of the time is spent pontificating, particularly by the blustering autocratic father. At the end of the play they asked us to vote on the issue, but the mindless bluster of the two men gave the play an obvious skew for independence.	Hill Street	2022	28
128	Muller's Last Tape (***) Too little	Assembly Rooms	2022	15
129	Let's Talk About Philip (***)	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	11
130	1972: The Future of Sex (***)	theSpace on North Bridge	2022	10
131	Adults Only Magic Show (***) After seeing eight magic shows, I am afraid that Breck and I had become jaded. Other than their contrived escape routines, and one card trick, we had seen all of their tricks at the Fringe already, and many were better executed by others. Their dialog was fun, and it did take me a while to figure out their new card selection trick which depends on some nifty shuffling.	Assembly George Square Studios	2022	9
132	Hamlet with Sir Ian McKellan (***) From the poor management of the audience queue, this whole ballet production “narrated” by McKellan just doesn’t work in so many ways: the open procession was too long and boring; without Shakespeare’s lines the silent characters are easily confused, and McKellan’s recitation of Hamlet’s famous lines were often not synchronous with the action. The whole play was confusing, and boring.	St. Stephens	2022	26
133	Fire Signs (***)	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	12

134	Crybabies: Bagbeard (***) If you like the idea of a fellow wearing a blue plastic shopping bag as a beard throughout a show, then this is for you. It is zany, chaotic, and sophomoric. Not my cup of tea, but Breck loved it.	Pleasance Dome	2022	6
135	Mind Mangler: Member of the Tragic Circle (***) This show has an obviously inept mind reader try unsuccessfully to convince the audience that he could read minds with the aid of an equally obvious planted assistant. He did do some magic tricks, but his patter and less than deft execution didn't help matters. Even Breck found this shtick tedious.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	8
136	The Oxford Imps (***) Six Oxford students and their keyboardist fed audience suggestions into their prescribed scenario blanks. There were a few comedic gems, and, thankfully, no really weak actors, but floundering seem too prevalent. It became all the more apparent as they would choose to repeat a good idea that had gotten a laugh until had worn desperately thin.	Gilded Balloon Patter House	2022	3
137	A Sudden Violent Burst of Rain (***) In a small island country, a female shepherd must deal with an unsympathetic landlord, and bureaucratic government. This has the cast as "Half Empty Glasses," had suffers from the same lack of multiple character differentiation by each actor. The plot bounces all over the place, and ends up an incoherent mess.	Summerhall	2022	25
138	Badass (***) If you haven't dealt with cancer, then this is informative. I have, and there was nothing new here.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	16
139	Handbook of Civilian Defense (What Every Loyal American Can Do To Help the United States Win the War)	Greenside Nicholson Square	2022	12
140	The Greatest Hits of Lily and John (***)	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	12
141	Hound of the Baskervilles (***)	theSpace on North Bridge	2022	10

142	Men With Coconuts (***) This was another show that seemed to believe that louder is necessarily funnier. With my hearing loss and their keyboard, I rarely could understand them, and left.	Gilded Balloon Patter House	2022	5
143	Richard Herring: RHLSTP (**) Through no fault of the ever-engaging Herring, I thought this would be one of his stand-up gigs instead of an interview for his podcast. His interviewees Flo and Joan from “Flo and Joan: Sweet Release” were nice enough, but it just wasn’t what we came to see.	Assembly Rooms	2022	8
144	Destiny (**) Walked out because we couldn’t understand them through their thick Wiltshire accents.	Underbelly Cowgate	2022	16
145	Hey, That's My Wife! (**) Sophmoric.	Hill Street	2022	15
146	This is Memorial Device (**) This homage to a fictional 1980s band just never grabbed me. Though he had worked to create a few historical fakes, most of the low budget ramshackle set seemed thrown together for its weirdness. The final playing of a song from their album lasted way too long.	Wee Red Space	2022	23
147	Gash Theatre Needs Some Space (**) Low budget weirdness.	Assembly Rooms	2022	15
148	Bloody Mary: Live! (**) Gives some facts about Bloody Mary, but the audience participation falls flat.	Pleasance EICC	2022	17
149	Pauline (**) Self centered Fringe trope.	Pleasance Courtyard	2022	14
150	Scottish Falsetto Socks: Eurovision Sock Contest (**) The puppeteer presents places eight costumes on his socks to create signers from eight different countries. This overloud show comes across as an improv show with its tuneless, witless songs. It seemed that the puppeteer spent a day creating the eight sock sleeves, and then decided to just wing the rest of the show.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2022	4

151	General Secretary (*) For no apparent reason, two young women are made rulers of the entire world. As they unsuccessfully deal with the problems of the world we can see that not only are they incompetent, but so was the playwright. There is nothing here worth your time.	Gilded Balloon Patter House	2022	4
152	Chicago! Chicago~ (*) Horrible directing. The audience couldn't see half of the action, the acting was stilted and lacked projection in many cases, and the lead couldn't sing.	Greenside@Riddles Court	2022	20
153	Guide to Surviving Masculinist Territory (*) All we did for this show is walk around the streets near Summerhall and listen to a pre-recorded stream of interviews about an incel mass killer and his copycats. The guide of the walk did nothing but lead us around. Worthless.	Summerhall	2022	21
154	Janeane Garofalo: Pardon My Tangent (*) Janeane seems to have taken the title to heart, for she could not stay focused for the whole show. She bounced from commenting on people's hair to half told stories about talking with her brother to incomplete political diatribes. Occasionally she would have a witty asides, but they were lost in her scatter brained show. We came away guessing that she was on some medication that went horribly wrong.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2022	6
1	Eowyn Emerald and Dancers (*****) This is a single, ingenious jazz pas de deux with an incredibly diverse mix of music and moves. Even when there is sorrow, her love of life comes through. Her extremely tall partner does an fine job of shadowing her quick, precise movements.	Multistory	2021	?

2	A Play, A Pie, and A Pint - Chic Murray: A Funny Place for a Window (****) The cast of three portray episodes from the lives of the comedian and his originally more famous song and dance wife while accompanying the play with a piano and an occasional accordion. I had never heard of Chic Murray, but still found his story, and frequent examples of his 1950s humor interesting and funny. But its been two years since I have had to decipher a Scottish brogue, and I missed quite a few of his lines.	Multistory	2021	24
3	When the World Stood Still (****) A keyboardist and a delightful storyteller who plays a fiddle, recorder, banjo, and accordion, perform her original Celtic melodies and Scottish airs interspersed with tales from completely renovating their old, cold, wet house on the Isle of Lewis during lockdown. The source of inspiration for her tunes range from the sea and the sky to grandchildren and celebrations, and their tempos vary accordingly. Her tales resonate with a rough, rural life permeated with a love of nature, family and friends.	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2021	25
4	Carole King and James Taylor Story (***) A pianist and guitarist sign well known songs from the famous pair, each with a short introduction describing the events of their lives surrounding the songs. The patter is well crafted, and they both had fine voices, with his guitar work rivalled Taylor's. My problem was that only once did the timbre of her voice match that of King's.	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2021	24
5	Miss Lindsay's Secret (***)	Scottish Storytelling Centre	2021	25

6	Slings and Arrows (***) A cast of mentally disabled people tell the tale of one trouble woman's life. Even though the whole production had the feel of a elementary school production, with missed lines, and awkward entrances and exits, I couldn't help but appreciate the sincerity of their efforts. I admire their bravery in challenging themselves to perform in front of an audience, and making an effort overcome their disabilities.	theSpace @ Surgeons Hall	2021	24
7	Eight Hundred Dollar Value	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2021	25
8	Somebody Special – The Aca-Betrayal (***)	theSpace@Surgeons Hall	2021	25
9	You're My Jury (***)	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2021	25
10	Return of Sherlock Holmes (***) Sherlock returns after his "death" at Reichenbach Falls, to solve a murder and prevent one with the help of Doctor Watson. Both Debbie and I nodded off during this dark, slow piece. Sherlock made his requisite keen observations and leaps of reason, but I never felt a sense of urgency or danger.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2021	24
11	Fear of Roses (***) A self-centered manager carelessly orders around her former classmate who is now her assistant. The flimsy plot had some twists, but the whole play lacked the necessary realism to have me care about either of them. In particular, a heinous crime seemed unjustified, and was dismissed with a quick blackout.	Assembly Roxy	2021	24
12	Burnt Out (***)	Roxy Theater	2021	25
13	Bank Job (***)	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2021	25
14	Trust Me, I was a BBC Doctor (**)	theSpace@Surgeons Hall	2021	25
15	Tick Tick (**)	theSpace @ Symposium Hall	2021	25

16	Friend (The One With Gunther) (**) The café owner from "Friends" complains about his unrequited love for Rachel while going through all ten seasons of the TV show. While I was amazed by the energy the actor put into this manic acid trip of a review, it had little to offer me because I had not watched the show. On the other hand, since most of the audience were fans, they seemed to enjoy all his quick references, and may given him four stars.	Pleasance at EICC	2021	24
1	How Not to Drown (*****) This is the true story of how an 11-year old boy made his way from Kosovo to England, and then spent his teen years in foster care and educational systems poorly equipped to deal with children who don't speak English. The play is careful to blame the UK systems, and rarely indicts individuals as intentionally mistreating him. As a Traverse play, we are treated to a tilted wood square set that is creatively transformed into ships, and buildings as needed with just steel fencework.	Traverse	2019	16
2	James Rowland's Songs of Friendship (trilogy) (*****) Rowland tells three stories about his two lifelong friends. The tales move from dealing with the death of loved ones to James' big crush to the challenges of integrating a new friend into the tight group. We had seen the third story last year, but is more powerful with the extensive backstory afforded by the previous two.	Summerhall	2019	18
3	In Loyal Company (*****) After the blitz of Liverpool, a young man joins the army, fights in Singapore, and becomes a Japanese POW in a "Bridge Over the River Kwai" camp building a railroad in Thailand. The actor proves up to the task of blending the roles of the soldier, narrator, and a few secondary characters into a powerful whole. While the privations of the POW camp take up much of the play, it is his tales of the air attacks on his transport that stand out for me.	Pleasance Dome	2019	5

4	Fragility of Man (*****) This one man show follows the volatile life of an intense12-year old homeless fighter through the dark streets and penal system of the Thatcher era. His sweating bare chested physique combine with his vivid, alliterative prose project an intensity that is both physical and psychological. While his main character dominates the story, he easily switches into his sweet girlfriend to provide an important motivating contrast.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	31
5	Out of the Blue (*****) I traditionally see Out of the Blue on the last day of the Fringe because they never disappoint me with their great singing and exuberant choreography. This version fulfilled my expectations. This year was a little different from the past because they had more newer songs that I hadn't heard before, but they were still fun, and seemed well justified by the age of the performers.	Assembly George Square	2019	26
6	Ed Byrne: If I'm Honest (*****) Byrnes comedy centers on his own failings and dealing with his two young sons and wife. Though it seems impromptu he carefully crafted his show to "drift" between a variety of topics with his fathering serving as touchstones. From super hero movies to seeing himself in his children to his final sarcastic interaction with his wife, his gentle humor had me wiping tears of laughter from my eyes throughout.	Assembly Rooms	2019	1
7	Buzz (*****) With a huge video screen displaying the space race images and scenic landscapes a backdrop, and accompanied by a woman playing an odd assortment of instruments, an actress relates a tale of a Norwegian boy, Mattias, who idolizes Buzz Aldrin, the second man to walk on the moon. As the quirky story roams from Norway to the quiet Faroe Islands, the whole performance gels into Mattias' surprising mix of contentment and social ineptness. Most memorable, and telling, are the events at a high school party where Mattias wears and homemade space suit and stalks the girl of his dreams.	Summerhall	2019	11

8	Until the Flood (*****) An actress recreates several people who live near Ferguson, Missouri where a policeman shot and killed an unarmed Black teen. The characters range from teen to senior, Black and White, racist to peacemaking pastor. I admire the play for allowing every character to present their views without injecting the playwrights judgement.	Traverse	2019	13
9	I Run (*****) A long distance runner uses his training for a marathon as a way to deal with the death of his six year-old daughter. You would think that the use of a treadmill on stage would feel like a cheap, theatrical device, but it work surprisingly well to reflect his emotional states. I normally do not like plays that jump around chronologically, but a video screen indicating the time in days away from her death allowed such time changes to work well.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	18
10	Bismillah-An Isis Tragicomedy (*****) In Iraq, a captured British soldier must deal with his ISIS jailer who is from London. This show does a remarkable job of balancing job of developing the humanity of both characters while reminding us of the horrific situation of the condemned soldier dealing with his executioner. I often felt conflicted as they and I laughed and smiled as they discovered their common heritage between bouts of the assertion of the prisoner's powerlessness.	Underbelly Cowgate	2019	9
11	On the Other Hand, We're Happy (*****) A loving couple who have grown up together must make decisions about marriage, having a child, and/or adopting. Their love suffuse this whole piece as the plot evolves in a natural way to explore the many decisions facing a couple creating a family. The edgy character of another mother sets out in high relief the calm love of the couple.	Summerhall	2019	23

12	Choir of Man (*****) This musical is set in local tavern in which the men chose to sing rather than form sports teams. This is classic revue that mixes upbeat singalong songs with dance with solo ballads with audience members invited on stage to be the center of attention. I saw this show in 2017, and the vibe was just as great this time, as audience joyfully joined the pub men.	Assembly Hall	2019	5
13	Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu 2) (*****) These five shows covered, in order: a couple trying to address his bucket list; a considerate wine salesman serving a troubled woman; a couple dealing with the woman's mixed feelings at her ex's wedding; a trio finding that the apocalypse wasn't what they had expected; and a woman responding to her boyfriend's accusation of being a coach potato. Whether reality based or fantastical, each short play took their premise and cleverly mined its humor in a very satisfying manner. I was particularly impressed by how their endings punctuated the theme of each story.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	1
14	Best Girl (*****) A young woman must learn to love her trumpeter friend while dealing with her family's past. The premise sounds ordinary, but her acting, and the nuances and plotting of the script make this exceptional. The symbolism of her father's hands brought tears to my eyes.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	31
15	Islander: A New Musical (*****) A young woman on a small, moribund Scottish island comes upon a strange, dispirited, young woman on her beach who seems quite out of place. From their opening duet, the voices of the two captured my soul as there was something ethereal as they intertwined with the help of a music looper. This well suited the spirit of their mythic tale of forgiveness and redemption.	Summerhall	2019	3

16	The Shark is Broken (*****) While making "Jaws, "Robert Shaw, Roy Scheider, and Richard Dreyfuss share many hours aboard a boat while waiting for Bruce, the mechanical shark, to be repeatedly repaired. Watching the hard drinking, irascible veteran Shaw berate the career conscious newcomer Dreyfuss provides much of the spark and humor of this piece while the working class Scheider acts as the level headed mediator and peer of Shaw. Shaw's son wrote the script, and one nice touch is watching his father repeatedly rework a scene throughout the show until it becomes a powerful finale.	Assembly George Square Studios	2019	10
17	Endless Second (*****) When both have been drinking, the lover of a now barely conscious girlfriend has sex with her even though she clearly mumbles "Not tonight." This finely written piece provides a balanced view on how both people slowly come to grips with the event that they both regret. I particularly appreciated how the man is portrayed as sensitive and caring, but confused and conflicted.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	19
18	The Nights by Harry Naylor (*****) A newspaper woman tries to convince a British Iraq veteran to lambast an ISIS sympathizer who wishes to return to the UK. This taut play deals with the directly with the way people's morality can be pushed askew by war. The veteran's tale of a cricket match using prisoners as targets is unforgettable.	Gilded Balloon	2019	21
19	The Claim (*****) A Congolese asylum seeker must deal with miscommunication between him and his interpreter and his harried interrogator. This play nicely conflates the subtle issues of mistranslation between desperate cultures with the exigencies of an overworked bureaucracy with the added pressure of unwanted social advances between co-workers. The whole becomes wonderfully exasperated as we know what he is trying to say, as the bureaucrat tries to force his simple story into the special box she wants to fit it in.	Summerhall	2019	23

20	Camille O'Sullivan: Cave (*****) The Irish singer focused this concert on the works of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds. Their work perfectly suited Camille's mix of boisterous rock and roll, and ballads. As usual her banter between the songs felt natural, and proved winning.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	25
21	Baby Reindeer by Richard Gadd (*****) The standup comedian tells the true story of a middle aged high powered lawyer who has been stalking him for more than five years, and how the legal system has been of little help. This is not intended to be humorous, and his projection of her text messages, and replays of her voice messages provides powerful evidence of how the woman could use her legal training and past stalking experience to avoid the behavior that the legal system needs to justify a response. Despite a recent temporary injunction, he does an excellent job of conveying how she has haunted his life and mind for years, and even now attacks his family using insidious techniques.	Roundabout at Summerhall	2019	2
22	Butterflies (****) This show explores how social media affects the lives of three diverse young women. Whether dealing with a dating site, creating podcasts, or an online gaming boyfriend, each finds that such media can lead to frustration and pain. As one who generally avoids social media, I found the three different stories quite illuminating.	Zoo Playground	2019	6
23	The Professor (****) David Calvitto plays a history professor who decides to give a wide ranging lecture intermixed with recent events from his life. His quick delivery is laced with sly bon mots about life and culture that reminded me of Douglas Adams' "Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy." His adventure in the Louvre is sophomoric, but its punchline makes it worth it.	Assembly Rooms	2019	15

24	The 27 Club (****) A troubled artist prepares for an exhibition of his art while contending with a much ignored girlfriend and intrusive gallery mates. I don't want to give anything away so I will simply say that the plot twists beautifully as the story unfolds looking at his personal history. I appreciated that it ended without providing an easy solution.	theSpace on the Mile	2019	11
25	I Am (****) An ensemble of nine uses dance, song, and short vignettes to explore a variety of prejudices and how a person should withstand them. I was initially leery of a large cast, but was won over as they dealt with racial, sexual orientation, physical appearance, and gender issues in turn using a range of effective dramatic treatments that avoided being preachy. Among the most memorable was a small man being rejected by both a team of female cheerleaders for being a man, and a group of football players for being too small.	Greenside @ Royal Terrace	2019	8
26	Daughterhood (****) or (*****) After caring for her ill father for four years, a woman must deal with the return of her activist sister from university. This play evolves beautifully as their fraught relationship moves through many stages as they interact more and more. I was confused because the men in their lives is played by one actor whose roles I could not differentiate, and thus gave it four stars, but Tim said he could easily tell who he was playing based on the clear differences of his accent, and thought it was best he'd seen thus far.	Summerhall	2019	14
27	Rust (****) Two people, married to others, arrange a weekly tryst in a flat that has a bedroom full of pillows. As time passes, we are treated to a panoply of interactions as sex, family, and the vagaries of any relationship bear down on their cozy ivory tower. This well-crafted play takes its ten written, but unspoken rules, and tests them beyond their breaking point, and yet the couple's obvious attraction keeps drawing them back to each other.	Assembly Roxy	2019	16

28	Daliso Chaponda Blah Blah Blackchat (****) The Malawi standup comedian has created a good hearted routine with stories that range from Richard Pryor's change of heart when he deals with MS to the topic of racism to the treatment of role models. He often polled the audience to elaborate on a topic, but never abused us. I found his long story about his father, Minister of Education in Malawi, dealing the changing political winds there most entertaining.	Gilded Balloon	2019	12
29	Black and White Tea Room – Counselor (****) A Black man arrives for his first appointment with a White counselor who has had great success with clients by developing their trust. While the acting is superb, the plot kept our attention locked to the stage as the cogent story unfolded. The director changed the setting from Korea with subtitles last year to English this year, and the play lost some of its power because racism and constant loud arguing replaced a mysterious relationship and quiet punctuated with sudden outbursts.	Assembly Rooms	2019	7
30	To Fall in Love (****) An estranged husband and wife set about answering a set of personal questions they found in an article to help them avoid divorce. The questions work well as a device to provide the starting points to explore their individual and shared pasts as well as the source of their current impasse. While the introduction of whiskey creates a truce of sorts, I was pleased that the play avoids taking the easy path, and continues to seek a deeper solution.	Greenside @ Infirmary Street	2019	8

31	War of the Worlds (****) This play intertwines a recreation of Orson Welles' 1939 radio play about an Martian invasion of Grover's Mill, New Jersey that many Americans took seriously, and a woman creating a podcast about a 13-year old girl who was left alone in her house by her family in Grover's Mill when they drove off to escape the Martians. As the twin stories unfold we learn how podcasts of the 21st century may be thought of as the radio of the 1930s. The plotting is clever, and the story is even educational for those unfamiliar with how commercial podcasters develop their stories.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	11
32	Four Woke Baes (****) A fellow and his three buddies camped out for his stag party find that they must share their campsite with an attractive, feminist woman who has very strong opinions about sex and relationships in general. Though this is a well trodden path, the acting is superb with each character providing a distinct, credible view of the topics at hand. I liked how a rifle served many purposes in the plot.	Underbelly Cowgate	2019	9
33	AJ Holmes: Yeah, but Not Right Now (****) Holmes, a star of "The Book of Mormon" musical, tries his hand at standup mixed with music, and succeeds. As he accompanies himself on piano and guitar we hear the great voice that made him a star, but also the clever songs he has written since he was 18. Beside a few jokes, most of his humor is in the form of tales from his career path combined with self-deprecating stories from his social life.	Underbelly Cowgate	2019	10
34	Fishbowl (****) The stage is three adjoining one-room rooftop flats: one white and sterile, another a crowded conglomeration, and the third decorated in pink for its sexy woman occupant. This physical piece explores how they deal with their own uniquely designed rooms as well as their social and physical interactions with their neighbors. From a goldfish that travels through the piping to a dance routine of trading partners to a toilet that appears when someone claps, the show had me laughing throughout at its mostly slapstick comedy.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	12

35	It's True, It's True, It's True (****) Based on a true story, a sixteenth century Italian teenager charges a famous painter with rape. The three actresses clearly differentiate the multiple characters each must play. The simulation of a thumbscrew to test the validity of her claims was an excellent reminder of how little the court valued her testimony.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2019	25
36	Crocodile Fever (****) After being away for many years in prison and fighting, an IRA fighter returns to home to visit her sister when she hears that her father is dead. The plot twists and incremental elements of weirdness make this macabre tale a delight. Little touches like an infrequent croaking frog and shared taped music keep this quirky tale surprisingly touching.	Traverse	2019	20
37	Noise Boys (****) Four tap dancers, a pianist/singer, a guitarist, two beatboxers, and a rapper mix and match their talents to create an engaging review. The tap dancers are the core talent, and they don't disappoint as they display their individual skills and then perform complex choreography in unison. Given their expertise, I was surprised that they didn't have a soft shoe routine to break-up the loud numbers.	Assembly George Square	2019	17
38	Bryony Kimmings : I'm a Phoenix Bitch (****) Bryony explores her battle with depression, and dealing with her dangerously ill baby. Her tale is heart wrenching, and it is clear that it took a tremendous effort to find her way back to mental health. The set is surprisingly complex for a Fringe show, particularly the final mountain that actually climbs.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	19
39	Einstein (****) The master imitator, Pip Utton, is back with a new show playing the wild haired German theoretical scientist reviewing his life and discoveries. Upton does a good job mixing together moments of his life with criticism of his treatment of his wife as well as trying to explain critical theoretical physics in layman's terms.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	31

40	Josephine (****) Tymisha Harris plays Josephine Baker as sings, dances, and orates through the life of the impoverished black Missouri girl who rose to fame in Paris only to find repeated troubles whenever she returned to the USA. Harris has the voice and body to pull off her imitation of the singer who originally achieved fame through her burlesque dancing in Paris. I appreciated that she integrates the personal life in chronological order to reveal the star's altruism as she spied for the Allies, adopted twelve children, and made speeches with Martin Luther King Jr.	Gilded Balloon	2019	31
41	Watching Glory Die (****) This is the true story of a wild teen's suffering in the Canadian prison system, and how a guard and her mother deal with her plight. The acting and story were compelling, and left me vexed as to how the problem should be addressed. I had originally undervalued this show because it followed another depressing show, so I recommend you see it after something lighter.	Assembly Rooms	2019	1
42	Pizza Shop Heroes (****) Four men who came to the UK as unaccompanied teens five years ago, along with their counselor tell of their harrowing journeys to freedom as well as the tribulations of trying achieve asylum and become assimilated in British culture. Though it is clear they are not actors, their authenticity easily overcomes their lack of dramatic training. Unlike another immigrant show the focused on legal and housing issues, this one takes a larger view including their "rules" for how to become a successful asylum seeker including preparing for their trip, to how their families back home may react to their "success."	Summerhall	2019	3
43	Naughty Boy (****) In a mental ward, a rough fellow from the streets tells of both the exploits of his gang of violent friends as well as his own contradictory remorse. The story provides insight into the twisted code of anger that could "justify" his actions. The short scene about a duck being accidentally shot provided a potent counterpoint.	Gilded Balloon Patter Hoose	2019	2

44	The Trojans (****) Using excerpts of Euripides play about the suffering of the Trojan citizens after their defeat as a touchstone, a large cast of Syrian immigrants to Scotland tell of their experiences in Syria, and in their new home. The Greek's words and the Syrians own laments resonate perfectly. I found it heartwarming to see their children run on the stage at the end.	Pleasance at EICC	2019	7
45	Funny in Real Life (****) A stand-up comedian starts talking about his wife when she suddenly interrupts him from the back of the room. The show works well as he tries to accommodate her proposed limits on the subjects covere in his routine. Early on he chose me as his confidant, and I gave him a sweaty, comforting hug toward the end.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2019	18
46	Legally Blond The Musical (****) A fashionista decides to enroll in Harvard Law School to win back the heart of her boyfriend. Everything works well with this: most voices are strong, the lyrics appropriate and clear, the dance numbers fun, and, despite its fairy tale quality, the plotting holds up. I was pleased that the cast was diverse in body types, but surprised at the lack of people of color.	Assembly Rooms	2019	15
47	Passengers (****) Three actors play three separate personalities of the playwright: brash, overconsiderate, and thoughtful. The play works well as he tries to find a way to deal with the three in a way that allows him to function fairly normally in society. The use of a scaffold as a metaphorical prison was an inspired device that the show uses to good effect in many scenes.	Summerhall	2019	14

48	Enough (****) Two flight attendants, one single and the other married, who have shared flights for twenty years, cannot seem to find contentment. One line from the play sums it up, “It is hard to take care of yourself when the world is not designed for you.” I found that the device of having the actresses often alternate lines made this dense play much more difficult to imagine their stories than it needed to be.	Traverse	2019	13
49	Detour: A Show About Changing Your Mind (****) A comedienne tells of her search for fulfilment as her career moved from dancer to history doctoral student to standup. As one might expect from a graduate student, she carefully crafted her words into a treatise on rejecting culturally imposed roles using meditation and alternative spiritual paths. It did bother me that she placed gender bias as the source of much of her troubles at finding a satisfying career while ignoring her childhood and the fact that others of both genders have the same quest.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2019	10
50	You and I: A New Musical (***) A young woman has an incredibly advanced, but ignorant, android delivered to her door that was secretly built by her deceased sister. The play combines scenes of caring about her sister and the robot, with the fun of introducing him to the life of twentysomethings. Both her emotional journey, and his humorous evolution to thinking individual provide a thoughtful core to this interesting tale of self-discovery.	Underbelly McEwan Hall	2019	16
51	She Sells Sea Shells (***) We follow of the working class woman who unearthed many of the most important Paleotonic fossils in the UK without receiving attribution until late in life. It seems that her mother was smart enough to haggle the prices for the fossils. It was both inspiring and disappointing that she could teach herself to read both English and French, and argue with the renowned scientists of her time, and yet be dismissed by the scientific societies of her time.	Underbelly Cowgate	2019	24

52	Cardboard Citizens: Bystanders (***) Four people use verbatim testimony, and vignettes based on real life to present four noted homeless people who suffered at the hands of some authority. The show breaks each story into parts that then alternate with the other stories which makes each more difficult to follow. The use of videos and news clips from the actual cases at the end proved to be a powerful epilog.	Summerhall	2019	22
53	My Father the Tantric Masseur (***) A young bisexual woman tells of her sexual experiences starting from early childhood in a family that openly discussed such things. It was refreshing to hear of a mother who quickly, and warmly dealt with her daughter's sexual concerns. It was cool how she treated her father's discovery of sexual massage late in life with lightness and humor.	Assembly George Square Studios	2019	2
54	Frankenstein : How to Make a Monster (***) Graduates from the Beatbox Academy combine to provide complex poly-rhythmic songs. The competition between two randomly chosen members permitted them to really show their stuff. The final song in which the leader would point at a member to continue the ad hoc song for a short time required both poise and mastery of the participants.	Traverse	2019	20
55	Hitman and Her (***) A blabber mouth middle aged woman has an appointment with a middle aged hitman in a bar to arrange the murder of her husband of eight years. This comedy well mines her indiscretion in openly discussing murder, as well as his focus on movies and television. I loved his paean to the original "The Italian Job" movie as he lauds its stars, director, composer, and lack of CGI.	PQA Venues at Riddles Court	2019	10
56	The Fishermen (***) After a long absence a Nigerian man who is an accused murderer secretly returns to his village and talks with his younger brother about their lives and the events that led to his life on the run. The story is interesting slice of Nigerian life, but their accents made it difficult to follow it at times.	Assembly George Square	2019	19

57	Shakespeare for Breakfast (***) This revue sets Romeo and Juliet as a battle between two family owned coffee shops. This script mines the story for all the puns and quips they can find.	C venues - C viva	2019	24
58	The Crown Dual (***) This is a comedic take on the life of Queeen Elizabeth II portrayed in the recent Netflix mini-series. Though I generally dislike audience participation, the tenor of this show was well suited to it. Prince Phillip comes in for the most ridicule as his desire for a new title figures into many of the scenes.	Gilded Balloon Patter Hoose	2019	18
59	Gun (***) One fellow with clunky props portrays all the characters in his humorous take on movie westerns. His story has everything from white hat sheriffs to femme fatales to evil connivers to a bad brother with a golden heart. This was a preview, and many of the laughs arose from the quick witted comedian dealing winningly with the vagaries of collapsing props, missed sound cues, and a low ceiling.	Assembly Rooms	2019	1
60	All of Me (***) After an introduction full of apologies, a woman tells of her life of dealing with depression and her imagined, demon-voiced sister it produces. Despite the dark subject she sprinkles in little humorous bits that provide productive breaks. The cluttered stage with its dripping sand bags help contribute to the feeling of chaos that is her life.	Summerhall	2019	22
61	Hyde and Seek (***) This one man show has a 19th century stage doorman deals with Dr. Jekyll, Mr. Hyde, and their showgirl lover. Flickering lighting, shadow projections, a ventriloquist dummy, a crate that opens on its own, and even a bloodied Punch puppet combine to give the show a very creepy feel. I was impressed how he only subtly changed his expression to differentiate between Jekyll and Hyde.	Underbelly Cowgate	2019	5

62	Devil of Choice (***) This story tries to update Faust's bargain, by transferring it into a modern story of adultery. The problem lies in that in the original story good and evil were clear, but here the pain of the two women and inconsistency of the devil husband belie the attempt. Without the false comparison, I think the story of three complex people would have been much stronger.	Assembly George Square Studios	2019	2
63	America is Hard to See (***) A real town in Florida filled with pedophiles on payroll tries to become more integrated into the surrounding communities. While it is clear that many of ex-cons misrepresent their guilt, their stories of trying to reclaim normal lives are heartening. In particular, the effort by a new pastor to have the Christian ex-cons accepted in conservative, but shrinking, congregation showed that progress was possible.	Underbelly Cowgate	2019	20
64	Surveillance (***) This show has three humorous sketches: three government people use the Internet to discover an amazing amount of information about people of interest; in order to read a message a man is asked to reveal a lot about his personal life that is promptly shared; and a dean of a college launches a campaign to inject little RF chips in the hands of the students and faculty to reduce crime and make life easier for everyone on campus. All three are informative, and serve as warnings about the extent that our personal data is now available. The third story about campus RF chips is by far the longest, and becomes de-railed as it unnecessarily veers into the social lives of its two protagonists.	theSpace on North Bridge	2019	12

65	44 Days (***) With contemporaneous photos as a backdrop, a large cast portrays the lives of auto workers in Flint, Michigan before and during their 1936 sit-in strike against General Motors. Much of the power of this work arises from the real dismal conditions of the workers and their heroic effort to confront the largest corporation in the world. I appreciated that the show made a point of highlighting how the workers' wives volunteer brigades prevented thugs and police from invading the factories.	Greenside @ Royal Terrace	2019	9
66	Ejaculation-Discussions about Female Sexuality (***) With her lover providing beautiful musical accompaniment, a woman describes her own voyage of sexual self-discovery after a bout with depression. This quiet show imparts its new information about female sexuality, including female ejaculation, in an easy, non-threatening manner that is a nice contrast from the in your face sexuality of most of the Fringe. Her simulation of female ejaculation was a nice humorous touch.	Summerhall	2019	23
67	Le Coup (***) A cirque that centers around staged wrestling matches that neatly highlight the gymnastic abilities of the two partners/competitors. Though there were no tricks that I had not seen before, the premise provided a new setting and use for their skills. Because we were sitting in the front row, we had greater appreciation for the height of the three performer lifts.	Underbelly Circus Hub	2019	20
68	I Will Tell You This for Nothing (***) A woman tells of the true life experiences of her raconteur mother who had been a nurse in World War II. The thorough tale covers everything from her training to D-Day transport to serving in a front line hospital to helping 40,000 starving survivors at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. It is full of little details like sleeping in trenches full of frogs that bring the story to life.	Assembly George Square	2019	6

69	NewsRevue (***) The troupe accomplished their task of lampooning recent news events in a workmanlike fashion. The ditties were clever, and the impersonations fun, but nothing really stood out.	Underbelly George Square	2019	18
70	Up and Away (***) A young woman and her director/friend who have created a successful streaming channel invite a troubled animator to collaborate with them. The elements of this story of drug addiction arising from original oxycodone prescriptions are compelling, but their non-chronological organization in the play weakens their power. There is also a scene describing a stay in a Chicago hotel that is, and feels, superfluous as it takes place.	theSpace on the Mile	2019	9
71	Bobby & Amy (***) A socially ostracized girl and an autistic boy become fast friends, and help a rancher together. The story is touching but the initial introduction of the many characters by the two actors shifting quickly among them lost me. It was only after the play settled down, and focused on the couple interacting that story started really solidify for me.		2019	
72	Status (***) An American fellow compares his experiences in foreign lands with that of the native. Now that he has toned down his guitar, his prose songs work in a Sondheim kind of way.	Assembly George Square	2019	19
73	Fudge (***) A naïve gay man, an experienced gay man, and their woman flat mate party late into the night to commemorate the experienced fellow moving in with his lover. As the booze and drugs flow, and the woman acting as sage advisor we are treated to the history of the two men, and the complexities of their relationships. Though many of the events are run of the mill party stuff, the underlying love of the two gay men keeps poking them in interesting ways.	Gilded Balloon Patter Hoose	2019	25

74	The Patient Gloria (***) This is a feminist re-enactment of three psychotherapy sessions filmed in the 1960s to be shown in university psychology courses, but later played for the public despite Gloria's objections. The director's note had led me to believe that this would be a hatchet job on the three male psychotherapists, but at least Carl Rogers came across as a reasonable fellow who championed the acceptance of a client as an important aspect of therapy.	Traverse	2019	20
75	The Red (***) In his will, the father of a man 20-years sober asks his son to drink a bottle of fine wine bought especially for him on his son's second birthday. The play has the son and the spirit of his late father discuss whether the son should break his alcohol fast for this request. Though the Alcoholic Anonymous arguments for remaining sober are strong, seeing the joy wine brought his father and having matured in twenty years provide a good challenge.	Pleasance Dome	2019	25
76	Fox (***) A new mother must deal with post partem depression, a demanding baby, and a homeless man living outside her door front door. We feel her increasing desperation as her depression prevents her from seeking help from her husband, friends, and society. As she acts as a voyeur of the life of the homeless man society's efforts to help him make her isolation all the more stark.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	17
77	Will Gompertz:Double Art History (***) A professor of art history gives an informative lecture on the development modern art from Monet forward. This well prepared presentation has many slides that allow him to not only show paintings but close-ups of telltale brush strokes. We even had a written test at the end, on which I only earned 5/10—so pay attention!	Underbelly Bristo Square	2019	24

78	The Archive of Educated Hearts (***) The small audience gathered around a table to learn how all of the women of the storyteller's family have dealt with breast cancer. The gentle review is aided by family photos slowly added to a pile on table at the center of the shed. The cluttered set was well suited to the short tale.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	8
79	Freddie - One Night with Freddie (***) A piano playing Freddie Mercury imitator leads a rock through 90 minutes of Queen's songs with lots of invitations for the audience to sing along. The entire band was quite capable, and the crowd enjoyed the whole show. While many in the audience, particularly the women, could sing along with most of the songs, there were a few obscure ones that no one seemed to know.	The Old Doctor Bells Baths	2019	7
80	My Darling Clemmie (***) A senior actress plays Winston Churchill's wife recounting the events of her and Winston's lives. Her portraits seem balanced as hear of her own foibles as well as Winston's along with letters that reveal their love and differences. The juxtaposition of her dislike of their Chatworth home with his and their family's love of it made it all the more real.	Assembly Rooms	2019	4
81	My Leonard Cohen (***) Backed by a band of four, singer/pianist Stuart D'Arrietta looks and sounds like Cohen as he tells of Cohen's life and sings many of his songs. Though I was never a big fan of Cohen, hearing of the origins of each song, particularly that of his ode to Jewish concentration camp death march bands, added a lot of power to them. Though the performance was often louder than I like, there were times that the driving rhythms seemed a perfect fit to the voice and sentiment of Cohen/D'Arrietta.	Assembly Rooms	2019	1

82	Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu 1) (***) The five shows this day explore, in order: a young woman who prefers to kill her dates instead of saying no to a second date, two men faced with deciding who should kill the other, Dr. Johnson carrying on a conversation with his mistress Mrs. Thrale using an extremely limited vocabulary, a world war relying on flying comedians to do its battles, and office workers taking revenge on a food thief. The first two have some nice plot twists and word play that make them standout. The whimsical war is fine British humor gone amok, but the effort to use different intonations of the same few words in Dr. Johnson's conversations fails miserably, and even the fine example of whimsical British war humor could not escape its taint.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	31
83	Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu 3) (***) These five short stories are, in order: a couple touring a home to purchase discover some unexpected additions; a couple assuming the Bogart and Bacall roles from the movie "The Big Sleep" to try to understand its plot; three couples react to an apocryphal discovery by an amateur astronomer; a very proper posh gentleman tries to create a politically correct stag party; and three prim and proper ladies who kill "deserving" people must try to come to terms with one of their members deciding to marry. All of the stories are humorous and generally well acted, but also shallow. Still, it is a nice way to start the day; just don't expect it to be as good as Menu 2.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	2
84	Musik (***) Frances Barber portrays an old singer/actress recounting her fictious arty life including her exodus from Germany, starring in an avantgarde film, and working in Truman Capote's Factory using photoshopped photos. Tim knew that her character was based on a minor character in a film from the early 2000s, and loved it as a send-up by a great actress. For me, she was an old actress in a lousy wig who was a poor imitation of a wonderful older Fringe singer I hung out with ten years ago.	Assembly Rooms	2019	20

85	Ivory Wings (***) A young woman in a flight alternates between playing her young mother when she was ferrying planes during World War II, and her old mother suffering from Alzheimer's. The adventurous tales of flying disabled planes kept me riveted, but the oft told Alzheimer's vignettes, though touching, felt like a misuse of valuable script time in comparison to the unique flying stories. Her recreation of the harrowing tale of flying through fog, clouds, and friendly fire with a plane with severe mechanical problems kept me on the edge of my seat.	Assembly Rooms	2019	11
86	Don't Be Terrible (***) A comedian invites a heckler on stage, and then commits to teaching how to do stand-up in six weeks. It is a clever premise that works well with the comedy-challenged "normal" guy trying to find "his" comedy while their love lives go awry. His final five-minute routine is a good combination of her lessons, and the events in his average life.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	24
87	The Gray Cat and the Flounder (***) This is a multimedia adaption of the cartoons drawn by a husband of he (flounder) and his wife (cat) as they shared 47 years together. We donned special headphones to listen an ensemble of strings and woodwinds as a narrator told of the couple's life in the Pittsburg art scene as well as the adventures of the cat and flounder. Two actor/singers as well as shadow puppets provided a range of visual presentations for the accessible show.	Assembly George Square	2019	7
88	I Pilgrim (***) An older actor presents a travelogue of he and his wife's walk of the 800km Camino de Santiago in Spain. From his blistered feet to an unbearable couple to beautiful scenery there is nothing exceptional here. After so many fictional Fringe shows, it is just a nice, real tale of a couple who refresh their love for each other later in life.	theSpace at Surgeon's Hall	2019	2

89	Tartuffe (***) A businessman is so enamored with a charlatan that he places his guru above his family's needs and desires. I have seen this farce several times before, and I was impressed with how forceful the wife was in this version. I think the brevity of the seduction trap scene hurts its traditional farcical potential.	Assembly Rooms	2019	15
90	There She Is (***) This physical theater piece begins with a Romanian immigrant standing in a London underground station when a whale suddenly appears on the tracks. She uses buses, hails taxis, rides ferries, and swims to try to reach the "better place," but she has problems communicating with everyone. I imagine that the whale's unintelligible vocalizations as a "fish" out of water was meant to be symbolic of the general theme of the communication problems of immigrants in the UK, but I didn't realize that until now and have improved my impression of the piece.	PQA Venues at Riddles Court	2019	11
91	Lobster (***) A cute twentysomething woman recounts her challenges using online dating. We are treated to samples of initial messages and photos from a long series of fellows who are clearly unsuited to a woman looking for a lifelong partner. I was struck with her revelation that online dating is so easy that it makes people greedy to find that perfect spouse instead of accepting people with some flaws.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2019	24
92	Shaving the Dead (***) In their funeral parlor, two low key undertakers who have been partners for many years share a few long held secrets while watching over a mysterious coffin. As befits the setting, this quiet, slow paced comedy finds its humor in the little things in life. Nonetheless, the highlight is when one of them plays some music on his smart phone, and they each slowly break into dance.	Assembly George Square Studios	2019	10

93	Back of the Head with a Brick (***) A 29-year old man presents his girlfriend with a tale of the recent events in his life. His prose is beautifully constructed at times, and the story of the fraud perpetrated on his grandmother is interesting. However, his work is still rough, with lines forgotten, banal prose at times, and his choice of disruptive, blaring music from a cellphone to separate his scenes.	Summerhall	2019	23
94	Redacted Arachnid (***) This show follows the expensive development of the most expensive Broadway show in history based on Spiderman. The show provides lots of information about the troubled production starting from its first inception to more than 150 days of previews to opening. Though the timeline was fraught for the producers, since they are never fleshed out as people, this show never connected with me other than elaborate lecture.	C venues - C aquila	2019	17
95	The Kiss (***) In the 1930s, two Russian soldiers, one shy, and one rough and gregarious, visit a general's fancy party, and the shy one leaves changed. This is a buddy show with each helping the other with their weakness. Though being true to his character, it is too bad that the rough one applies his diminished code of honor to his friend as well as women.	C venues - C aquila	2019	8
96	Paradise Lodge (***) An entertainer hires a woman to help entertain the residents of a senior, memory care home by singing the songs from World War II. Besides old songs, he treats his regular audience with respect and understanding. The two actors change into two senior characters often to provide touching scenes demonstrating their challenges.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2019	26
97	Anguis (***) A feminist doctor interviews Cleopatra while dealing with her own malpractice case.	Gilded Balloon	2019	21

98	Predictably Irrational (***) A fellow demonstrates how the commercial world can manipulate our thoughts. Using research into everything from beer glass shapes to Starbuck's use of three sizes to presenting a wrong number, he provided fascinating insight. I was a bit bothered that he drew unsupported causes from some studies.	theSpace at Surgeons Hall	2019	17
99	Moby Dick (***) One actor assumes the mantel of Ishmael to narrate the whole of Moby Dick in one hour. The short script does a surprisingly good job of exploring both the characters and the core hunt of the book. It was a preview, so his fumbling over some lines is understandable, but somehow, the elaborate language gets in the way of the thrill of the adventure.	Assembly Rooms	2019	1
100	Enigma (***) In World War II, seven women from quite different backgrounds are hired to decipher the encoded messages used by the Japanese. As the play progresses we learn of the groups successes and failures as well as little about their lives from letters they received, but the large size of the group meant there wasn't enough room on the stage, nor in the story for any of the individual stories to come alive. I was left with the feeling that the producers were trying to cash in on the two recent films that dealt with the subject.	Greenside @ Nicolson Square	2019	4
101	Being Norwegian (***) A woman proud of her Norwegian roots visits a shy man in his flat only to find him too conflicted to continue their romance. The story works because her Norwegian openness and conviction provides a potent counter to his Scottish guilt and sullenness. Their shared love of watching the city at night provides convincing evidence that they do indeed have somethings in common worth pursuing.	Venue 13	2019	4

102	Umbrella Man (***) At a bar near Angkor Wat in Cambodia, an addled Scottish tour guide introduces himself and uses poetry, storytelling, and songs to tell of his life. He plays the piano well, and his music is beautiful, as is his sometime incoherent poetry. It was a nice, quiet way to start the morning.	Summerhall	2019	22
103	Stepping Out (***) An assorted group of several women and one man take a tap dance class, and then train to perform in a charity benefit. With so many characters receiving fairly equal time, we do learn of an aspect of each, but none but the teacher ever becomes a whole person for us. The finale is not quite what I had expected, but, nonetheless, was quite satisfying.	theSpace at Niddry Street	2019	3
104	Traumboy (***) A real 29-year old Swiss gay prostitute talks a little about his life, and a lot about his work. The show works well because his approach to sex and work is open, clear, and sincere. Though he trained as an opera singer for a while, his costumed finale felt like a bittersweet delusion to me.	Summerhall	2019	2
105	Hughie (***) In the 1930s, a down on his luck gambler tires to impress the desk clerk who replaced his recently deceased friend. As his braggadocio continues, we come to understand how significant this lowly clerk was in his shallow, lonely life. Though the tale unfolds at a steady pace, it does seem to be a one note piece.	Gilded Balloon	2019	2
106	E8 (***) After school, two troubled teens find refuge in their classroom with the two teachers assigned to nine such pupils. The brash, smart girl dominates the play as the lives of the other three become secondary to trying to placate and/or control her. The lead teacher is so soft hearted, that the play becomes simply about when, and not if, the girl will get whatever she wants.	Pleasance Dome	2019	5

107	Breakfast Plays: The Future Is [..] “Kit Kat” (Play 1) (***) After trying to nurse an injured squirrel back to health, two 8-year old’s go on a hunger strike to save the world. Though one of the little girls speaks a little too well for a child, their core naïve idealism still permeates the play. The lead actress had a pitch perfect voice for her 8-year old character.	Traverse	2019	13
108	Trying it On (***) A successful playwright reviews his life as well as those of other radical leftists of his youth to see how they have changed. Though some of their views were interesting, the presentation of them together on the back wall confused me as it was difficult to discern who was speaking.	Traverse	2019	21
109	Woke (***) Apphia Campbell presents a picture of the discrimination against Blacks in the USA justice system with emphasis on Assata Shakur a Black Panther woman now hiding in Cuba, and a fictional college freshman from Ferguson, Missouri where a deputy killed an unarmed Black teenager. After seeing the more balanced “Until the Flood,” Campbell comes across as a woman who ignores some of the facts about Ferguson killing to permit her self-righteous anger full vent that are grounded in other wrongs. One of those wrongs that she does clearly describe involves petty ticketing by Ferguson police that lead to large fines and jail time.	Gilded Balloon	2019	23
110	Romeo and Juliet by Curious Pheasant (***) The version of Shakespeare’s play has the Capulets and Montagues, including the women, cast as two rugby teams of three gay men each. I think that the play just doesn’t work because of the incongruity of having a rough rugby Juliet being lovingly wooed by her competitor. Because of its brevity, the play is further weakened by having Nurse act as both a caring confidant and a murderous thug.	Assembly Rooms	2019	15

111	Cruel Intentions The '90s Musical (***) A brother and his stepsister set out to corrupt two young virgins to the songs of the 1990s. Because I did not know the popular songs, and my old ears could rarely understand their lyrics, I found most of this sex centered story of little interest. However, Tim loved it, and thought it destined for London.	Assembly Palais de Variete	2019	12
112	Drowning (***) This show attempts to recreate the lives of four Austrian nurses who drowned more than 200 of their patients. Though the events seemed plausible, since the court documents were sealed, most of the play is just guesswork rather than based on the reality of the four. I came away feeling that I had just witnessed a fictional drama dressed up as a documentary.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	25
113	For All I Care (***) A young, depressed shoplifter is placed in care until there is no room for her and invited into the home of one of the care givers. Whether it was because I was tired, or the story poorly told, I cannot tell, but I just could not get a handle on this story until friends helped me with it.	Summerhall	2019	22
114	Fake News (***) An earnest speaker tells us media interns how he accidentally produced fake news. The actor speaks quickly and clearly as he lays out his instructive fable. The problem for me was that he was too sincere, and I kept waiting for some black humor to creep into the story.	Assembly Studio	2019	16
115	The Gospel According to Thomas Jefferson, Charles Dickens, and Count Leo Tolstoy: Discord (***) After their deaths, the three fellows mentioned in the title find themselves locked in a room with each other and grapple with their different interpretations of the Bible. Dicken's love of words, Jefferson's love of reason, and Tolstoy's spiritual quest means that their approach end up being at odds with each other, and seemingly irreconcilable. While Jefferson and Tolstoy seemed real enough, Dickens seem too self-impressed, particularly in the presence of Jefferson, to be anything but a caricature.	Greenside @ Infirmary Street	2019	4

116	Confirmation (***) A winning young, gay man tells of how growing up in the most conservative part of Ireland affected his life and his belief in his own magic. His innocent belief in his ability to change the world sets this apart from other Fringe autobiographies. Nonetheless, as the glitzy finale confirms, the show conforms to the Fringe stereotype of a person who thinks they are more talented than they are.	Pleasance Dome	2019	4
117	I Lost My Virginity to Chopin's Nocturne in B-Flat Minor (***) A young couple constantly argue with each other in biting ways. We wondered why they would even stay together.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	18
118	Community Circle (Trevor Lock) (***) The audience is arranged in a circle, and after an introduction to this play without content, Lock asks five people to volunteer to write their ongoing thoughts in journals he provides, and then proceeds to pick up the journals and read them out loud as the session continued. I generally feel that dramatic shows built around audience participation may be fun, but lack depth, and, despite Lock's winning personality, this was no different. There were many laughs as one woman took on the role of media documenter a little too seriously, as she took photos of every little thing.	Summerhall	2019	14
119	Tales from the Garden (***) While tending a garden tray on stage, a young woman from South Africa tells of an ugly sexual experience on her trip to London and dealing with its aftermath. While her experience was dire, it closely followed the path of many other such shows at the Fringe with little new to recommend it. The opening scene has her claw rose petals from her mouth which, though symbolic, seems incongruous with the jaunty attitude she immediately assumes afterwards.	Assembly Rooms	2019	7

120	Where to Belong (***) Victor Esses, a Lebanese Jewish gay man, has been aware of how hard it is to fit into life ever since his family moved to Brazil when he was a boy. He combines the events from his life with questions of the audience to explore what it means to "belong." While I understand that videos and pictures of his life are used to demonstrate his sense of belonging, they, and the bulk of the show, seems too self-centered.	Summerhall	2019	23
121	Relational (or a Writer's Guide to Loves Lost and Found) (***) A writer tries to figure out where his life went wrong by directing different aspects of his character to follow edited scripts from his past. The device of an author handing scripts of his life to actors to explore possibilities and better understand his past is ingenious. However, the scenes are too disjoint to provide any revelations other than frustration on his and our part.	theSpace on the Mile	2019	8
122	Rich Kids: A History of Shopping Malls in Tehran (***) This show attempts to integrate Instagram into the performance focused on how one spoiled rich kid came to die in a car crash in modern day Tehran. The images and movies from the fellow's life certainly contributed to a sense of his life being cutting edge, but the lack of bandwidth in the Traverse made the Instagram feeds badly out of sync with the performance. Between trying to repeatedly trying to connect to the feed, and then hearing the actual performance with multiple delayed echoes on our smartphones the whole play became one big jumbled failed experiment.	Traverse	2019	13
123	Breakfast Plays: The Future Is [..] "Work Life" (Play 3) (***) A laid off factory worker for a petroleum country must figure out what she should do next, and seeks help from her estranged mother. The play takes a nice twist when she visits her mom, and discovers that she is not doing what she had told her.	Traverse	2019	24

124	A Rock'n'Roll Suicide! (***) The former singer for a semi-successful rock band in the 1980s tells of his life of drinking and women while touring for the past 40 years. I will give him credit for not being apologetic for his years of dissipation, but his acknowledged Attention Deficit Disorder meant he had to read much of his script. I must admit that admired him for being true to his self, and continuing to make his way from Birmingham in the music business for all these years.	Zoo Southside	2019	24
125	Genesis: The Mary Shelley Play (***) Set in stormy villa, Lord Byron, Mary Shelley, Piercy Shelley, and two others while away the time exploring the spiritual world and trying to write ghost stories. Byron dominates the play as he seduces the poet, and bullies all the others. Though the play does provide a series of events that may have led to Mary's creation of the Frankenstein story, the focus on Byron's chronic misdeeds cast a pall over the entire production.	C venues - C cubed	2019	11
126	Honeypot (***) Several women explore a variety of situations where women can support the empowerment of each other. Many scenes were poorly defined so it took a while to understand their topic. The use of music from the 1960s that explicitly described the role of women both provided counterpoints and enlivened the whole piece.	Greenside @ Nicolson Square	2019	10
127	From Judy to Bette The Stars of Old Hollywood (***) A singer proposes that Bette Davis, Judy Garland, Betty Hutton, and Lucille Ball are the four women who changed Hollywood by asserting themselves against the system, and then sings songs from their careers. Since only Garland's songs are still well remembered, this show is full of obscure songs that lack any resonance with the audience. Though the actress provided brief descriptions of each woman's "battle" with the system, the lack of more personal details made it feel like a dull history course.	Gilded Balloon Patter Hoose	2019	10

128	Apologies to the Bengali Lady (***) A woman discusses how the British colonial rule affected the role of women in Bengal. She uses as her starting point the necessity of using Bengali prostitutes for the roles of women in Shakespearean plays because of the imported Victorian code of prim and proper.	Greenside @ Nicolson Square	2019	24
129	Ladybones (***) A young woman with psychological issues participates in an archaeological dig that discovers the bones of a young teenager from 16th century England. The needless use of audience members to help re-enact her therapy sessions bothered me. I did find the track of the unearthed skull both clever and touching.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	9
130	Marx in Soho (***) Karl Marx returns from the dead to tell of his life, and frustrations. Though I learned a lot his constant intensity made the show unpleasant. It seemed like whether it was escape from Germany, or the visit of a Russian for dinner everything required Marx to be agitated.	PQA Venues at Riddles Court	2019	24
131	Arrivals (***) After a drinking binge a fellow awakes in an empty Budapest airport lounge with only a talkative woman for company. The self-centered woman is purposely annoying from the start, and the plot moves forward slowly as it reveals his path to the airport. The story is just a little too surreal to be effective.	theSpace on the Mile	2019	8
132	The Burning (***) The cast of four women follow the persecution of women from the time of the witchcraft trials to the 19th century through the letters found by a woman intent on selling her inherited estate. While the mistreatment varied, there was little new here to hold my interest. As an American, the final call to action to save the moors from fire was both confusing, and out of place.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	12

133	Bible John (***) Four office mates discover that they all secretly love true crime stories, and set about listening to a podcast that attempts to solve the Bible John serial killer case. As they tried to pursue the clues provided in the podcast, I found it hard to keep awake. When they came to the end, and presented the lessons they had learned, I felt that the play had pandered to the audience instead of proving their point.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	6
134	Claire Dowie's When I Fall If I Fall (***) The lesbian activist plays an old cancan dancer reliving her life while dealing with Alzheimer's. Though she portrays well both the physical and mental infirmities of age, the play suffers from the concomitant repetition. The story has uplifting moments, but seems thin.	Summerhall	2019	14
135	Breakfast Plays: The Future Is [..] (Play 2) "First Woman" (***) In the future, a woman agrees to run an automated plant on the moon so they she can be the first woman to set foot on the moon. A decent story, but forgettable.	Traverse	2019	14
136	Zounds! (***) At Zeus's command, the Olympian gods eat dinner and drink while they can only watch the Greeks and Trojan fight a war that their brethren caused. While the play does serve as a good refresher for the Greek mythology you have forgotten, but it just too long. Despite Athena and Aphrodite having the most substantive roles in the war, it is the flamboyant Hades that steals the show.	theSpace at Surgeon's Hall	2019	3
137	Breakfast Plays: The Future Is [..] "Mooning" (Play 4) A journalist joins a cult at their retreat, and is attracted to a woman who is a believer. While he is skeptical, her sincerity does challenge him. The final scene is quick and to the point.	Traverse	2019	25

138	With Child (***) The actress/playwright set herself the task of portraying stories of pregnant women that did not revolve around their pregnancy. While she appears pregnant in all six vignettes, other than that conceit the stories lack an overarching theme that would give the whole some power. While I, as an American, could only detect three different accents, afterwards a Brit told me that she clearly portrayed six different women.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	31
139	Resurrecting Bobby Awl (***) Three woman attempt to reconstruct the life of a mentally disabled fellow who roamed Edinburgh in the early 19th century. Much as their evidence is fragmented and odd, the play seems to have no clear path, but to provide disjoint vignettes from his life that never really make sense. In particular, the play starts with the display of a boot with a cloth in it that was supposedly where he was found as a baby, but is way too small to hold a baby.	Summerhall	2019	3
140	Art is Shit (***) A real professor of Art lectures on the business of modern art starting with Duchamp's 1917 "Urinal" using photos torn from some publication. Most of the time he simply read his notes from the back of the photo pages, then repeated them, and added little else. When the emcee called time, he still had a stack of pages to do, and left me with impression of a poorly prepared presentation given by a likeable man who was out of his depth.	New Town Theatre	2019	17
141	Chasing Aces (***) Students portray a researcher, a counselor, and eight teens going through group therapy to deal with their troubled lives. As each teen speaks, we learn of the abusive parents, missing fathers, and poverty. The good hearted story does mention many sources of risk for the kids, but the short time allotted to each prevents us from getting to know any teen well enough to really care about them.	Greenside @ Nicolson Square	2019	7

142	A Beautiful Way to be Crazy (**) Backed by trio (including her dad as drummer?), a 33-year old singer/songwriter tells of her difficulty to find her voice in the music industry. She seemed nice enough, but she just doesn't have the talent of her idol, Joni Mitchell.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2019	26
143	Hetaira: A Mythic Cabaret (**) A talented singer assumes the role of 2500 year-old woman who has figured in many historical events. The story line just doesn't work as she as she progressively assumes the mantle of both a debater of Socrates and muse of Mozart, among other prestigious positions—it would have been better to have been their minstrels. The show really goes awry as it ends by suddenly jumping backward in time to blame the Viking god Loki for her troubles.	Greebside @ Infirmary Street	2019	17
144	Burgerz (**) After having a man throw a hamburger at him on the Waterloo Bridge, a trans person has created a student where they invite an audience member to help prepare and cook a hamburger. Though we do hear of the tribulations of growing up trans, much of the show is spent interacting with the surprisingly thoughtful volunteer. To me, dramatic shows that depend on volunteers, particularly when the audience is not thoroughly warned about the level of participation required, are cruel, lazy, and usually full of wasted time that could have been spent better other ways.	Traverse	2019	13
145	It's Beautiful, Over There (**) A woman uses her three names as a starting point to tell of three (or more) deaths that affected her. The range of her relationships with the people allows the show to explore their different impacts on her. In particular, the death of grandfather, who built her a complex dollhouse, meant that she would not have his help and company when creating the small furniture for it.	Venue 13	2019	4

146	Dexter and Winter's Detective Agency (**) The son and his playmate try to prove that his mother was not involved in a jewelry burglary. Though many children's shows work for both the children and their parents, this is not one of them. While I approved of the moral lessons sprinkled throughout, and the children in the audience definitely enjoyed the show, the general hyperactivity of the three adults portraying the characters played well only to the kids.	Roundabout at Summerhall	2019	3
147	Ane City (**) Accompanied by a guitarist, a young woman describes the night she returned to her Dundee friends after spending two years in Glasgow as a university student. The show is almost a perfect example of the classic Fringe play where a young adult puts on an autobiographical play exposing her revelations as if hers were something new to the world. From the drug filled pub scene to the encounters with irate ignored friends to her poorly sung songs the whole show offers little beyond the banal.	Assembly Roxy	2019	3
148	Oh Yes Oh No (**) A woman presents a show that tries to advocate for women to enjoy any aspect of their sexuality, but to object whenever the culture forces them to be submissive. From its show's title to the opening scene of the Ken and Barbie dolls having hard sex to the huge messages projected on the scene ("I want to be slapped." "Subjectivity is boring.") the play does not emphasize enough the power and right of a woman to say NO. Rather, the show spends the bulk of its time saying that it is OK to say yes to such acts.	Summerhall	2019	23

149	The Passion of the Playboy Riots (**) In 1902, William Keats and a Irish woman from the gentry form a theatre company to promote Irish identity and nationhood. The staging is unique as the two of them sit on the stage as if they are in a balcony above their theater's stage watching a play as a cast member mimics snippets of the sounds of a performance, including those of the audience. Though the story portrayed their difficulties with the government and their audience over the years, it never drew me in.	PQA Venues at Riddles Court	2019	11
150	Numbers (**) After a drunken bout with a mirror, a troubled young man rebuffs his girlfriend and seeks counseling. The play gets its title from his incessant effort to quantify both the things and events in his life, eg. "I have had 15 girlfriends." I was coming down with a cold, but it still seemed that the play went nowhere.	C venues - C aquila	2019	5
151	Myra's Story (**) This a a tour de force of acting portraying the life of an alcoholic homeless woman in Dublin. With just a park bench for a set, we learn of her baby Patrick, the one bright spot in her otherwise dour life, and even he proves a disappointment. Despite a spot on evocation of the drunk, ninety minutes of unrelenting misery with virtually no relief from props, sets, or pleasant events became unbearable.	Assembly Rooms	2019	1
152	Richard Herring: RHLSTP (**) For his podcast, the comedian starts with about five minutes of stand-up on the news of the day, and then interviews two performers from Fringe shows. My lack of enjoyment arose not from the actual show, but from my own mistake in thinking I would be seeing Herring performing one of his wonderful solo shows instead of a podcast. The people around me, who knew what they were in for, seemed pleased with the show.	The Stand's New Town Theatre	2019	6

153	Sold (**) Based on the first autobiography of slave woman published in the UK, a woman tells of her life as a Bermuda slave from childhood "nigger" to a master's child to heavily abused servant to a woman who would not allow her to buy her freedom at any cost. I found that the lack of providing her lengths of service as she was repeatedly sold from one master to another made it unnecessarily difficult to understand how she would have interacted with others, let alone survive. While I was repulsed by the privations she described, from the outset, the evidently self-important congo player who accompanied the actress consistently spoiled the whole experience by playing too loud for the small room.	Pleasance Courtyard	2019	3
154	Father (**) In Russia, the daughter of an abusive father must deal with her successful daughter whose personal life is a mess. Simply put, I couldn't stay awake for this show.	Greenside @ Infirmary Street	2019	8
155	Happy Hour (**) In the future, two oblivious siblings play with each other, go to his soccer (football) practice, and take her ballet classes, as their lives are absorbed into a horrific fascist world. This surreal show paints with a broad brush that leaves many things unexplained, but does create the ominous feeling of disturbing world just outside their understanding. Though the plot slowly moves forward, the constant repetition of their childish games serves less as a touchstone, and more as an impediment to a clarity that never comes.	Pleasance Dome	2019	4

156	Pops (**) An out of work young woman must return to live with her mentally disabled father. The play is full of long, awkward silences mixed to scenes where the two actors talk to each other without being heard. In one scene, she repeatedly enters his room and receives the identical response from him each time, but we are left to determine if this is a sign of his dementia, or a montage of time passing in a monotonous relationship—it is ironic that a play about miscommunication fails to communicate with its audience.	Assembly Roxy	2019	31
157	Fifty Shades of Shakespeare (*) A large cast uses snippets of Shakespeare's plays that deal with love and sex and the love potion from "A Midsummer Night's Dream" to create a montage of sex scenes. The attempt fails miserably as the snippets are too short and out of context to have any emotional content, and the short lived, anonymous characters are too fleeting for us to care about them anyway. The only memorable aspect was having four actors support the horizontal fairy queen so she could "fly" over her victims to apply the potion in their ears.	theSpace at Niddry Street	2019	8
158	R'n'J: The Untold Story of Shakespeare's Roz and Jules (*) Rather than dying, a pregnant Juliet joins Rosaline in an murderous attempt to escape the revenge of the Montagues. While purports to be a "Thelma and Louise" spree, the production is so chaotic with a mix of nonsense videos and characters running in and out of the auditorium that the farce falls flat. The ending was emblematic of the whole incoherent mess as Juliet still has the bulge of pregnancy after giving birth.	Gilded Balloon Patter Hoose	2019	17

159	BoxedIn Theatre Presents: Shellshock! (*) A recent graduate finds work for an oil company that is suffering from repeated public relations disasters. I felt like I was watching an unintentional implementation of “The Producers” strategy as this musical had a chaotic plot, banal lyrics that rarely rhymed, and weak singers who couldn’t carry a tune. The only aspect that seemed even slightly professional was the guitar player.	Pleasance Pop-Up: Dynamic Earth	2019	9
160	Shakespeare Up Late! (*) This late night take on Hamlet has his father’s ghost in a wheel chair, Polonius as a hand puppet, and Ophelia as a blow-up doll. Though there are elements of the play to be seen, virtually none of the beautiful language is to be heard except in snippets. All in all, I couldn’t wait for it end, and evidently the rest of the audience agreed since we all voted for Hamlet “not to be”.	C venues - C aquila	2019	4
161	Moot Moot (*) Two virtually identical men sit in chairs and portray radio hosts of a call-in show who constantly repeat the mantra “Get in touch. It is all about you and your opinions” despite never taking any calls. This absurdist comedy relied on so much repetition that the bulk of the audience were resting their heads in their hands sharing bored looks with each other. The only break in the tedium was when the two explored the many configurations of their office chairs.	Summerhall	2019	9
162	Die! Die! Old People Die! (*) The play begins with an old man and woman shuffling to a table for five minutes, and then continues its snail’s pace for the balance of the show! We kept hoping they would break from the tedium with some great black joke, but they never did. The only funny part was when she slowly gave him a blowjob (out of sight behind his coat), but that was certainly not enough to satisfy the bored, irate audience.	Summerhall	2019	22

163	Crowned with Glory and Honour (*) Although the description in the Fringe Programme describes this as a play that examines how people and societies "…determine which people are valuable and which people are disposable," I was surprised to find that it was a Christian show that at its core was arguing against abortion. Though there was a character who did not regret her decision to have an abortion, she was portrayed as having an empty, lonely life now. I felt betrayed by the producers who advertised their play in such a misleading way.	Carrubbers - High St.	2019	6
1	My Left/Right Foot (*****) An acting club tries to win a competition by developing a musical based on "My Left Foot," the autobiography of a man who suffers from cerebral palsy from birth. Instead of celebrating the accomplishment of one man, like the movie does, this play uses the competitive drive of the diverse characters of the club to promote including disabled people by looking beyond their disabilities. Great voices, wonderful songs, several subplots, and a surprisingly light touch make this both fun, and uplifting.	Assembly Roxy	2018	20
2	Black and White Tea Room Counsellor (*****) In Korea, a young man arrives for his first appointment with a counselor who has had great success with clients by developing their trust. Though we had supertitles, the two men's non-verbal language was so clear, understanding their words often seemed superfluous. While the acting is superb, the plot kept our attention locked to the stage as the cogent story unfolded.	Assembly Rooms	2018	24
3	The Song of Lunch (*****) After many years, a book editor arranges to have dinner with an old flame. The lyrical prose and her sharp style make this an elegant piece with every word and move precisely conveying the subtlety (and lack of subtlety) of the two characters. The unique shadow puppet-like videos in the background contribute to the art gallery elegance of the piece.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	14

4	Mark Thomas - Check Up: Our NHS at 70 (*****) Thomas researched the NHS by interviewing health officials, observing medical workers in a variety of situations, and talking to a GP about his own medical future. He combines this all into a fact filled, sincere, but humorous show that well argues his point that the NHS and its supporting systems are not working as well as Brits think, and has reached a point that it will only get worse if funding is not increased, and its structure changed. While his anecdotes reflect his appreciation of the medical professionals well to show that the workers are not at fault, it his statistics about the poor outcomes for cancers in comparison to other countries that really proves his point that change is needed.	Traverse	2018	5
5	Underground Railroad Games (*****) A Black woman and a White man use a game to educate their students about slavery before the Civil War while the pair have a tempestuous affair that harkens back to the sexual dynamics of that time. Just as the game is a clever device with which to educate the students (and audience), the couple's interactions cleverly reveal the racial relationships of that past, and the present. The graphic sex forces us to acknowledge the complexity of the sexual relations under slavery, including the wet nursing by slaves, in one scene, and the utter power of the master to dehumanize a slave in another scene.	Traverse	2018	16
6	Heroine (*****) MJ Wells portrays true story of a lesbian who joined the U.S. Army in 2000, and then had to deal with sexual abuse, and PTSD. Whether dealing with a lover in a "Don't ask, don't tell" army, or trying to recover from her experience in Iraq, she keeps the show real and riveting. The ambush scene that includes dealing with her tormentor at the same time is a great mix of action, honor, and her thoughts at the time.	Assembly Hall (Rainy)	2018	2

7	Entropy (*****) A troubled teenager returns home and makes demands on his foster mother. The play is striking for its interplay between the young man seeking both revenge and love, and the mother's fear, denial, and love. While the story is powerful, the little touches, like him looking at his toys, or her subtly adjusting her dress keep the tension taut throughout.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2018	6
8	And Before I Forget I Love You, I Love You (*****) Pip Upton assumes the roles of a husband/caregiver, sufferer, and son who must deal with Alzheimer's disease as it impacts their lives in different ways. Each portrayal brought tears to my eyes. He cleverly uses his only props, supposed notes for funeral and birthday speeches, to demonstrate the mental state of the speaker.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	11
9	Pussy Riot: Riot Days (*****) The Russian political punk band plays its music and tells its tale of repression while videos of their struggles play on a screen behind them. The music is not to my taste, but the thought of seeing people who have resisted the Russian government to the point of being in the gulags for two years is riveting. Hearing, and seeing how they planned and carried out their effort to play music for a few moments in a cathedral to protest the Archbishop's deal with Putin was awe inspiring.	Summerhall	2018	11
10	Island Town (*****) Three close teenagers feel trapped in their isolated town share everything with each other. Both the causes of their discomfort and their efforts to efforts to find solace are finely written and performed. While there is tragedy in each of their lives, they find fun often enough to allow their pain to be keenly felt.	Summerhall	2018	22

11	Di & Viv & Rose (In an Hour) by Ameilia Bullmore (*****) Though they barely know each other, a lesbian, an intellectual, and a free spirit, Rose, move into a house just bought by Rose's uncle. Though this could have been just another college years Fringe story, the women's stories are more nuanced, and the stories of their lives after college are anything but trite. As with most plays in this setting an unexpected pregnancy occurs, but Bullmore wisely doesn't allow it to dominate the story.	C Cubed	2018	2
12	In Addition (*****) A twenty something couple try to make ends meet while dealing with parents, depression, and a tenuous job. The play revealed to me how social media may present social and employment opportunities that integrated into the lives of young workers, but they still must deal with the same problems we all have had. The love between the couple is clear even though his depression often hides his.	Underbelly Cowgate	2018	11
13	Dangerous Giant Animals (*****) Of all the family members, a middle sister deals with her younger sister's mental disability best, but the role has repercussions. We learn how she deals with her sister's limited mental abilities and rage, and how these disabilities affect the family dynamics. The story is remarkable for its balance of love, sacrifice, and self-awareness.	Underbelly Cowgate	2018	3
14	Build a Rocket (*****) A woman relives each year of her life from becoming pregnant at sixteen to raising her son until he's taken his GCSEs. While this story has been told many times at the Fringe, the year by year script and her range combine to make the story fresh and powerful. From joy to exhaustion to frustration, her life is a whirlwind that she can tame only some of the time.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	20

15	The Swell Mob (*****) This immersive production used the Assembly Underground area and 16 actors to recreate an 1830s tavern complete with Faro, a bar, a boxing ring, gypsy fortune tellers, pick pockets, flash mobs of dance routines, and the removal of a soul from a denizen. The wide range of activities, and the surreptitious guidance of several lowlifes easily drew even the most self-conscious audience member into the scenario. I loved that offering a tip to the Faro dealer lead to him reciprocating by cheating for me on the next bet.	Assembly George Square	2018	26
16	Out of the Blue (*****) The twelve guys from Oxford were back with their great songs and choreographed hijinks for another great show. One of my traditions is to see them on the last day of the Fringe when they are decked out in kilts, and they are aware that it is their last concert before this group disbands. Besides the music, it is always touching to see their camaraderie.	Assembly George Square	2018	27
17	Daughter (*****) This edgy piece begins with a fellow describing how he innocently plays with his 3-year old daughter, and participated in her birth, and then devolves into a tale of his sexual experiences. From beginning to end, his sincerity and honesty make this a very powerful piece. The final, fearful dance with his daughter works well to tie everything together.	Summerhall (Kings Hall)	2018	16
18	KillyMuck (*****) A poor Northern Ireland girl must deal with an abusive drunken father, and endless societal and institutional prejudice because she Catholic, and lives in public housing. While the bulk of the time is telling stories of her life, she also intersperses citations of statistics on differences of educational achievement and intelligence between economic classes. Whether it be a fight with her father, or discovering a porn video when babysitting, the stories have those little touches that make them believable and touching.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2018	26

19	The Other Guys: A Tribute to Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons (*****) Backed by a small band, four singers provide covers that range from the Four Seasons to the Beatles to recent songs. Besides having fine voices, they executed the choreography of the early 1960s throughout the performance. They easily had the whole room up on its feet with many of dancing to their tunes.	C Chambers St.	2018	18
20	Extinguished Things (*****) A young woman explores the abandoned house and lives of a childhood neighborhood couple she barely knew. It is a quiet tale with little clues explored to create a portrait of rich, loving, lives. In the end, we are left quite satisfied.	Summerhall	2018	1
21	The Blues Brothers - Live (*****) Jake and Elwood with three other singers and a septet perform most of the songs from the movie. I traditionally see this show the first day of my Fringe because they never fail to get me and much of the audience up and dancing by its end. The songs don't change from year to year, but neither do the good times!	C Chambers St.	2018	1
22	Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu 1) (*****) The premises of the five plays are: an office worker builds a child's fort from his desk to get away from his work, a lousy playwright inundates a writing contest with his short plays, a childless wife becomes obsessed with doing everything necessary to become pregnant, an old lifeguard seeks to deal with retirement by watching another beach, and the members of a old man's imagination have trouble coming up with a successful sex fantasy. I liked this menu best of the three because each of the five found the key concept of the premise and then explored it without becoming repetitious, nor too zany. Not surprisingly, the lifeguard retirement story was the most poignant for me.	Pleasance Dome	2018	1

23	Maz and Bricks by Eva O'Connor (****) At a rally in Dublin to repeal the Eighth Amendment banning abortion, a fellow stops a woman from throwing a rock, and then the two of them slowly learn of each other's lives. I know that sounds trite, but these people are complex, and the issues in their lives are not simple. Both had a chance to fill out their characters, and grew.	Summerhall	2018	14
24	In Loyal Company (****) After the blitz of Liverpool, a young man joins the army, fights in Singapore, and becomes a Japanese POW in a "Bridge Over the River Kwai" camp. The actor proves up to the task of blending the roles of the soldier, narrator, and a few secondary characters into a powerful whole. While the privations of the POW camp take up much of the play, it is his tales of the air attacks on his transport that stand out for me.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	20
25	A Sockful of Custard (****) Two fellows play Spike Mulligan and the shows director who recount the comedian/writer's life and routines. The two create a show that reflects his surreal approach to comedy while still communicating his life's story. The use, and abuse, of index cards to layout the structure of the show was an inspired echo of his work.	Pleasance Dome	2018	21
26	Timmy (****) This two hander has a sexy woman trying to be the long term lover with an indecisive man who wants to be just a friend without benefits. The emphasizes the emotional distance between them by having them never touch, and always speak to the audience instead of each other. Though he has the stereotypical trouble of males getting in touch with their feelings, that doesn't get in the way of the nuanced reversal of the stereotypical push for in sex by the two genders.	Assembly George Square	2018	25

27	What Girls Are Made Of (****) The true story of the career of Cora Bissett who at sixteen fronted a minor Indie band, and then dealt with the many pitfalls of the music industry. Though she had to deal with adversity, she has the courage and persistence that keeps the story moving forward with an upbeat feeling. With a small back-up band, she still has the voice to cover the music of her life.	Traverse	2018	15
28	Famous Puppet Death Scenes (****) The four puppeteers find a huge range of humorous ways to have a variety of puppets die. The show is well designed with a combination of unique puppet scenes, interspersed with variations on the death of a specific puppet who gets smarter and smarter about his impending doom. While they created many novel approaches, I was most impressed by a huge pop-up book with pages that moved closer and closer to a deadly house.	Summerhall (Kings Hall)	2018	16
29	Coriolanus Vanishes (****) A woman relates her abusive childhood, and her own volatile life. The story is told in dramatically lit snippets separated by blackouts. The unique lighting design of each scene combine with the blackouts to create a sense of a disjoint life which reinforces our feeling of a life that can erupt with rage without notice.	Traverse	2018	10
30	A Christmas Carol (****) Guy Masterson performs Scrooge based on a script that Dickens himself performed as he toured America. The play highlights Masterson's ability to portray forceful characters as he alternates between Scrooge and each of the three ghosts. The show was marred with music and sound effects that drowned out Masterson, and a finicky reverb for the ghosts. I was told by the director that an illness in another play had forced this production to skip its tech rehearsal, and the sound issues would be addressed. In that case, the show would surely deserve five stars.	Assembly George Square	2018	4

31	Flop (****) This large farce loosely portrays the events around the impotence trial of an 18th century French count . This is that rare farce that lets the story itself carry much of the comedic burden, and doesn't think louder and faster are funnier. Each character has that little absurd touch that keeps things fun, with a Downs man demonstrating his range of comedy that is both illuminating and good-hearted.	Summerhall	2018	17
32	Meek (****) In a future country with strong religious laws, a factory work is in prison awaiting trial for her seemingly mild subversive work. With only her conversations with her lawyer and her best friend, we get to both follow her quest to discover who submitted the complaint, and how a government may respond to a social media campaign. Though the final act tied up loose ends neatly, I would have preferred to have the plottingt less obvious, and some questions left unanswered.	Traverse	2018	24
33	Breakfast Plays: Youthquake 2 (****) Each of the Traverse's Breakfast Plays presents a reading of two plays, one by an intern and the other by their mentor, that address the lives of millennials. The intern's "Squall" has three high school students railing against administrative power as they hide from an active shooter in a designated safe room in their school. Kieran Hurley's "Fucking Millennials" has the young madame of a brothel lecture her former head teacher on the political incorrectness of his childhood books.	Traverse	2018	22
34	Ulster American (****) While discussing a play about the Ulster troubles with its director, an American movie star makes an ill advised statement that rattles the English director and the Belfast playwright. This is an odd mix of slightly farcical characters with polemics that works in most cases. However, I was annoyed that the bulk of the farce relied on the director's omission of one sentence in the retelling of the statement.	Traverse	2018	21

35	Class (****) The working class parents of a failing third grader bristle at recommendations by his teacher. The play provides insight into their three lives by switching to scenes of the son and girl in after school remedial sessions with the teacher. Even with this additional information, the father and teacher still seem to be too extreme to be real.	Traverse	2018	21
36	The Greatest Play in the History of the World (****) A woman uses pairs of shoes to represent the characters of a story about a hermit author who incessantly watches his neighborhood from his window only to find that time has stopped at 4:40 in the morning. Each snippet from his life and those of his neighbors contributes to a surprising heartwarming glow of a wonder and love. The final reassessment of the kids down the street is a great way to end a tale of how the little things in life can change your life.	Traverse	2018	15
37	Eleanor's Story: An American Girl in Hitler's Germany (****) This true story has a 10-year old American girl accompany her family to Germany in 1939, only to find them trapped in Berlin throughout the war. From giving a seat to old Jew on a bus to attending school after America declared war to being “mother” to a dying German soldier, every vignette had touching details that brought her story alive. My only complaint was that she did not specify her age until half way through the story, so I had troubles imagining her position during the earlier stories.	Gilded Balloon	2018	27
38	Unspoken (****) A distraught young woman talks with her remote psychological counselor after her father’s funeral. As her complex character relates her tale, the counselor also grows nicely. The mystery of a whisperer to her mother at the funeral is well maintained throughout.	C Royale	2018	25

39	Dirty Rotten Scoundrels (****) The large musical has a suave older gigolo tutoring a young rough edged Lothario on how to seduce and extract money from women at a resort. All the cast does a fine job with both the singing and the choreography. The subplot of his aide dating a prospective victim adds a touch of love that is sorely needed as a counterpoint to their crassness.	Assembly Hall	2018	17
40	Nigel Slater's Toast (****) The large cast follows the experiences of the food critic as he grows to manhood as the only child of a sickly but loving mother and a conservative businessman. The heavily choreographed show keeps the events at an emotional distance from the audience with only a few hugs and a flare of anger penetrating its storybook quality. Nonetheless his latent love of food is apparent throughout the play from his love of candy to his high school cooking class.	Traverse	2018	12
41	Can't Stop, Can't Stop (****) A college student suffering from obsessive compulsion disorder (OCD) explains how the disease works, and how it affects him. This show achieves a remarkable balance of his compulsive behavior and his efforts to tell his story. I was never sure what was an act, and what was his version of the disease, but that didn't matter.	C Royale	2018	19
42	Tobacco Road (****) Two criminal gangs join forces in post World War I London, and rise to power. After their gritty presentations of how they made their initial money, the middle section on their expansion seems a bit too dreamy. I was amazed with how well they create an entire gang war in such a small space.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	22
43	Home (****) After building a room on stage, the show goes on to fill the stage with a complete two-story home that is then used by the large cast and many audience members. Like a three ring circus, it was both fun and exasperating as many things happened at the same time in different parts of the house. The appearance and disappearance of people in the bed and shower added a feeling of whimsy to the whole affair.	King's Theatre	2018	25

44	All Change (****) A daughter spends a morning with her father who lives alone with his unacknowledged Alzheimer's disease. The play has just the right mix of moments of clarity with moments of denial. I found their word game of saying words of greatness a clever device to demonstrate both their shared past and his state of mind.	Assembly George Square	2018	11
45	That Woman! Wallis Simpson Duchess of Windsor (****) Wallis Simpson, for whom Edward VII abdicated his throne to marry, tells her life story from her days Baltimore society girl through her other two marriages to her exile life in Paris. While she spends time on how her role as Edward's chaperone evolved into his lover, she wisely devotes more time on her first marriage and its aftermath. I found her efforts to re-build her life in Shanghai and Peking in the late 1930s surprisingly gritty.	Gilded Baloon Teviot	2018	4
46	The Marilyn Conspiracy (****) After discovering Marilyn Monroe dead, six people gather in her living room to try to determine what happened before calling the police. Presumably much of the script tries to construct of chain of events to explain the facts revealed well after the inquest that found her to have committed suicide. The play becomes unnecessarily repetitive because the script tries to explain the delay in calling the police by having the participants learn of key facts a little at a time and re-hash their thoughts with each new fact.	Assembly George Square	2018	5
47	We've Got Each Other (****) Due to "financial difficulties", a producer/director must describe the campy musical he planned to present without any actors. I found this virtual play wonderful fun as he filled in the Bon Jovi music and light design with his clever descriptions. His own choreography while sitting was surprisingly elaborate and well done.	Pleasance Dome	2018	7

48	Westminster Hour (****) A journalist thinks she know something that will influence the Home Secretary. The duel between the two is tense with its clever thrusts and parries. I think I saw this before with a different name, and a more satisfying conclusion.	Sweet Novotel	2018	5
49	Women of Lockerbie (****) Seven years after the tragic downing of the flight over Lockerbie, a mother returns to search for her son's remains while the women of the town try to stop the American government from burning the clothes of the passengers. The intertwining of the grief of the mother and that of the women of Lockerbie create a powerful and poignant play. The final scenes address the needs of both well, and left me teary eyed and satisfied.	C Chambers St.	2018	9
50	Trojan Horse (****) In 1998, an anonymous letter charged that Parkview school in Birmingham was secretly promoting Islamic extremism. The cast of five easily assume the roles of teachers students, inspectors and accusers to debunk the accusations, and reveal the political motivations behind the government's reaction to the letter. The cross examination of the main accuser is quite effective, but the later opening of the students' results seemed superfluous.	Summerhall	2018	10
51	Let's Talk About Porn (****) A large, young cast provides an even handed view of the porn industry. They do a great job of mixing not-too-sexual dance with information about the life of its people, and its business dynamics. The two instances of a couple managing a sex business with children around softened the image, and made it more real.	C Chambers St.	2018	22
52	Freeman (****) One white man and five Black people combine to present scenes of Black mistreatment in the USA and the UK over the past 200 years. The variety of true stories strengthens the story, but the disorder of presentations and lack of introductions makes it more confusing. It was surprising that the show touts itself as being about mental health, when all of the examples are based on race.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	22

53	Janis Joplin Full Tilt (****) Backed by a rock band, an actress signs Joplin's hits as well as some more obscure songs amidst scenes from her life. She has a good voice, and the Texas drawl, but, not surprisingly, I couldn't hear the soulfulness that made Janis' performances so special.	Assembly Rooms	2018	7
54	Dominoes (****) A high school teacher is confronted with her mixed race heritage as her family and friends learn that she is about to marry a man whose ancestors owned her ancestors as slaves. The play is even handed as we hear of her fiancé's pleas of generational innocence, her best friend's priority of Black Lives Matter, and her own use of "passing" as a white. The conclusion does not provide a simple solution, but it has clarity.	Assembly George Square	2018	12
55	On the Exhale (****) A professor overly concerned about gun violence has an extreme reaction when it becomes a reality in her personal life. The plot maintains tension of the play from beginning to end, and the ending is very satisfying. However, I found the use of the third person narrative, and the relentless tension just too wearing for me.	Traverse	2018	23
56	Lights Over Tesco Car Park (****) A cast of four combines audience participation with some stories about UFO sightings create an amiable show. By checking with potential participants as they came in, and having good natured non-embarrassing tasks, this show handled audience participation better than any other I have seen. Their relaxed tone allowed the finale to utilize the audience's cellphones to create an atmosphere that led to surprising participations	Pleasance Dome	2018	14
57	After the Cuts (****) A husband desperately tries to save his wife's life after the NHS refuses to help her. His determination is admirable, and their love palpable. The play suffers from often being too loud for the reverberating Demonstration Room .	Summerhall	2018	1

58	Your Alice (****) Alice Little alternates between talking with Charles Dodgson (Lewis Carroll) and venturing in Wonderland. The interactions between the two were touching as Alice is shown to grow to womanhood, but the excerpts from the two books were too disjoint. The staging made full use of the sumptuous costumes of the whole cast.	Greenside Nicolson	2018	20
59	Lost in Thought (****) A young woman and her mother try to deal with her advancing obsessive compulsion disorder (OCD). The fact that her obsession is a fear for the safety of her mother, adds a new dimension to the typical solitary obsessions. Not only does the mother suffer both from worry and her daughter's inordinate attention, but she learns that the her own actions can have dramatic effect on her daughter.	Underbelly Cowgate	2018	21
60	A Fortunate Man (****) Two people cite passages from the book, and describe the life of a beloved, but troubled country doctor. Their admiration for the doctor added immeasurably to the story. Though the production was sparse, the slideshow of black and white photos behind the two gave a fine sense of the time of the story.	Summerhall	2018	1
61	The Aspirations of Daise Morrow(****) At the funeral of the free spirit in a small Australian town, we see scenes of how she changed peoples lives while a string quartet provides a score. The four actors seamlessly change between the characters to create a townful of unique characters that we quickly know and understand. The varied score reflects the range of activities well, and, at its best, conveys the love of life that was at the core of Daise.	Assembly George Square	2018	3
62	May I Speak About Dance? (****) While one man slowly moves, another lampoons the pompous approach to dance taken by some critics and academicians. Throughout this satire I found the Dutch dry wit most winning. I loved the scene where the commentator places on post-it notes with references to other dances on innumerable body parts of the dancer.	Summerhall	2018	4

63	Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu 3) (****) These five short plays have: 1) A pair of office workers playing in a “quiet’ sandbox for adults only, and must deal with an upset mother; 2) A man builds a watch that allows him to go backwards in time so he change how he interacted with his lover; 3) The elders of a Christian church decide that if they radicalize they will attract more young people ; 4) One of a pair of goldfish in a fish bowl wants to explore the world; and 5) A troubled couple tries therapy that alternates between exercises, and answering random penetrating questions. Though all of the stories have a whacky element, all but the churchgoers had me care for the characters. The three characters in the sandbox have a surprisingly adult conversation that made for a much better play than I would have expected from the premise.	Pleasance Dome	2018	3
64	Velvet (****) A young gay actor must decide to what lengths he is willing to go to advance his career. The play works well to portray how a young actor could be slyly manipulated as he becomes more and more desperate. His final power struggle is a fitting climax to the story.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	7
65	Infinita (****) Starting from his funereal four physical theater artists in masks recreate scenes from his life. This is an uneven production with some very slow parts from his time in a wheelchair that had me napping, while a crib scene had me alert and laughing. A scene where a rest home patient tried to steal more drugs from a nurses’ station had the right touch of mayhem.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	22
66	Shakespeare for Breakfast (****) The “Taming of the Shrew” becomes the “Taming of the Shoe” as the play is transferred to the owner of a modern shoe store trying to wed off his two daughters. I was pleasantly surprised to find that there fewer references to British pop culture than in the past which made it more accessible to me. The succeeded at mixing Shakespearean wit with sophomoric antics to create nice light fare with which to start the day.	C Chambers St.	2018	8

67	The Political History of Smack and Crack (****) Though the play spends some of its time describing how Western governments cynically allowed heroin and cocaine to enter their countries in the 1980s, the bulk of it was following the lives of two junkies. I found I quickly cared about the large, soft hearted fellow, and the hardhearted apple of his eye. Their last meeting had just the merest amount of hope that seemed appropriate to their fraught relationship with drugs and each other.	Summerhall	2018	9
68	Blackthorn by Charley Miles (****) A taciturn boy and bright girl grow up as companions in a rural community, but when she chooses to leave to go to college a rift forms. The play explores their unspoken love without becoming trite. Though the words are not spoken, her tone and subtle acts constantly convey her love for him.	Summerhall	2018	13
69	Bare (****) To the surprise of his secret gay lover, a popular boy joins him in the try outs for the high school's play. The play does a surprisingly good job of covering the manifold complications for the indecisive boy, his lover, and the girl mistakenly interested in him.	Hill Street Theatre	2018	20
70	Your Bard (****) A fellow describes the life and times of Shakespeare with particular attention to lifestyle of acting companies in Elizabethan times.	Assembly Hall	2018	5
71	The Duke (****) Sitting at a desk, a fellow tells a convoluted story of his mother and the porcelain statue of the Duke of Wellington treasured by his father.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	7
72	My Left Nut (****) A young fellow learns to deal with a swollen testicle, coming of age, and the death of his father. The actor does a good job of differentiating the many characters of his life. His interactions with his widowed mother throughout the story were particularly touching.	Summerhall	2018	19
73	Awakening (****)	Underbelly Bristo Square	2018	25

74	Mengele (****) This two hander has the former Auschwitz doctor defend his war crimes while talking to a mysterious woman who seemingly saved him from drowning.	Assemble George Square	2018	5
75	Narcissist in the Mirror (****) A bright, beautiful young actress goes through a seemingly endless series of lovers as she tries to find her own self worth. The play intersperses rhyming with prose in a clever, but also self-defeating way because it interfered with my suspension of disbelief. It is ironic that actress was the playwright, since, like her love life, her cleverness makes her fictional life unreal.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	11
76	Orlando (****) Rebecca Vaughn portrays the immortal character who winds his/her life from the Elizabethan times to the present. I am always amazed at Vaughn's stamina and ability to perform at a top level for such long stretches—and without breaking a sweat! On the other hand, without another actor to provide some counterpoint, each play becomes monotonous in its wordiness.	Assembly Roxy	2018	6
77	Revenants (***) In countryside of 1942 England, Queen Mary, her chauffeur, and a gay actor are confronted by a Black American soldier with a bleeding back and a machine gun. The play does a good job of comparing the plight of Blacks in America with that of homosexuals in Britain at the time. The final act seems too preachy.	Pleasance Dome	2018	24
78	No Kids (***) This is a physical theater piece about a gay couple trying to decide if they wish to adopt a child. While the dancing is fine, the section on coming out seemed superfluous to the subject at hand, and made the play too long.	Pleasance Forth	2018	14
79	Brexit (***)	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	26

80	Rat Pack – Live (***) Backed by a ten piece band, three men sing the songs of Dean Martin,, Sammy Davis Jr. and Frank Sinatra. None of them try to impersonate their singer though the Sinatra singer does a reasonable job of matching Frank's style. Though a couple of the songs didn't seem linked with its singer, particularly Dean singing "King of the Road," the crowd still seemed happy.	C Chambers St.	2018	18
81	Our Man in Havana (***)	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	27
82	Unspoken (***) Veterans	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	26
83	Picasso's Women (***) An early lover, wife, and later mistress present half-hour monologues about their time with the artist. The monologues have little drama, but are highly informative.	Fruitmarket Gallery	2018	24
84	The House (***) An older married couple sign the papers to sell their beloved house only to find that the buyers will not do what they expect. The words are sharp, but this one note farce seems too predictable in its evenly paced escalation of exasperation.	Assembly George Square	2018	23
85	The Archive of Educated Hearts (***) An audience of five in a garden shed learn how all of the women of storyteller's family have dealt with breast cancer. The gentle review is aided by family photos slowly added to a pile on table at the center of the shed. The cluttered shed is well suited to the short tale.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	18
86	Portrait's in Motion (***) A German fellow displays his collection of flipbooks on a video screen while providing background stories on each. He constructs flipbooks by taking three photos per second for twelve seconds, and then securing the photos together into a booklet that he can bend and flip through to create a short animation. He was right, that the final photo seems to usually convey the essence of the person photographed.	Summerhall	2018	16
87	Stardust (***)	Pleasance Dome	2018	27

88	Love Song to Lavender Menace (***) The two store clerks of the first gay bookstore in Edinburgh reminisce about the events surrounding its founding, and the changes it saw. The vast majority of the audience loved it, including Tim, but many of the references were aspects of the gay culture that were lost on me.	Summerhall	2018	23
89	Buried - A New Musical (***) Two serial killers decide to join forces, but have troubles romantically. Despite their excellent voices and good music, the instances of them killing innocent people prevents this show from gaining any tempo. Only the final act works to resolve the conflict.	Underbelly (Ermintrude)	2018	23
90	The Canterville Ghost (***) An 19th century ventriloquist, magician, psychic, and singer perform their music hall acts, and present Oscar Wilde's tale of a ghost that doesn't scare two children. Each act seems appropriate for its time, and is well executed, albeit a little simple for our modern times. Overall, this is a straightforward interpretation of the play in a setting of the time Welles wrote it.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	17
91	White (***) The daughter of a Jamaican man and Irish woman describes how she has come to grips with her mixed race heritage. She does a good job of conveying how her notion of herself evolved from a sense of uniqueness in childhood to being forced to identify with her Black heritage now. Though she has a good voice, the use of looping once again disrupts the flow of the story.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	18
92	Revelations (***) A lapsed Christian fellow who grew up with a lesbian, and is now close friends with her lover speaks of their time times together as it led to her pregnancy. His gentle defense of his Christian upbringing as warm versus cool gave the whole story a pleasant feeling.	Summerhall	2018	18

93	Henry (***) A renowned puppeteer teaches a master class on objects as puppets with two assistants while dealing with the death of his remote actor father. He did teach me how to imbue life into objects, but the story line with his father was weak. His constant repetition of his lines along with the repetition of slowly moving objects to enliven them deadened the whole show.		2018	
94	American Idiot (***) This musical has a couple of guys rejecting life in suburbia and reveling in the darker side of city life. The band was great, but they drowned out the singers most of the time. Because the cast was too large for the space, and the choreography too fast for the dancers, most of the dancing looked like individuals running around trying to do their assigned moves in a first rehearsal.	C Chambers St.	2018	18
95	I am Not Your Woman (***)	Greenside Infirmary	2018	22
96	User Not Found (***) We donned headphones and peered at the supplied smartphones to learn of how a fellow dealt with deciding whether to delete all of the social media content of his dead lover.	Traverse at Jeelie Piece Café	2018	8
97	Blackout (***) Five actors take turns describing how their characters dealt with their alcoholism.	Summerhall	2018	9
98	OTOSOTR (***)	Underbelly Cowgate	2018	23
99	First Snow (***) The family and friends of a Quebec woman gather together at her house to hear her surprising announcement. Much of the play is taken up with a decidedly one sided argument about Quebec and Scottish nationalism.	Summerhall (Kings Hall)	2018	16
100	Simon Callow in De Profundis (***) Callow sits in a chair and recites Oscar Wilde's very long letter to his lover. I found the letter to be nicely written, but rambling, and, after only three hours of sleep, soporific. However, Tim loved it.	Assembly Rooms	2018	15

101	Tremor (***) A woman shows up at an old lover's door to discuss their past. Too much of the play is spent by her beating around the bush before we get to the meat of her problem. I did like that the it provided two ways of approaching their problem without taking sides, despite one of the solutions being nationalist.	Summerhall	2018	13
102	Chihuahua (***) This one woman show has her alternating between a modern day waitress, and a 1905 well born, but impoverished, society woman to see how each deals with the financial adversities of their lives.	Assembly Roxy	2018	7
103	Flies (***)	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	26
104	Ailsa Benson is Missing (***) A 14-year old girl must deal with the discovery that her classmate is missing. The part of the story centered on the girl works well, but the surrounding section dealing with the narrator contribute little, and the legal evidence is contrived.	Assembly Rooms	2018	15
105	Fast (***) This is the true story of a quack in Washington state in 1912 who ending up killing her patients by starving them to death in her sanitorium. The actress maintains a sense of self-righteousness of purpose and rebellion against a male dominated medical profession that sets her apart from stereotypical serial killers. It was amazing that she was allowed to continue despite newspaper headlines.	theSpace at Niddry Street	2018	23
106	Breakfast Plays: Youthquake 1 (***) "Old Enough" had a 25-year old man and a slightly younger woman in a hotel room both celebrating and regretting the advent of a law that raised the age of consent to 25. "Grout" was literally foregettable.	Traverse	2018	21
107	Neverwant (***) Reminiscent of "1984", in the future society has chosen to outlaw emotions because they are inefficient, but one fellow falls in love with his officemate. This mix of over-the-top characters with a sincere man and woman with whom we are supposed to care just does not work.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	9

108	Starfish (***) A young woman has trouble being faithful, and then a miscarriage makes her life even less tenable.	C Royale	2018	8
109	F**k You, Pay Me (***) A stripper tells of both the onstage and backstage life in a modern strip club.	Assembly Rooms	2018	8
110	Theatre Uncut: Women on Power (***) The show has actors reading three scripts dealing with women in various states of empowerment: a homeless woman renting a room from a man with sex as payment, a successful woman plumber, and a female student questioning the justification for her education.	Traverse	2018	13
111	Sticks and Stones (***) When a woman tells a non-politically correct joke in a business presentation, she is confronted with unexpected repercussions. Though the events that follow seem adsorb, they are not too far from reality to resonate. While the initial use of dance poses is fun, they are over done, and the whole play goes on too long.	Summerhall	2018	13
112	Hunch (***) A woman who blames her indecisiveness for a tragedy dreams of becoming a super hero who helps people make decisions.	Assembly Roxy	2018	7
113	The BasementTapes (***) While packing up her recently deceased grandmother's basement, a woman discovers cassette tapes that change her views of her family.	Summerhall	2018	17
114	Closed Doors (***) A trio of musicians sing the story of a neighborhood of subsidized apartments in which the residents are all suspicious of each other, and keep to themselves. The lyrics, when I could hear them, and musicianship are excellent, but the drummer often drowns out the lyrics.	Summerhall	2018	14
115	The Death of Edgar Allan Poe (***) Poe's life is told with a large cast re-enacting his stories and life.	C too	2018	13
116	Loop (***) We follow three generations of a family as one person from each deals with leaving home.	Underbelly Cowgate	2018	21

117	The Journey (***) A loving couple must deal with a nine-month journey together to and from another galaxy. The show starts with an announcement about a missing cast member, and continues to break the fourth wall throughout. In the end, the wall is broken so often, that we are left with actors emoting to no effect.	Pleasance Dome	2018	13
118	A Generous Lover (***) A transvestite tells of dealing with his manic friend, Orpheus, both in and out of psychiatric hospitals.	Summerhall	2018	18
119	Loving Monica (***) Four actors explore the life of Monica Lewinsky, the intern with whom Bill Clinton had an affair. The four take turns playing Monica as they attempt follow Lewinsky's recent TED talk admonition to treat people with compassion. While she is treated with understanding, Linda Tripp, who taped their phone conversations, and Kenneth Starr, the prosecutor who released the tapes, are presented as just evil people.	C Aquila	2018	17
120	Dusty and Shirley (***)	Rose Theatre	2018	25
121	Dressed (***)	Underbelly Cowgate	2018	25
122	Bubble Show for Adults Only (***) A man and woman explore the artistic and sexy possibilities with bubbles that can be durable, large, and/or filled with fog. The first half is great fun, and inventive, but the second half seems to be mostly a retread.	C Chambers St.	2018	19
123	Ad Libido (***) A 30-year old woman describes her fruitless efforts to have an orgasm with men. Since she never addressed masturbation, I never could get a sense of her real plight.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	6
124	The Cloak and Dagger Show (***) After an hour tour of the Grass Market describing it and the filthy life there in the mid-1700s, we watched a two hander about a young man seeking revenge for the murder of his brother by a Jacobite.	Sweet Grassmarket	2018	5

125	Maureen Lipman is "Up For It" (***) The actress/raconteur tells jokes and offers a few tales from her life, but often surrenders the stage to some musicians. Since I had not seen her work, many of the references in her jokes found no purchase. While the musicians were excellent, they were an unwanted interruption for an audience who came to hear Lipman.	Assembly Rooms	2018	8
126	Lovecraft (Not the Sex Shop in Cardiff) (***) A young woman playfully reviews the scientific findings on the biochemicals involved with the feeling of love.	Summerhall	2018	1
127	Elvis: Young and Even More Beautiful (***) With a guitar that he can barely play, and overload background music, the singer does a credible job of imitating Elvis. His performance was marred as he appeared to be either drunk or suffering from lack of sleep. He often sang to his sound man at the side of the stage instead of the audience, and with twenty minutes to go started to frequently look at his watch.	Frankenstein Pub	2018	2
128	A Virgin's Guide to Rocky Horror (***) This casual version of the campy cult classic provides guidance for the audience of the interactive parts that have developed over the years. The narrator does a good job of integrating the audience into the experience.	Hill Street Theatre	2018	4
129	The James Taylor Story (***) This show alternates between clips from a video of Taylor's life, and a singer with a guitar performing his songs. Twenty minutes into the show the fire alarm ended it prematurely so I cannot tell whether the show may deserve four stars.	theSpace@Symposium Hall	2018	4

130	Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu 2) (***) The five short plays have: 1) A man obsessed with the authenticity of battle re-enactments competing for the part of a king with a woman who is there just on a lark; 2) Three astronauts about re-enter Earth's atmosphere after being away for many years must confront what their lives will be like on Earth; 3) A man tends to try new things only once, and his wife is particularly frustrated; 4) A man and woman sit next to each other on a park bench and think about each other in flowery romantic language, but only say brief, non-committal things to each other; 5) On her wedding day, a bride is accosted by each of her former lovers trying to get her to leave with them. Three of the plays repeat a gag too many times. In particular, after two suitors show up for the bride, the succeeding suitors add little.	Pleasance Dome	2018	2
131	Are There More of You? (***) This solo show has four monologues about the lives of four older women.. She did a fine job of differentiating the characters, but the stories themselves are literally forgettable.	Assembly (Baillie Room)	2018	26
132	Feed (***) A woman's Internet story about a current Palestinian boy goes viral because of an photo she reused from 5 years ago. The first half of the show that addresses the cynical manipulation of Internet media is great, but the second half dissolves into chaotic farce.	Pleasance Dome	2018	24
133	Trump Lear (***) A comedian plays himself being forced to replay his play about Donald Trump under the watchful eyes of the president.	Pleasance Courtyard	2018	20
134	Doors Opening (***) We see the current lives of the six people in a stuck elevator portrayed in turn. This feels like a college play where the instructor had to find parts for ten students.	Greenside Nicolson	2018	13

135	Alabama God Damn (***) A Black man returns to his hometown in Alabama to attend the funeral of his close friend, and finds his death suspicious. This combination of music, rednecks, and southern stereotypes is mildly entertaining. Though the story as a mystery works, the hijinks and music hurt the show.	Pleasance Dome	2018	25
136	Romeo and Juliet (***) This heavily abridged version is well performed by the two actors, but the soundscape drowns out many of their lines.	Zoo Charteris	2018	15
137	(even) Hotter (***) Two lesbians interviewed people about sex, and now mix verbatim recounts with performances alluding to their own love and sexual approaches. The audience loved it, but I found it too self-involved.	Bedlam	2018	10
138	Proxy (***) An actress presents a tale of a poor Arkansas woman who makes her daughter ill so that the mother will receive attention from the medical world—a mental illness called Munchausen by proxy syndrome. The actress' inability to differentiate the characters with props or accents make the tale unnecessarily difficult to follow.	Gilded Balloon	2018	9
139	Care Not, Fear Naught (***) We follow Anne Bonny's short career as a pirate. Through no fault of her own, the young pretty lead with her long hair, just never looked manly enough to fool a pirate crew who would dread the bad luck of having a woman as part of the crew. That said, the story is well told, and informative.	Greenside @ Nicholson Square	2018	6
140	Electrolyte (***) A lost young woman takes up the offer of a bandmate, and travels to London to find her mother. The music sometimes has a good beat, but is generally unappealing and disrupts the meandering story.	Pleasance Dome	2018	6
141	Ruki (***) A Gypsy tramp tells of his life as a friend of a champion Gypsy boxer in Nazi Germany. His speech was difficult to understand, so the power of the story was greatly diminished for me.	C cubed	2018	13

142	Whisky & Gin Tasting Cabaret (***) Between songs performed by three young women, the audience is given three tastings of gin. There was no whisky offered, and the singers were of varied quality.	Hill Street Theatre	2018	4
143	Wired (***) I simply could not understand the brogues used in this story of a daughter in the army, and her mother. I often fell asleep, but Tim thought it pretty good.	Army@ The Fringe	2018	16
144	Onstage Dating (***) The promiscuous comedienne asks an audience member on stage, and then goes through the motions of a full seduction including wine and getting almost naked in a bed on stage. The whole thing feels awkward to watch. The young man she chose was so good natured that he seemed like a plant, but wasn't.	Underbelly Cowgate	2018	2
145	Drifting Towers (***) In a woman about to graduate from college, and her friend are in the 99th level of a hundred level video game as they mix acting as their avatars in the game with their real life interactions. The avatar recreation of the old game is cheesy, but fun. The real life part of the story is rather thin.	C Aquila	2018	2
146	The Fishermen (***) After a long absence a Nigerian man who is an accused murderer secretly returns to his village and talks with his younger brother about their lives and the events that led to his life on the run. The story is interesting, but their accents were too strong for me understand much of what they had to say.	Assembly George Square	2018	3
147	Status (***) An American fellow compares his experiences in foreign lands with that of the natives. For a substantial part of the show he accompanies himself with an electric guitar that is so loud you cannot hear his words.	Summerhall	2018	3

148	Wrecked (***) Six of us climbed into a wrecked compact SUV to have the driver tell a tale of how the car came to be in its current condition. The story builds nicely, and the conclusion is satisfying though surprising. However, I sat in the back next to a noisy fan, and missed many of the quiet things the driver said as well as the playback from a audio player in her lap.	Gilded Balloon at The Museum Crash Site	2018	10
149	Margo: Half Woman, Half Beast (***) A singer tells of her life in 1932 Berlin as she lives among the Jews of the cabaret scene. Half of the play she sings songs from that era.	Assembly Rooms	2018	12
150	Earnest & Wilde: Let's Face the Music (and Franz) (***) A singer and her pianist tell of the facts leading up to the assassination of Archduke Franz	C Royale	2018	12
151	Chamberlain… Peace in Our Time (***) Scenes of Neville Chamberlain talking to his aide about his political career alternate with singer singing songs from the 1930s that relate to the events. The problem here is that Neville Chamberlain was a lousy orator, and the actor playing him stayed in character throughout the show.	Greenside Nicolson	2018	11
152	Dean Friedman's 40th Anniversary "Well, Well Said the Rocking Chair" (***) Dean provided a few stories of his life, but mostly sang all the songs from the album and some of his others. Much of the audience, including Debbie, could sing along with him, and had a wonderful time. As an initiate, I found most of his work good natured but lacking.	Sweet Grassmarket	2018	10
153	Three Women Three Myths (***) Three American women with mixed race ancestry said which race/culture they identify with, and then provide a myth from that culture. The whole seems too impromptu, and lacks a sense of focus.	C Royale	2018	8
154	Behind our Skin (***) A Moroccan immigrant in France, and a French woman in London describe their challenges as immigrants. Their strong accents and their dull stories made it difficult for me to keep awake.	C Aquila	2018	4

155	East Belfast Boy (**) An Irishman alternates between break dancing, and telling of his current life, and the birth of his daughter. I am sort of guessing about the plot because I missed many of his words because the background soundtrack was too loud, he had a strong accent, he often spoke softly, and he often spoke while facing away from. He sure could dance well though.	Summerhall	2018	14
156	A Joke (**) Three comedians find themselves in some extra dimensional white room, and try to figure out what they should do. With two actors from sci-fi TV series I loved, I had high hopes for this, but it is just too scattered. McCoy is still a good clown, and many of the jokes were funny, but the premise made the whole thing leadened.	Assembly Rooms	2018	12
157	Breakfast Plays: Youthquake 3 (***) “The Things I Would Tell You (By Some Young British Muslim Women)” had three monologues about how each woman did not feel accepted into the British society because they were Muslim. I am sorry to say that by the time “Lurker” came along the monologues had lulled me to sleep.	Traverse	2018	23
158	[insert slogan here] (**) A gentle fellow uses a video designer, a sound designer, and audience participation to create a video advertisement to compete with the Volvo ads he loves. His approach is nice, but the two designers seemed to compete to overwhelm the project.	Zoo Charteris	2018	15
159	Mungo Legend of Glasgow's Saint (**) The large cast of this Catholic acting company from Glasgow spend two hours presenting the life of a 6th century church leader, including the three miracles that led to his sainthood. I appreciated the sincerity of their efforts.	St. Patrick's Church	2018	12

160	The Rockford File (**) Two guitarists created songs based on scenarios that might havppened in the James Garner TV series. Their banter is cheesy and poorly written. The lead guitarist, Rockford, plays well and has an adequate voice, but the bass player had no voice and occasionally played an acoustic guitar that sounded awful.	Pleasance Dome	2018	19
161	Showmanship(**) A circus psychic eschews the normal trappings of her profession to talk about hope. Though she is constantly gesticulating, her presentation is repetitive and monotonous.	C Royale	2018	19
162	Fallen Fruit (**) A Bulgarian woman describes life before and after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The show reflects her gentle personality, and seems to lack the power that such events should impart to a show. Her unintentionally ineffectual tosses at a wall of small cardboard boxes epitomizes this problem.	Summerhall	2018	7
163	Everything Not Saved (**) This show is about how memory, and how it can change over time, but don't look for a story here. It is a mess with arguments about Rasputin juxtaposed with three actors repeating their simultaneous overdramatic deaths. I will admit they addressed memory, but I found the mix too esoteric for my tastes.	Summerhall	2018	10
164	European Citizen Pop Song (**) A Belgian woman travelled the EU to gather musicians to provide backup for her song about European unity, and now asks her audience to help sing the song. She is a exuberant and quirky, but the song is seemingly intentionally horrible, and our participation doesn't help.	Summerhall	2018	1
165	Nele Needs a Holiday: The Musical (**) After her band breaks up, a young Belgian musician decides that she can better achieve fame by moving to London. She is likable, but the story is thin, and the lyrics poor.	Summerhall	2018	14

166	The Approach (**) We rotate through pairs of three women talking about their mundane lives and trying to deal with the enmity between the two sisters. While the acting may be fine, the story is banal. The fact that much of the final conversation is taken from previous conversations was supposed to be an indictment of their shallowness, but also serves as a reminder of how little was offered in the play itself.	Assembly (Rainy)	2018	6
167	Frieda Loves Ya! (**) A stripper meanders through a good hearted, but amateur show.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2018	21
168	Hymns for Robots (**) This is the life story of the woman who was hired by the BBC to create electronic music, including the theme for Dr. Who. While she was certainly a brilliant trailblazer, the show seems as dull as her much of her esoteric music.	C Aquila	2018	2
169	Fall of Eagles (**) The large, young cast relies on a lot music hall slapstick and songs to present a little information about the three main royal families of turn of the century continental Europe: the Hapsburgs of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, the Romanovs of Russia, and the Hohenzollern of Prussia. The songs and comedy were just to sophomoric for me.	Gilded Balloon	2018	19
170	Harpy (**) An old woman who hoards everything must live in her clutter and deal with a social worker. This repeatedly put all of us to sleep.	Underbelly	2018	21
171	Monsieur Somebody (**) Three convicts tell a tales of their best lies. The show devotes most of its time to a Frenchman who repeatedly dupes a wife while attacking her husband.	Venue 13	2018	12
172	The Last Straw (**) Two people argue in a variety of ways. Another Summerhall Demonstration Room show that didn't take into account the reverberations in the room.	Summerhall	2018	1

173	Baby Face (*) An energetic actress addresses the infantilizing of woman by the media by acting like a baby, and then a child. Her initial long scream in the echoing Demonstration Room sets the tone for a show that is too loud and too wild to communicate anything other than the unbridled energy of a child.	Summerhall	2018	1
174	Let's Inherit the Earth (*) Four actors alternate between two adsorb scenarios both based in a world where global warming has caused the seas to rise so that few people are left. Though the actors worked hard, neither story had any merit.	Pleasance Forth	2018	14
175	Solarplexus: An Alternative Energy Play (*) The son and daughter compete with each other to save their back-to-nature father from the evil corporation that threatens the ecology of the whole world. It is a mess with cartoon characterizattions, and subplots that are confusing and contribute nothing.	Zoo Charteris	2018	15
176	Very Blue Peter (*) Three disgruntled hosts of the children's show takeover the TV studio and attempt to revive the show with slipshod allusions to its icons. With the mean host dominating the other drunk woman host and crying depressed host, the show feels mean throughout, and any fun is quickly squelched.	Gilded Balloon	2018	8
177	Flight (*) The audience of 21 are ushered into a shipping container that holds a replica of one side of an airliner fuselage, complete with 7 rows of seats. With the plane in complete darkness, the audience listens on headphones as they hear takeoff, and some weirdness. There is nothing here that merits your time or money.	Summerhall	2018	6
1	The Flying Lovers of Vitelsk (*****) Accompanied by a cellist and piano/mandolinist, we follow the lives of the Russian painter Marc Chagall and the love of his life, Bella, from when they first meet. The staging, acting, singing, script, and choreography are exquisite. The music and their love often brought tears to my eyes. This is it folks!	Traverse	2017	15 & 25

2	Moonlight after Midnight (*****) A little gem that originally seems to be about a hooker role playing with a man, but then develops into so much more. The couple have wonderful chemistry, and the plot twists are well placed and touching. Before going in an Assembly staffer remarked about how well the cast treated the staff.	Assembly George Square	2017	18
3	Cathy (*****) Cathy, an evicted mother vainly tries to find shelter for her daughter so that she can study for her GCSE exams. With a fine supporting cast, Cathy provides a tour de force of a woman slowly beaten down as she exhausts all her possible avenues of escape. A scene in a bus terminal was most poignant as some kindness is finally offered her as she reaches her nadir.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	26
4	Adam (*****) A transgender Egyptian suffers hazing, and worse, in his native land, and tries to emigrate to Scotland. The real-li---fe Adam shares the stage with a woman who plays another version of himself so that we are treated to a wonderful interplay of his two genders.	Traverse	2017	18
5	Doris, Dolly and the Dressing Room Diva (*****) Three singers accompanied by a keyboardist impersonate Garland, Day, Minelli, Parton, and other famous female singers to relate some of the events in their lives and sing their hits. All three have great voices, and the light hearted approach keeps the whole lively despite their subject's darker experiences. I particularly appreciated how they avoided the trap of trying to match Garland's "Over the Rainbow" by singing it as a trio.	Gilded Balloon Rose Theatre	2017	18
6	Out of the Blue (*****) The twelve guys from Oxford were back with their great songs and choreographed hijinks for another great show. One of my traditions is to see them on the last day of the Fringe when they are decked out in kilts, and they are aware that it is their last concert before this group disbands. Besides the music, it is always touching to see their camaraderie.	Assembly George Square	2017	28

7	Seanmhair (*****) In the late 1800s Edinburgh, a 10-year old daughter of a banker falls in love at first sight with a 10-year old very tough street urchin, and the feeling is mutual. Three women share portraying the girl while one of the three plays her grandmother and nanny, and another plays the steely boy. Seanmhair is Gaelic for grandmother, and she plays a pivotal role in aiding the girl in her time of nee in this marvelous play. What a way to end the Fringe!	Bedlam Theatre	2017	28
8	Black Mountain (*****) The suspense of Hitchcock in a Stephen King setting without the gore.	Summerhall	2017	14
9	Choir of Man (*****) This musical is set in local tavern in which the men chose to sing rather than form sports teams. This is classic revue that mixes upbeat singalong songs with dance with solo ballads with audience members invited on stage to be the center of attention. The vibe was great on a Saturday night when the show had its first sell out performance.	Assembly rooms	2017	19
10	Camille O'Sullivan: Where are We Now? (*****) The Irish singer who seems to mix Janis Joplin and Edith Piaf makes a shift away from Brel to explore the songs of Bowie and Cohen. Though she retains her unique styling, the show seemed refreshed with the new song list. Then again, for me, she can do no wrong.	Underbelly's Circus Hub	2017	8
11	Mark Thomas: A Show That Gambles on the Future (*****) The leftist comedian mixes stories of dad with the audience deciding which of their propositions Thomas should place a wager on. The master story teller has honed his stories well, as well as demonstrates a great ability to cleverly have fun with the audience's suggested wagers. Once in a while he was caught off guard by how the audience did not fully agree with politically correct stances.	Summerhall	2017	8

12	Mine (*****) A single mother must deal with the ramifications of her teenage son's actions. The story is well acted, and covers a lot of untrodden territory. I do not want to say more for fear of spoiling it.	Zoo Southside	2017	11
13	Blues Brothers – Live (*****) Jake and Elwood with three other singers and a septet perform most of the songs from the movie. I traditionally see this show the first day of my Fringe because they never fail to get me and much of the audience up and dancing by its end. The songs don't change from year to year, but neither do the good times!	C Chamber Street	2017	6
14	Pike Street (****) A one woman show that her playing a Puerto Rican woman in New York City tenement caring for unresponsive daughter while also playing her womanizing father, Jewish neighbor, returning soldier brother, and few other characters. Without costume changes, she instantly switched between characters in a discernible way to create a vibrant social life. The rascally Poppy character provided both comedic relief, and pathos.	Summerhall	2017	14
15	The Whip Hand (****) The ex-husband of a now well-to-do women is welcomed to her family to celebrate his 50th birthday, but then he makes a request that throws the whole group into chaos. The play is riveting throughout because each character can make the claim that their opinion is most valid. Despite all the twists, the ending is quite satisfying.	Traverse	2017	16
16	Richard Herring: Oh Frig, I'm 50! (****) As the tite suggests, Herring reviews his life from the perspective of 50-year old stand-up comic who has married and had a child since he was 40. Herrings wry observations are fun though he relied on much of his routine from his "…I'm 40!" show. He did seem to flounder a bit because some of his jokes that evidentially went well on Saturday had a flat reaction from this Sunday crowd.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	6

17	Deadly Dialogues (****) Four performers weave a complex tapestry from stories of British Muslims dealing with different interpretations of their religion. The stories are powerful, but the show is seriously weakened by the lack of differentiation of the multiple characters played by each actor. This would be a five star production if only the actors would use different voices or mannerisms to help us when they shift between their roles.	C Chamber Street	2017	7
18	Portable Dorothy Parker (****) An actress plays Parker in the 1940s editing her book with an invisible young woman by reading a huge variety of her quips, and relating anecdotes of her life surrounded by the celebrities of her time. I love clever aphorisms, and she spins them out at a furious pace. The insights into her personal life keep the show from just being a litany of one liners.	Rose Theatre	2017	9
19	Speaking in Tongues: The Lies (****) Though "Speaking in Tongues: The Truths" is not as good, I would recommend seeing it right after this. A pair of couples stray for a night, and then deal with the repercussions in their marriages. The initial interwoven simultaneous conversations that diverge and then match sentences is clever, and foreshadows the structure of the whole show.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	10
20	Out of Love (****) Two 11-year old girls, one appealing to boys and the other not, form a friendship that lasts into their twenties. Nothing is simple for them, as sometimes they compete, and sometimes they console each other. You just don't see this topic covered this well at the Fringe.	Summerhall	2017	16
21	Monster (****) An actor describes when he had the difficult time balancing time with his girlfriend and preparing for a role in a play that involves men being angry at women. He does a job of differentiating his many characters, including imitating Patrick Stewart, as well performing excerpts from Shakespeare. The discussion of anger management is direct, but not preachy.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	22

22	The Revlon Girl (****) In 1966, a mother invites a Revlon girl to make a presentation to a group of women who are still grieving a mining catastrophe that killed 116 children, and 20 adults in school. Each of the four mothers as well as the girl have tales of loss and coping that are touching. The framework worked well, with a little comic relief thrown in to keep this from becoming a quagmire of pathos.	Assembly Roxy	2017	27
23	Joseph K (****) This is an updated version of Kafka's "The Trial" with the protagonist being a middle level office worker who is "arrested" by a couple of private cops for an unknown crime, and then doesn't deal well with the unexpected consequences. Most of the events of the novel are here, though the doll obsessed lawyer seemed a little over the top for this tale. All in all though, the huge cast do a good job of conveying the sense of unease and futility of the man that is at the heart of the play.	C Chamber Street	2017	26
24	The Nature of Forgetting (****) This physical theater troupe depicts a 55-year old father who suffers from memory loss by mixing up parts of scenes from life. A scene where his lover is riding his (stationary) bike and he repeatedly catches up to her running is particularly touching. I was enamored with the intensity of the his brides's dancing.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	25
25	Elephant in the Room (****) One woman plays all the characters in this tale of the elephant-headed god Ganesh searching for his human head that his father had cut off. Her characterizations of animals as well as people are fun and well differentiated. Her ability to balance on one foot while making all sort of extreme movements is something to behold.	Assembly Rooms	2017	24
26	Nothing (****) A classroom of Danish students try to convince a truant student that there is meaning to life. The original idea is good, but as their efforts get darker the play loses any semblance of verisimilitude. Nonetheless, it does follow it's own path consistently to its projected conclusion.	Summerhall	2017	24

27	Tobacco (****) What starts out as a slapstick send up of a lecture evolves into a beautiful piece of physical theatre full of contradictions. I was continually surprised how he used the podium prop in so many ways. His rocking trip had a sweet grace.	Assembly George Square	2017	24
28	Misterman (****) A social outcasts with religious hallucinations endlessly replays his neighborhood interactions in his room. The acting is superb, and the story an appropriate mix of the real and unreal. I originally rated this much lover because that mix confused me, but in hindsight it was masterful.	C Primo	2017	19
29	An Evening with an Immigrant (****) Inua Ellams presents poems about his life as a Nigerian immigrant to the UK. Each poem has a beautiful start. However, it was late, and I had been seeing plays since 9am, and faded in the middle of each poem.	Traverse	2017	22
30	Into the Woods (****) This version of Sondheim's musical combining various fairy tales into one world has everything you can ask for: great voices, fun portrayals, and creative production. It comes down to how much you like the play itself. For me, the second act pales in comparison to the first.	Assembly Rooms	2017	17
31	The Fall (***) Based on real events, students at a Capetown university occupy the campus to protest the existence of a statue of Cecil Rhodes on the campus. The show is unusual in that much of the story takes place as a group of student leaders argue for the best course of action. The wide range of different values and interests keeps their arguments passionate and intriguing.	Assembly Hall	2017	23
32	Nina - A Story about Me and Nina Simone (****) Josette Bushell-Mingo, backed by a jazz trio, presents the songs and biography of Nina Simone. The singer and the band provided excellent renditions of the range of songs that Simone performed. While I heard about, and saw many political events from her life, I was left with the feeling that I had learned more about a myth of the Black Equality Movement than a real person.	Traverse	2017	8

33	Part of the Picture (****) A young artist convinces the Occidental Petroleum Company to let her visit the largest North Sea platform for a week so that she can create drawings of this important aspect of Scottish culture. Through her interviews, and performances by two oil workers we learn of life both on and off the platform. Her virtual artifacts proved surprisingly touching in the final act.	Pleasance Dome	2017	11
34	Big Bite-Sized Breakfast (Menu 2) (****) This three day series of compilations of six short plays is always a must see for me. This time we have a drill sergeant trying to deal with politically correct marching songs; a married couple discovering an accurate script of the coming day next to their bed; siblings sharing some unusual eggnog; two strangers trapped together in a rotating door; and a gay couple dealing with a dangerous spider in their kitchen. I loved how the story about the scripted couple doesn't just play it for laughs, but explores the possibilities.	Pleasance Dome	2017	9
35	Space Rocket Oddity Man (****) A lone man must work out his romantic problems with his interstellar spaceship's artificial intelligence. In the course of his negotiations we learn not only of how they became romantically involved, but also of how he ended up alone. This charming piece has a wonderful mix of science fiction story telling with a deft imagining of how such a romantic relationship could develop and continue.	Zoo Southside	2017	7
36	Manwatching (****) An actor simply reads a script written by an anonymous woman about women's private thoughts about men. The script covers everything from scoring systems to orgasms. My favorite was a long section on her approach to fantasizing.	Summerhall	2017	27
37	Red Bastard: Lie with Me (****) The comedian in a red bulbous costume explores people lying, particularly those dealing with being of "faithful" in a relationship. Despite his nominally nasty reputation, his polling of the audience was done with flair not flames. In the end, my seat mate, Josh, ended up dancing with him.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	10

38	Morgan Stern (****) This solo show has a 19th century man is selected to be an invisible guardian of a mentally troubled modern boy. As the boy grows older, his ebb and flow of sanity is reflected in the play itself. While the play was incoherent at times, it all felt right.	C Primo	2017	12
39	Toll (****) In 1914, a farm boy follows his brother into the Great War, and experiences its camaraderie and privations. From his disconsolate mother and father to battle scenes to his leave buddy the cast of five serve the story well. Particularly memorable was a scene of charging a machine gun when a seemingly endless number of his fellow soldiers fall.	C Chamber Street	2017	11
40	Big Bite-Sized Breakfast (Menu 1) (****) This three day series of compilations of five short plays is always a must see for me. This one had a married couple reviving their sex life with a public hooker fantasy gone awry; a PR firm trying to update the image of the armed forces without mentioning war; a man who can read people's wishes from the coins they throw in a fountain; a future where love is illegal; and a Valkyrie who has a roller skating girl friend. I found the effort to transform the military into national team sport particularly clever.	Pleasance Dome	2017	11
41	Michael Brandon: Off Ramp (****) For someone who has starred in numerous major motion pictures, and a hit TV show, Brando is surprisingly self-effacing. That is not to say he doesn't have many stories involving major stars, such living with Kim Novac for a year, but he rarely portrays any of his success as due to acting ability. With a backdrop of scenes from his roles, he seems to effortlessly tell his tale with little other than appreciation of a life well spent.	Assembly Rooms	2017	9
42	Enterprise (****) Four businessman compete in pairs to come up with a plan to save their company. The lines are quick, witty with a tinge of acid. I was a little tired, and regret it.	Assembly Studios	2017	18

43	Will Seaward's Ghost Stories (****) Seaward presents a tale full of funny names, and bizarre beasts that is shambolic, silly, and just plain fun. Have a beer, and prepare to ooh, and aah as the low tech show unfolds. His "incompetent" use of a Ouija board was particularly inspired as he tried to guide the shared toy shovel to create the "surprising" messages.	Gilded Balloon	2017	8
44	Wondr (****) This solo show has a mother who has a million twitter followers use her wits and all the resources available to her to track down where a kidnapper took her daughter. I always love resourceful people, and her modern approaches are clever. The word choice is exquisite, with much of it seemingly in verse.	Assembly Roxy	2017	14:10
45	Big Bite-Sized Breakfast (Menu 3) (****) This three day series of compilations of five short plays is always a must see for me. Unhappily, I didn't keep notes for this one, and it was a long time ago.	Pleasance Dome	2017	10
46	Box Clever (***) This two hander has a poor mother battling the system and her former lovers to keep her 5-year old daughter safe. "Cathy" is a much better treatment of this topic	Summerhall	2017	14
47	Flesh and Bone (***) Five residence of a London tenement try to deal with being at the bottom of the socio/economic ladder. Fights, drugs, pregnancy, race, and homosexuality all arise and dealt with in reasonable fashion. The surprising relationship between the granddaughter and her grandfather was a little too neat for the cheap laugh it got.	Pleasance Dome	2017	27
48	From Ibiza to the Norfolk Broads (***) On his 18th birthday a boy follows a map of David Bowie's haunts that his absent father left him for his 18th birthday present. The boy has inherited his father's obsession for Bowie but is also a social misfit and suffers from an eating disorder. I was impressed by how the actor conveyed his desperation in some subtle other not subtle ways throughout the whole journey>	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	26

49	Pip Utton's Greatest Hits (***) Utton plays Hitler in the last day of the Third Reich in his Berlin bunker giving a speech to his officers, and then another to his civilian staff. Both speeches have the passion and eloquence of a great orator, with a few asides about how best to rule. I had seen Utton's Hitler in 2003, and his second half screed about immigrants did not work as well this time because of Brexit.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	26
50	Sugar Baby by Alan Harris (***) This solo show has a Cardiff drug dealer tries to pay off his father's 6000 pound debt to a drug dealer, and then everything goes wrong. The show is at times surreal, a bit contrived, but always gritty. While the protagonist has many facets, his mother and the ending seem contrived.	Summerhall	2017	26
51	Tutu: Dance in All It's Glory (***) Six men dance in costumes more traditionally suited for women. One of them even does toe dancing. There were two dances that I found outstanding, but much of the rest had pretty uninspired choreography by comparison.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	23
52	Letters to Morrissey (***) Gary McNair tells the tale of a tween who writes a letter to the singer Steven Morrissey asking for his help in deciding whether to intervene in his best friends life. He provides a good blend of pathos and comedy as our protagonist deals with realities of his neighborhood and his chosen hero.	Traverse	2017	20
53	Sex Offense (***) An old lover meets with a wily Home Secretary on the day a harsh pedophile law is passed. The thrust and parry as she repeatedly tries to blackmail him is fun, but becomes a bit predictable with some built-in foreshadowing. His final decision seems out of character.	New Town Theatre	2017	16
54	The Divide, Part 2 (***) This is continuation from Part 1 so to avoid spoiling it, I won't talk about the storyline. There is more action, but the pacing still seems slower than necessary. Much like the end of the Tolkien movie "Return of the King," just when you think it is over, another ending is tacked on.	Kings Theatre	2017	20

55	The Divide, Part 1 (***) A hundred years in the future a virus develops that has no effects on female humans, but kills adult males 10 days after they have contact with female so that the few remaining and Brits live in towns segregated by gender. The premise is clear, and the world created within the bounds of fantasy. While I liked the initial "scientific" lecture device to get us up to speed, the balance of the play moved at a snail's pace.	Kings Theatre	2017	20
56	Borders (***) The two hander intertwines the story of an altruistic English photo journalist who becomes a photographer for celebrities with that of a Syrian rebel graffiti artist trying to survive in the civil war. Though there is a link in the end, the intersection is so tenuous that in the end it doesn't justify joining two essentially disjoint plays.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2017	18
57	The Sky is Safe (***) A Scottish businessman repeatedly meets a Syrian prostitute in Istanbul while we learn of the plight of series of Syrian refugees. The couple interactions are an interesting dance, but my attention strayed during the balance of the show.	Summerhall	2017	26
58	The Friday Night Effect (***) Three women decide to go out to a bar, and during the show the audience divides into groups and votes what will happen at four(?) turning points. The choices are not straightforward, with there never being a unanimous decision. However, we were the only group of the ten that voted for honesty at one point.	Assembly George Square	2017	23
59	Wild Bore (***) Three women rake critic over the coals, and then perform a variety of sketches that test the boundaries of good taste. Some of the sketches were novel and interesting, while others were either banal or based only on shock value.	Traverse	2017	13

60	Heroes (***) We follow a small classroom of 14-year-olds for more than a decade as they deal with living in a country that has been involved in a seemingly endless war that conscripts all 18-year old boys unless they have a child less than three years old. The larger cast allows the show to explore many aspects of the impact of such a war. The epilogue diminished to power of the play though.	Summerhall	2017	7
61	Venus and Adonis (***) An actor performs the 28-year old Shakespeare's first successful work, a poem about Venus trying to seduce a reluctant Adonis. Most of the time he assumes the role of Venus as she touts her charms, and complains about Adonis' coldness. One particular scene has Venus lying on his/her back guiding her hands as the poem describes mounds and wet valleys to help the uninitiated better understand Shakespeare's lascivious references.	C Primo	2017	12
62	Places (***) Romy Nordlinger portrays Alla Nazimova, a Russian violin prodigy who studied acting under Stanislavsky only to emigrate to the USA to become a super star actress/director/producer of silent movies. Though the actress only has a passing resemblance to the one pictured in the many photos projected behind her, she certainly conveyed the drive and passion of her subject. As a lover of Hearst Castle, I could appreciate her huge and popular Garden of Allah mansion she built and lost on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood.	New Town Theatre	2017	12
63	Glitter Punch (***) A naïve, 16-year old with low self-esteem meets a fellow smoking at school, and romance ensues. Due to differences between British and American English as well as Fringe age-blind casting, I and other Americans thought the fellow was her fellow student, while the rest of the audience thought the fellow was her teacher. Obviously, we viewed the whole play was viewed in entirely differently. I think it would have been worth four stars had I known.	Assembly George Square	2017	23

64	Secret Lives of Humans (***) The grandson of the author of "The Ascent of Man" explores his grandfather's locked room with his date. Learning of his work during World War II was interesting, but the girl friend's argument with the central tenant of the book was specious and tiresome.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	22
65	Man on the Moor (***) A young fellow tries to find his father who disappeared one day. His real tale of discovering a man who looks like his father, and following that trail is surprisingly well documented.	Underbelly	2017	10
66	Speaking in Tongues: The Truths (***) Not as good as Speaking in Tongues: The Lies, but I would recommend seeing it right after the "…Lies" nonetheless.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	10
67	Let Me Look at You (***) An older gay man talks about being cool in the current gay culture as well as the history of the gay rights movement. Initially has impressed with his seemingly casual lists of significant people within different gay contexts, but it felt so artificial after a while. Worse, was his repeated statement that "I'm not going to talk about AIDS," and then doing just that.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	12:15
68	Dickless (***) An actress plays both a tough young woman who knows her way around the inner city, and her friend who is having trouble with his sexual identity. The girl's toughness is there in many details, but the fellow doesn't simply completely fleshed out.	New Town Theatre	2017	16
69	The Toxic Avenger (***) The cult movie is turned into a musical complete with a protagonist who is transformed by toxic waste into a hero.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	15
70	The Thinking Drinkers: History of Alcohol (***) We are served four alcoholic beverages while two men provide history lessons and tasting guidance. There facts are interesting and seem solid, while their silly comedy fist the show. I thought their motto was great: "Drink less, but drink better."	Underbelly Med Quad	2017	24

71	Last Resort (***) The audience is ushered into a room with filled with beach lounge chairs, and then are treated to a tour director and assistant guiding the activities at this Guantanamo Bay resort. This is quite a mix of resort send-up and torture that sort of works. The little bags of sand at each chair for our bare feet was a nice touch.	Summerhall	2017	8
72	Deep in the Heart of Me (***) A dissatisfied middle aged wife decides to go to Lesbos while the rest of her family disperses for a week.	Sweet Grassmarket	2017	10
73	Cosmic Scallies (***) A poor small woman enlists an old friend to help her cleanup her flat, and then volunteers to help her get a prescription for her pain.	Summerhall	2017	14
74	One Hander (***) The actor/comedian relates his life's experiences with particular attention to the fact that he was born without a left hand. Well acted, and funny, while addressing his special challenges.	C Primo	2017	12
75	Last Clown on Earth (***) The master dancer of the Derevo company plays a clown in an abstract world shown as a cartoons and videos on the back screen. Though he is still a marvelous dancer and choreographer, this seemed more like a requiem with a devil and a god than an adventure.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	25
76	Curse of the Mummy (***) A trio create a low tech send-up of "Raiders of the Lost Ark" works because they keep it silly. Just plain fun.	Just the Tonic at the Caves	2017	25
77	A Thousand Doorways (***) Diane Edgecomb tells of her trip into Kurdish Kurdistan to record the folk stories before they disappear. Though her story is thrilling sometimes, the show is too long.	C Primo	2017	12

78	Reduced Shakespeare Company: Will's Long-Lost First Play (***) I saw this show last year, and gave it five stars then, jet lag and a new young cast instead of the old wise crackers just seemed a fast talking re-hash to me. Everyone else seemed to like this story that combines the significant characters from Shakespeare's plays into one story written by high school Will. My companion thought it should be four stars.	C Chamber Street	2017	7
79	Nassim (***) Each day, the Iranian exile teaches enough Farsi to read a short children's story to a new actor. The actor, and the playwright are nice enough, but the whole premise and story seem thin.	Traverse	2017	19
80	Workshy (***) A woman describes her real life of holding minimum wage jobs, drug dealing, and being a sex chat girl. I found the show a bit sparse, but her straightforward revelations were insightful. How can forget that she demonstrated that she would drink her own piss on the sex chat shows.	Summerhall	2017	26
81	Lilith: The Jungle Girl (***) In the late nineteenth century, a scientist and his assistant receive a dangerous humanoid in a crate from Borneo. The story is silly and bizarre but surprisingly coherent. I was in the mood to go with it, most people were not.	Traverse	2017	12:10
82	Fix (***) Three actors provide biochemical information about addiction, and then portray three people dealing with various forms of addiction. It was informative and interesting, but the stories were more educational than drama.	Underbelly Cowgate	2017	27
83	Breakfast Plays: So Far as a Century's Reach (***) Three women and a man read from a script that mixes and matches them to tell short vignettes that all deal with pregnancy. This was the best of the four Breakfast plays.	Traverse	2017	23

84	Odyssey (***) A solo show presenting Homer's epic in one hour using lots of hand gestures to depict the gods. Others rave, I found the gestures repetitive and confusing at times. Nonetheless, he did cover all the significant events in only an hour.	Pleasance Dome	2017	14:20
85	Suspicious Minds (***) A husband in a troubled marriage tries to salvage it by reserving a time travel vacation that visits ancient Rome, 18th century Britain, theTitanic, and some other places in time. The concept was good, but the changes in the relationship of the couple never gelled.	Pleasance Dome	2017	17
86	Indie as F*ck (***) Tales of the formation and gigs of a high school band. Fun, with good music, and mediocre lyrics that at least I could understand.	C Royale	2017	13
87	Ensonglopedia of Science (***) A likable fellow performs a ditty for each letter in the alphabet that covers some aspect of science and some form of music that begins with that letter while the audience plays a game to try to figure out what the name of the musical reference. This is an ambitious mix of animation, power point, musical composition, and science that appeals to both older children and adults while addressing topics ranging from dinosaurs to DNA to atoms. All of the adults around me were constantly involved as they wrote their musical answers on their scorecards.	Gilded Ballon a the Museum	2017	7
88	Alpha (***) It's been a while now, but I remember two actors that never interested me. However, a separate actor performed a dance using English Sign Language with such style and energy that made the whole play worth the price of admission.	C Primo	2017	12
89	Good with Maps (***) A woman repeatedly explores the Amazon River basin. Tim loved it, I fell asleep.	C Primo	2017	
90	Trygve Wakenshaw & Barnie Duncan: Different Party (***) Two physical comedians play inept interior design salesman who must deal with all sorts of silly difficulties in their office. It is very good physical comedy, but that is all it is.	Assembly Roxy	2017	11

91	Britney in: John (***) Two women recount their real trip to the USA when they were in their gap year to make a documentary based on interviewing people with the name John Hancock as they crossed the country. This is a charming, self-effacing story of an innocent adventure with excerpts from their amateurish film as well as amusing anecdotes and back stories. At 23, the banter of the two clearly evinces their continued love for each other.	Bedlam Theatre	2017	7
92	All My Life Long (***) In this version of "Same Time Next Year," on the first day of spring each year a needy girl has a one night stand with more conventional man who loves her but she has rejected. His slow progression in life while waiting for her to figure life out is well written. Her wandering from one troublesome relationship to another and constant self-pity is wearing.	C Royale	2017	10
93	The Inconvenience of Wings (***) The husband of a manic depressive cannot deal with her death. Though the story was well told, and her acting was impressive, the superfluous nudity really detracted from the play.	Assembly Studios	2017	17
94	DeLorean (***) DeLorean founds a new car company without a real design, and must decide where to build the auto plant. I never cared for anybody in the story, except the Belfast workers who had their hopes dashed by a man who cared more about business deals than them.	Assembly Rooms	2017	10
95	10 Rillington Place (***) Based on the true story of a serial killer who hid the bodies in the floors and walls of his house. The actor was convincing as a fatherly figure whom women would trust. But that same consistent tone made the show dull.	SpaceTriplex	2017	8

96	Wanna Dance with Somebody! Or, A Guide to Managing Social Anxiety Using Theoretical Physics (***) A likable fellow in a sport coat uses planet lampshades to represent his friends and their advice on how to deal with social anxiety. He does spend much of the rest of time dancing joyously, but somehow the time passes easily. In the end, his treatise convinced virtually all of the audience to join him for a couple of dances at the end of the show.	Zoo Southside	2017	7
97	Carried Away (***) After an earlier miscarriage that she thinks was her fault, a young woman has troubles accepting her new pregnancy.	C Royale	2017	13
98	Meet Me at Dawn (***) Two women marooned on a beach slowly come to grips with their unusual situation. Because I misheard the origin of their plight, I was confused for the first ten minutes. In hindsight, it seems that most of us were kept in the dark for such a long time, that the play seemed too slow. However, the second half picked up the pace, and was quite sastisfying.	Traverse	2017	15
99	The Great American Trailer Park Musical (***) A large cast fills the trailer park as toll taker tries to convince his agoraphobic wife to leave their manufactured home to see the Ice Capades for their 20th anniversary.	C too	2017	14
100	Jess and Joe Forever (***) A chubby tween befriends a troubled farm boy each summer on her vacation,, and they slowly grow closer over the years. The mystery of his troubles is both intriguing and exasperating. Without a microphone, whenever she spoke to another side of Traverse 2, I could not hear her.	Traverse	2017	15

101	The Girl Who Jumped Off the Hollywood Sign (***) In the 1940s, an aspiring actress must confront the difficulties of getting a chance in the Hollywood studio system as well as the demands on stars like Judy Garland. Throughout the show, the actress has many Garlandesque songs. It is ironic that this is well acted story of futility was constantly thwarted by her good but not great voice in comparison to Garland's. I should note that my companion loved the show and would give it four stars.	Assembly Roxy	2017	7
102	The Testament of Mary (***) The mother of Jesus describes what her life was like dealing with Jesus and his disciples before and after the crucifixion. There are few references to his miracles, but this is not a religious tract. The heart of the story is a mother losing her son.	C Cubed	2017	28
103	The Last Queen of Scotland (***) A Ugandan woman brought up in Dundee rails against Idi Amin and then visits the nation of her birth to retrace her roots. From the start, this seems both facile and naïve. We know Amin was bad and crazy to think he had anything to do with Scotland, and the story makes clear that the woman is fully integrated into her Scottish community.	Underbelly	2017	18
104	Parlour Games (***) It is a dark and stormy night when the lights go out, and three young siblings create almost silent plays in the style of 1920s silent films. The simple plays, and their interactions seemed appropriate for 4, 11, and 13 year old children, but the play did seem too long. They used a wide range of techniques with flashlights to great effect.	Assembly Roxy	2017	16:55
105	The Road That Wasn't There (***) A girl follows a road that is only dotted lines on a map to discover a magical part of her town inhabited by a very nice boy. The use of shadow puppets is nicely done, but I'm afraid this children's story was a bit too tame for me. The kids seem to fall asleep too.	Assembly Roxy	2017	27

106	Burnt Toast (***) The day after a young woman commemorates her mom leaving the family at a pub, her mother shows up at the pub. Both the daughter, and her boyfriend are well defined, but the other characters are cardboard. In particular, the mother asks her daughter to let her explain, and then never does.	Assembly Rooms	2017	24
107	The Time Machine (***) A one man show as the protagonist from the H.G. Wells classic of time travel to a time when human race has divided into the blind Morlocks who keep the peaceful Eloi as cattle among other shorter adventures. The actor is virtually always either loudly lamenting or fiercely exhorting which is quite wearing after a while. There needed to be a little quieter time.	Assembly Roxy	2017	27
108	Karoo Moose - No Fathers (***) In South Africa, a young girl is raped by a bunch of men who go unpunished. I was often lost as the dialog is in a mix of English and their native language, and the songs are all in their native language.	Assembly George Square	2017	23
109	Play on Words (***) In a dystopian future, two women try to come up with new words with death as their punishment for failing. I had hoped that this would have been a show of clever word play, but was sadly disappointed.	C Royale	2017	13
110	Beam (***) A young plays a woman born in the 1920s by alternating between the woman on board a ship heading to Canada to meet her husband to be, and an old woman today. During the play she passes around jelly babies, lavender, a cuddly toy, and soft bundles for each audience member. In the end, there was nothing left of the play but her beautiful smile.	Zoo Southside	2017	14

111	Breakfast Plays: Ouroboros (***) Four women read a script about an Indian doctor who takes over a health center in a rural Indian village, and has a contentious relationship with the midwife who ran the center before she arrived. While the privations of the rural community affects most aspects health care, this play highlights its huge impact on obstectrics.	Traverse	2017	20
112	Finding Nana (***) A young woman returns to a holiday hotel where she shared so many good times with her recently deceased grandmother. Her acting was OK, and there wasn't much else to the plot.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	28
113	Frogman (***) The audience investigates the disappearance of a girl on the Great Barrier Reef with the help of VR goggles to present some of the evidence. The goggles contribute little the play, except to allow all of us to try them.	Traverse Codebase	2017	23
114	Submission (***) A Pakistani must try to reconcile his Islamic faith with his homosexuality when he encounters an old lover. Though the problem is posed, he barely searches for an answer so the whole play seems to have no direction.	C Royale	2017	19
115	Nikola and His Travelling Lux Concordia (***) Great idea, but the discourse becomes confusing and preachy.	C Royale	2017	13
116	Amy, 25, Almost Cool (***) On the day her old high school best friend arrives, Amy is invited on a date by a male model. The play explores the source of their friendship, dating, and the chinks in their relationship. The stuck prom dress zipper provided a bit of comedy, but the need to break the fourth wall to introduce a flashback felt clumsy.	C Royale	2017	13
117	Mental (***) The 26-year old son of a manic-depressive mother explains her condition, and his experiences living with her. Though sincere, his songs had little merit.	Assembly Roxy	2017	18:05

118	Breakfast Plays: Q&Q (***) Five actors read a play about three Syrian refugee women talking to two European government interviewers. Their stories are properly diverse, but I do tire of rotating storytelling.	Traverse	2017	9:45
119	Class Project (***) A woman plays excerpts from different prime minister's speeches about helping the lower classes, and then talks about the class differences. She evidently used different English accents to indicate subtle class differences, but they were lost on me.	Summerhall	2017	27
120	Eve (***) A monotonous presentation sinks this story of her life as she tries to be recognized as a woman.	Traverse	2017	15
121	Stegosaurus (***) A young woman's story of her unsuccessful battle with all three eating disorders: anorexia, bulimia, and binge eating. Though she described each of her dysfunctional behaviors in expert detail, the story seemed to go nowhere. While her sense of endless futility may have been the point, it seemed shallow.	C Royale	2017	13
122	Lady Macbeth : Unsex Me Here (***) Three men simultaneously perform an interpretation of Lady Macbeth's life. Though much of the time they were synchronous, the occasional, intentional, divergence intrigued me. I just don't remember her life well enough to make sense of several of the sequences.	Dance Base	2017	15
123	That's Life on Lisgar (***) A daughter of Portugese parents must deal with the cultural difference. It is sincere, but mundance.	C Royale	2017	13
124	Blurred Justice (***) A Yemen terrorist is put on trial for killing five people, and then the audience must vote on his guilt. The play shows both the bombing of the peaceful Yemeni wedding that motivates the man, and the premeditated murder of the five. However, we never learn what the five are doing, and in the end the whole play feels contrived.	New Town Theatre	2017	16

125	The Iconoclasts (***) A musical family stages a re-union in honor of a dead family member. The music was pretty good, but it was too loud and I couldn't understand most of the lyrics.	C Primo	2017	12
126	The Chess Player (***) On board a ship in 1942, an Austrian Jew who had been kept in solitary confinement by the Gestapo agrees play a game of chess against the world champion. The acting in this solo show is superb, but choice to repeatedly break the fourth wall is a disservice to the play. I was also pissed off that during one such break, the actor belittled a non-volunteer audience member.	C Primo	2017	12
127	3000 Trees - The Death of William McRae (***) Based on the life of the hard drinking leftist lawyer who may have been killed for his stands despite being ruled otherwise. The actor stays in character throughout, and that one note performance wears thin quickly.	New Town Theatre	2017	9
128	Things We Find in the Dark (***) This show mixes shadow puppets and live action to tell a tale of a little boy who is afraid of the dark who chases a monster who stole his light. This definitely an amateur production, but its message and simplicity was charming.	Zoo	2017	25
129	Bright Colours Only (***) We are treated to woman selling coffins starting with tea or whiskey and appetizers. Though her routine going over the selling points of the coffin in the room was fun, the whole show seemed thin on content.	Assembly Rooms	2017	24
130	The Offering (Guru Dakshina) (***) The young acolyte must learn how to battle evil from an ages old master. The whole thing was done with such solemnity and sincerity that there was little room for fun.	C Royale	2017	24
131	All We Ever Wanted was Everything (***) This musical has a boy and a girl who were childhood friends meet again at pub many years later after each has had miserable romantic experiences. Though the music was OK, the narrator and many of the lyrics were unintelligible and too loud for me.	Summerhall	2017	24

132	Status (***) This one-off was a playwright reading his play to us to get our reactions. It was late, I was tired, and I cannot remember it the next day.	Traverse	2017	22:10
133	Two (***) Two actors play the proprietors of a tavern as well as twelve of their customers. The actors get to show their chops in two of the stories, but the rest of the vignettes have little spark.	C Royale	2017	19
134	Raton Laveur (***) A woman comes home to find that her paranoid schizophrenic lover covered in blood from using a baseball bat to kill something wrapped in a bloody rug. She is surprisingly understanding, and he is really crazy. Very well acted, but a bit over the top.	Assembly Roxy	2017	15:30
135	Scribble (***) This show has an invited actor read their small part from a binder while the cosmologist protagonist tells of his difficulty at making decisions in his life. The reader adds nothing, and the goal of the show seems to be to provide one simple lesson the cosmologist learned to cope his disease. The whole thing could have taken five minutes.	Assembly Roxy	2017	25
136	6x6x6 (***) Three pairs of comedians present uninspired short plays.	Pleasance Dome	2017	10
137	Electra (***) This retelling of the revenge of the daughter of Agamemnon had little emotion and lots of words.	theSpace@Symposium Hall	2017	8
138	A Charlie Montague Mystery: The Man with the Twisted Hip (**) One man attempts to create a multi-character drawing room mystery, but he doesn't do a good job of differentiating his accents, and his jokes consistently fell flat.	TheSpace@Surgeons Hall	2017	17:55
139	Locker Room Talk (**) Four women listen on ipods and repeat the words verbatim of men talking about women when there are no women around. Each woman repeats the words of many men, and almost all are mundane things that we have already heard. Since the men aren't differentiated, even the fact the misogynistic comments from men across all classes was lost.	Traverse	2017	20:15

140	Little Boy (**) A Chinese production about a young man dealing with his powerful, but remote, father's death. While I could better understand the accented English, the subtle changes from one character to another confused me.	C Royale	2017	13
141	Smoking with Grandma (**) A Chinese production about an immigrant from Hong Kong waiting years to be allowed to take the ferry to Taiwan. I have difficulty with accents, and there didn't seem to be much of a story here anyway.	C Royale	2017	13
142	Party Game (**) This interactive story has the audience prepare a surprise party for the arrival of an honored guest. Though the actors could sing and dance well, and the activities diverse, I came away feeling that there were many better things to do for an hour.	Traverse at the Wee Red Bar	2017	9
143	Help! (**) A young woman who really has been diagnosed with depression and anxiety tells of her fight with her disease. Along the way she has a lot of audience participation, and in the end asks us all to help put her life back together by taping foil scraps to her body. Nice symbolism, but not much of a play.	Zoo	2017	11
144	Three Tales of Love and Death (**) Disjoint stories that had old news coverage for preambles for each. Simply blah.	Assembly Rooms	2017	16
145	The Last Days of Judas Iscariot (**) In purgatory, a defense attorney tries to argue that Judas should be permitted in heaven. While the acting was fine, the script was a mess. There was only one small section in which the defense attorney actually made a reasonable argument.	Pleasance Courtyard	2017	25
146	Flamenco Escocia (**) A flamenco guitarist plays duets with a bass guitaritst, and mandolin player with a flamenco dancer performing on two of the pieces. While the musicians are all talented, his supposedly Scottish inspired compositions are a mess. Only when the mandolin joined him did he play jigs that I could enjoy.	C Chamber Street	2017	6

147	Edison (**) Should be called “Tesla” because it is about Tesla being underappreciated as a worker in Edison’s company.	Zoo Southside	2017	11
148	The Expiration Date of Jonas Muller (Age 70) (*) An actor sits at a desk and reads a boring story.	Pleasance Dome	2017	11
149	Rainbow Soapbox (*) No different from last week, just with different acts. Still too loud, too brash, and amateurish to a fault. The three speakers continue to be sincere, and the best part of the show.	Traverse	2017	14
150	Breakfast Plays: Choices (*) This was not a play. It was one women reading a short story with some dialogue in it. Though the story was OK, it should not be sold as if it were even related to the play format.	Traverse	2017	19
151	Rainbow Soapbox (*) This morning cabaret tries to celebrate people who are different with a mix of speakers, odd performers, and a brash emcee. It was almost like “The Producers”, where someone tried to construct the worst show possible, except it was unintentional. It started late, had technical difficulties throughout, was way too loud, had sincere but untalented performers, and ran over their time slot by a half hour!	Traverse	2017	7
1	Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally (*****) A math teacher becomes enamored with her 15-year old student after finding remarkable photos on his mobile phone. This play had all the things I look for in a play: innovative set, fine acting, realistic characters, sensitivity, and an emotional mix. As a nod to the mobile centric culture of high school the play has their two mobile phones serve as expository devices that comment on the situations.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	16
2	Chopping Chilies (*****) This one woman show has an Indian martial arts guru coming to London to run his deceased uncle’s shoe repair store, and proceeds to help his hippie neighbor with her Indian restaurant. Clair Whitefield brings both the dour Indian and the light restaurateur to life with equal ease. Though the coincidence of shared sandals is unnecessary, it does at a touch of magic that fits the story.	Assembly Roxy	2016	5

3	Fresher (*****) The university sends ten freshmen to a small room where they must use drama therapy to address their various offenses that range from date rape to cyber bullying to petty theft. Each case is uniquely handled with a mix of debate, re-enactment by others, and denial. The two highlights were an anti-feminist Russian who constantly pointed out biases towards women in British society, and a scene where a plutocrat finally identifies with an unfortunate person.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	3
4	A Streetcar Named Desire (*****) A large Georgian troupe presents Tennessee Williams' play about a woman who comes to stay with her sister in New Orleans and is confronted with her uncouth husband. The entire production is top notch, with the actress playing Blanche conveying her mix of disgust, fragility, and reluctant hope perfectly. Though the story is in Russian the brevity of the lines of the play is perfectly suited to supertitles.	Assembly Roxy	2016	18
5	Hamlet in Bed (*****) A foundling who is obsessed with Hamlet finds a diary that leads him to a woman who may be his mother, and then casts her as Hamlet's mother in a play in which he is Hamlet. What starts out feeling like a stalker tale, expands as the world of acting and the Bard reveals much deeper characters.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	9
6	Sleeping Trees: Sci-Fi? (*****) Three fellow backed with two musicians create an inspired spoof of Star Wars based sci-fi movies. With no sets, no props, and no costumes they take us on a wild ride of imagined Darth Vader death grips, and pistol packing robots. I must warn others that you have to love sci-fi AND be in the right mood to enjoy this.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	27

7	Out of the Blue (*****) The guys from Oxford were back with their great songs and choreographed hijinks for one of their most diverse show in years. One of my traditions is to see them on the last day of the Fringe when they are decked out in kilts, and they are aware that it is their last concert before this group disbands. Besides the music, it is always touching to see their camaraderie.	Assembly George Square	2016	29
8	My Eyes Went Dark (*****) A successful architect has trouble dealing with the loss of his family when two planes collide. This intense play touches on themes of justice, and personal loss in an ambiguous way I've rarely seen. There are no black and whites here.	Traverse	2016	12
9	Once…(*****) The Derovo troupe presents a tale of a tongue-tied streets sweeper who falls in love with a waitress who is enamored with a wealthy, stylish patron. The surreal show careens from semi-realism to Keystone Kop chases to sword and sorcery fights with surprisingly accessible physical theater.	Assembly George Square	2016	10
10	Mungo Park: Travels in the Interior of Africa (*****) Three men create a "blockbuster" based on the life Mungo Park, a real life 18th century physician who was the first Westerner to explore Western Africa. This has entertaining mix of adventure, simple hardware props, a turntable, drama, with a dash of whimsy. The production does a great job of conveying the privations of the two expeditions as well as the African cultures that he came upon.	Summerhall	2016	6
11	Camille O'Sullivan : The Carny Dream (*****) As usual, the Irish singer provides a show that mixes ballads and rock with theatrics using her Edith Piaf voice to its full effect. I see her every year because she never fails to create	Underbelly Circus Hub	2016	9
12	Joe Stilgoe: Songs on Film (*****) The jazz pianist, with a bassist and drums, mixes medleys and jazz interpretations of famous songs from film. Though his medleys were well compiled, I wish he had shortened the jazz, and played more of the songs themselves.	Assembly Checkpoint	2016	7

13	Mouse - The Persistence of an Unlikely Thought (*****) Daniel Kitson plays a storyteller who receives a wrong number call, and then carries on with call. Kitson alternates between brief excerpts from the storyteller's life, and skillful interactions with the pre-recorded caller. Though the show is supposed to be eighty minutes long, it turned out to be two hours, which was too much for my companion.	Traverse	2016	12
14	The Marked (*****) A homeless man must regain his faith in man before he can deal humanely with his community. The ragged puppets and protagonist's pervasive skittishness beautifully convey the disarray, danger, and fragility of the environment of the homeless. Little things like a simple bird puppet that moved surprisingly naturally, and referring to a magic torch as a metaphor, raise this story to another level.	Pleasance Dome	2016	15
15	Pss Pss (****) The two mute clowns return to work their gymnastic magic while conveying their emotional states in delightful ways. Their work with an inverted step ladder is inspired, and her facial expressions are so winning. This is just a fun show you shouldn't miss.	Assembly Roxy	2016	18
16	Only Bones (****) Without leaving a one meter circle and almost no words, Thomas Monckton uses his body parts to create an amazing variety of stories, images, and movements. Who would believe that painting finger nails or an extra sock could be so entertaining? The highlight was watching him act like his neck could not support his head unless his head was perfectly balanced above his shoulders.	Summerhall	2016	27
17	All Quiet on the Western Front (****) We follow the lives of five young German soldiers as they suffer the privations, and occasional joys of the First World War. Though there were a few battle scenes, the heart of the story lies in their experiences away from front lines. The visit back home by one is particularly heart wrenching as the townsman of his village have no idea of what he has been through.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	27

18	Jules Verne's Extraordinary Voyages: The Lighthouse at the End of the World (****) After pirates overrun his Cape Horn lighthouse, the keeper and a shipwreck survivor try to delay their ship's departure. I didn't know the story, and the cast of five just made this a rip-roaring adventure of resourcefulness for me. While it may not suit others, for me it was a perfect rendering that relied on suspense and cunning instead of sword fights.	C Nova	2016	20
19	Angel by Henry Naylor(****) This solo performance has a Syrian teenage girl is suddenly trained by her father to defend their orchard, and then is thrust into the current conflict. This story reveals both the plight of all of the non-combatants in a war with fluid front lines, and the sexual abuse of girls in the war. The play has a great mix of adventure and cultural revelations.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2016	25
20	Dark Vanilla Jungle (****) A neglected 15-year old girl finds solace in the arms an older man who takes advantage of her. This is a very intense play as the girl creates an ever more fantastical world to deal with her own horrific experiences. I had rated this among the best plays a few years ago, and the acting was again excellent this time, but I think the stage direction having her move among the audience really diminished the sense of isolation that gave the original so much power.	C Nova	2016	20
21	Underminded (****) In 1984, a young coal miner tells of his experiences during the long strike when Thatcher decided to close many of the coal pits. Whether describing the confusion and retreat in the face of a mounted police, or confronting his best friend who becomes a scab, each scene has the details and depth of emotion to keep me always focused on the story. This darker version of the events was all the more interesting as a counterpoint to Mark Thomas' celebratory version of the events in "Mark Thomas: The Red Shed"	Zoo	2016	15

22	Mark Thomas: The Red Shed (****) For the 50th anniversary of his hometown's socialist social club, the activist comedian agreed to provide speakers and learn whether his own memory of a miner's march is accurate. Thomas is his usual sincere and thorough self while presenting the tale of his search in a very entertaining way.	Traverse	2016	6
23	Meet Fred (****) A three-person, two-foot tall puppet comes alive when he is lifted from his box, talks with the play's director, and then tries to get a job through a council employment bureau. The mix of his awareness of both his self and his three puppeteers, and the difficulties of making his way with humans and the huge physical world is both great fun, and touching at times. A key moment is when his Puppet Allowance is reduced by the job counselor, and he must decide which puppeteer must be fired.	Summerhall	2016	14
24	The Bookbinder (****) With just a few books, some knickknacks, and a desk lamp as props, a bookbinder of olde tells a wondrous tale of an apprentice who falls into another world where he learns to not take shortcuts in his job. This is a well honed tale by a personable and expressive fellow that is suited to both adults and grammar school children. The large pop-up book and simple shadow work seem perfectly suited to the story in this small venue.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	4
25	A Tale of Two Cities: Blood for Blood (****) This play has virtually nothing to do with the Dickens story, and is instead about a French mother whose son was run over by a nobleman vows to kill all of his descendants after the French Revolution. The seven cast members create a world of many characters with their own subplots that all contribute to the overarching story. I loved how all the pieces finally come together to make the finale perfectly plausible.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	16

26	Love, Lies, and Taxidermy (****) While his father futilely tries to re-unite with his mother, a young man falls in love with a woman whose father's ice cream truck business is failing. From porn bathtub scenes to selling stuffed animals on E-bay, each solution to their problems is quirky but realistic. Though the story has its share of shady dealings, it makes sure to avoid the black and white trap, and utilizes the winning chemistry of the three actors to the fullest.	Summerhall	2016	17
27	Growth (****) After a girlfriend notices a bump on one of his testicles, a down and out young man constantly imagines the worst. His interactions with his family and the NHS mine the serious aspects of his situation while providing both caring and amusing support. Though long awaited, the finale provides a satisfying conclusion that addresses his greatest need.	Summerhall	2016	8
28	Moscow Boys (****) A string quartet plays a wide range of music while dancing. The music ranges from classical to themes from James Bond movies to Pink Floyd, and the dancing ranges from physical theater to tap. Though the four men are always engaging, much of the last 20 minutes offered little new.	Zoo Southside	2016	28
29	Saturday Night Forever (****) Well after breaking up with his boyfriend over dancing, a man thinks he meets a less flamboyant man of his dreams. The romance is lovingly slow and well told without being too graphic. I know it is a minor point, but I was impressed by the versatility of six light towers composed of lines of LEDs that were used to both create the club scene backdrops, and emphasize emotional states.	Underbelly Med Quad	2016	18

30	The Six-Sided Man (****) To charge of one's life, a therapist advocates using a die to choose from an intentionally wider range of six choices created by his patient. While the idea is well conceived, the real charm of the show is having the two men interact as they mime through a whole romance for the patient over a series of sessions. The age and professionalism of the actors brings a gravitas to the show that a young cast could not achieve.	Assembly Roxy	2016	24
31	Small Hours(****) Two twenty-something close friends review their many late hour chats. I found most touching a scene where one woman starts to sing "their" song, and must start again before her friend finally gives in and shares the song.	C Nova	2016	3
32	A Regular Little Houdini (****) In the working man's world of early 20th century Newport, Wales, a young man attempts to emulate his escape artist idol. Though Daniel LLewelyn-Williams does do a couple of magic tricks, he relies on apt descriptions of his training to really convey the boy's determination. Williams also works hard to bring the life of the dockworkers at the time, but he switches characters too subtly at times.	Pleasance Dome	2016	20
33	Waves (****) In the 1930s, an Australian girl living on a very small island learns to swim by trying to emulate a series of sea creatures. This is a heartwarming story of a naïve child overcoming a fear of the sea, and growing stronger as she adapts to it. We were so mesmerized by the tale that we had not realized it was fiction until we researched it.	Summerhall	2016	23
34	Horse McDonald in Careful (****) Horse gives a deeply felt account of her life as an outsider when gays were persecuted by fellow students, doctors, and people in general. She tells poignant stories of hiding in her room to escape the bullying, dealing with a damaged vocal cord, and, after 50 years, discovering her soul mate. With snippets of her songs punctuate the stories and highlight her exceptional voice, the with only the section dealing with the death of her parents	Gilded Balloon at the Museum	2016	3

35	One, Two, Three, Yippee (****) The three young adult children have their ineffective lives changed when their rough crime boss father returns to town, and reasserts his power over it with terrible violence. Each of his children responds to his return in quite different ways, and learn that suddenly becoming powerful may not make their lives better. I was impressed with sheer power of self that the father exuded in all situations.	theSpace at Surgeons Hall	2016	6
36	Equations for a Moving Body (****) Hannah Nicklin tells of her life as it relates to her two year goal of participating in an Ironman triathlon. She keeps this interesting by mixing descriptions of her training regimen with anecdotes from her dealings with the other people involved in the sport. I was touched by her tribute to John Lam, a professional snowboarder who died snowboarding after he helped her train for the marathon part of the triathlon by running alongside her.	Summerhall	2016	14
37	Michael Griffiths: Cole (****) The pianist/singer presents Cole Porter's life while singing many of his hits. Both his voice and playing suited to his role as the wealthy, erudite composer. I particularly liked that instead of medleys he chose to play extended versions of songs that included less frequently heard verses.	Assembly George Square	2016	17
38	Kursk (****) In 2000, a British submarine is tasked to find and photograph a new Russian submarine that is somewhere in the Bering Sea. With a cast of seven in diverse roles, this show provides an excellent view of life aboard a modern submarine with all of its privations and complex routines. The only false note is the captain's explicit self-doubt on a couple occasions.	Bedlam Theatre	2016	25

39	Jane Eyre: An Autobiography (****) Rebecca Vaughn portrays Jane all the way from childhood to her marriage to Master Rochester. Even though I was not familiar with the story, I found her story clear, and always interesting. Unlike other Vaughn ventures, the script leaves her room to breathe and take the time act instead of rushing to get all of the words into the time slot.	Assembly Roxy	2016	21
40	Mrs. Roosevelt Flies to London (****) In 1942, the wife of President Franklin Roosevelt comes to Britain as his eyes and ears to learn of the country's condition and to promote plans for improvements after the war ends. The play does a good job of balancing the tales from her actual trip and her life story with FDR. At each stop, her short speeches made it clear that she appreciated the efforts by the men, and particularly women workers.	Assembly Hall Mound	2016	6
41	Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu Two) (****) The five comedic pieces for this menu are: 1) a wife and her clown husband visit a marriage counselor; 2) two separate couples carry on conversations that have phrases that coincide despite having opposite tenors; 3) a crime mob's traditional killer and his wife discuss an odd request from his boss; 4) an elderly rural couple argue over the arrival of a mule in their front yard; and 5) two policemen callously deal with widow of man killed by a bear.	Pleasance Dome	2016	7
42	Queen Lear (****) Like Stoppard's "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead," this show takes minor characters of a Shakespeare play, and lets them elaborate on their events. Here we have King Lear's wife suffering through a painful, overlong, pregnancy being attended by a physician and a midwife who are both caring and loyal. The whole story is both tender, and tragic.	Assembly Roxy	2016	9

43.F	Buzz: A New Musical (****) This story combines a history of personal vibrators with a woman trying to get over her musician lover jilting her. This is definitely not a show for everybody, but it was just great fun for both of us. A large part of its success rests with the winning personality of the lead as she participates in almost all of the scenes.	Greenside at Infirmary Street	2016	23
44	The Pianist (****) This time the physical theater artist Thomas Monckton of "Only Bones" plays a concert pianist who must deal with Murphy's Law to the extreme. His challenges range from the initial curtain having no entry seam to a piano leg that falls off to piano stool that is too high. Monckton is a master of exploring the comic possibilities of any situation.	Assembly Roxy	2016	29
45	Hess (****) Derek Crawford Munn plays an old Rudolf Hess, Hitler's deputy, serving a life sentence in Spandau Prison who presents his autobiography and his ultra-nationalist views. The fellow next to me whispered to me that he thought Hess a psychopath, but I think Munn was persuasive in showing how a well educated man like Hess could reasonably believe that totalitarian nationalism was a legitimate path for Germany after World War I. The play provides a finely wrought portrayal of a complex man who not only help found Nazi Germany, but independently tried to sue for peace with Britain, and was found innocent of the crimes of the Holocaust.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2016	13
46	Breakfast Plays: How to Ruin Someone's Life from the Comfort of Your Own Beanbag (****) A hacker walks through the use of Internet resources to find out about someone, and then declare them dead. As a Computer Scientist, I found it illuminating as well as scary. Just another way we can harm each other.	Traverse	2016	25

47	Diary of a Madman (****) When his son takes a break, the sole painter of the Forth Bridge accepts a university intern to replace him, and live in his bedroom. The story and acting were fine, but I had trouble understanding the lead at times because of his accent. The devastating finding of the intern was a great plot twist.	Traverse	2016	11
48	Care Takers (****) A new drama teacher takes her concerns that a student is being bullied to her unsympathetic assistant head teacher. The acting is superb, the ratcheting up of their tension precise, and the finale well conceived. However, the supervisor was so unnecessarily craven, and bigoted that she seemed a straw man instead of a real person.	C	2016	23
49	Teatro Delusio (****) With mute performers wearing masks, and manipulating a multi-person puppet, this show has three backstage workers at an opera house dealing with a wide range of performers as well as each other. The variety of masks and the performers ability to communicate despite their immobility were a delight. The show does seem to go on a bit long, as evidenced by the audience readily applauding when they mistook a fake curtain call as the real end.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	24
50	Blush (****) This two hander explores how sexual interactions on the Internet can damage people. Though one story covers disrespectful tweets, the bulk of the show looks at how nude selfies can be abused. The main problem for the show is that the shifts among the female characters are often not clear.	Underbelly Cowgate	2016	26
51	Penny Arcade : Loving Lasts Longer (****) The performance artist gives her own take on her life and the events of the decades, and dispenses advice and how to be more satisfied with one's life by rejecting the social norms. She certainly has a presence on stage, but I was left the impression that her advice suited her own life much more than that of the audience that supports her.	Assembly Checkpoint	2016	5

52	Bricking It (****) A young woman and her 73-year old contractor father combine to create a show of their lives by him telling stories and dad gags, and her building a brick wall on stage. This is not great theater, but the love and respect that the father and daughter have permeates the whole show to make it sweet but not saccharine. A good example of this was the gentle way she gave him stage directions between some scenes.	Pleasance Dome	2016	5
53	9 to 5 (****) This musical is a faithful adaptation of the 1980 film that has three female office workers stage a secretly usurp their male chauvinist boss. The choreography and singing are fine, but this comes across as a musical based on the title song. It seemed that it was always playing in the background, and all of the new songs paled by comparison.	Assembly Mound	2016	12
54	The Humble Heart of Komrade Krumm (****) In 4016, after a series of ice and hot ages, twelve chilly middle ages like people gather to tell and sing the tale of a girl as she seeks the temple of the heroic Komrade Krumm to help save Great Britain. The show rotates through communal songs, a translated descriptions of the quest, and fantastical stories of the 21st century's Komrade Krumm's bravery in space and war. The early, beautifully sung song about how Great Britain has better trees and mountains than anywhere else sets the tone for a tongue in cheek production that requires a lot of suspension of disbelief by the audience.	Bedlam Theatre	2016	7

55	Us/Them (****) Two teenagers re-create the experience of the 777 children hostages during the three-day Chechnyan terrorist siege of their Russian school in 2004. From the initial chalk drawings of the school layout to the lads embarrassment at taking his shirt off in the hot gym in front of the girl, the two do a beautiful job of evoking the atmosphere of a grammar school. The re-enactment of the terrorists switching the man with his foot on the trigger for the many bombs every two hours maintained the sense of threat throughout the piece.	Summerhall	2016	17
56	Glasgow Girls (****) This musical is based on the true story of five high school girls who lead a protest against the attempted deportation of their asylum seeking friend. While the story is certainly heart warming, most of the songs and many of the lines were unintelligible to my American ears. I was left with the feeling that the show relied more on the audience's reaction to the actual events and less on anything particularly outstanding in their portrayal.	Assembly Mound	2016	12
57	The Club (****) Partners in a 1990s nightclub must deal with a debt that is due a dangerous loan shark. What starts out as a crass druggy story quickly changes into an exploration of a quirky and deep friendship. These guys seem shallow, initially but by the end, I really treasured their friendship.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2016	29
58	En Folkefiende (***) A scientist discovers that the local spa is poisonous, but her brother, the mayor, tries to force her to squash the report to protect the town's economic interest. The play does an excellent job of revealing the political machinations in the face of unpleasant truths. The glass cube set was an interesting idea, but the failure of some characters' microphones meant that many in the audience could not hear them.	Pleasance Dome	2016	16

59	Fabric (***) A working girl marries a posh guy, and then gets raped by his close friend. Great acting, but I was tired of seeing so many rapes and abuses of women at this years Fringe.	Underbelly Cowgate	2016	27
60	The Wives of Others (***) Seven mobster women family members get together while their husbands and fathers hit another gang. The matter-of-fact conversations among the crass Italians is fun, and the plot twists keep things interesting. However, I found the final act tedious with its long harangue by a daughter, extended needling by a threatened cop, and predictable blood bath.	C	2016	20
61	The View from Castle Rock by Alice Munro (***) In 1818, a Scottish family sails to Canada.	artSpace at St. Mark's	2016	26
62	William Shakespeare's Long Lost First Play (abridged) (***) The veteran comedy trio try to condense all of Shakespeare's plays into one that has an overarching plot of Puck and Ariel trying to outdo each other by monkeying around with the other characters. This gives them the opportunity to make clever changes to a wide range of well known passages, but also requires them to make endless costume changes that become tedious. The big flaw is that the enmity between Puck and Ariel feels too contrived and cannot hold the pieces together.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	23
63	Travesty (***) This two hander has a standard romance story where boy meets girl, they decide to live together, and then they grow apart, except that the boy is played by a woman, and the girl is played by a man. The sincere and witty script tries hard to ignore the gender switch, and leaves it to the audience to note any situations that seem awkward physically. For me, I noticed that the actor often held the actress' face which seems uncommon to me.	Assembly George Square	2016	22

64	Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu Three) (***) This menu has five plays: 1) at an audition an actress must contend with an abusive casting director; 2) a married couple deal with their unsuccessful attempt at sado/masochism; 3) a man whose been alone on a large spaceship for many years finally has contact from intelligent life; 4) vignettes exploring where a woman responds to a man speaking to her through her front door; and 5) a business meeting with a leader who drones on and on.	Pleasance Dome	2016	4
65	Big Bite-Size Breakfst Show (Menu One) (***) This menu has six plays: 1) a team leader tries to teach how to collect for a cat charity; 2) two political prisoners don't trust each other; 3) two women practice a kidnapping; 4) a global Internet company supplies the things you want without you having to order them; 5) a man can always see two minutes into his future; and 6) three high school kids argue that Hamlet was gay. Though all were entertaining, only 4 and 6 were the least bit thought provoking.	Pleasance Dome	2016	26
66	Playing Maggie… The Iron Lady (***) Pip Upton plays another actor who impersonates Margaret Thatcher. The play flows from his dressing room to performance as Maggie, and then, in a further departure from such shows, he/she takes questions for Thatcher from the audience for a full half hour. His answers are well reasoned within Thatcher's philosophy, and he rarely ducks difficult questions.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	9
67	Oliver Reed: Wild Thing (***) Robert Crouch portrays the actor as he careens through life drinking and wenching with commoners and celebrities at every turn. Starting with four real beers, Crouch takes on the role with a gusto suited perfectly to his subject. The amount of liquid he consumes in the hour is amazing, and serves as a touchstone to the excesses of the man.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2016	14

68	Mark Thompson's Spectacular Science Show (***) Though this science show is oriented toward children, it was a wonderful reminder of those science demonstrations of my childhood. The experiments varied from Alka-Seltzer powered film canister rockets to pouring super chilled water to create ice stalagmites to a Whamo-blaster made of a garbage bin and a table cloth that shot smoke rings across the room. I was never bored, and often amazed.	Gilded Balloon at the Museum	2016	13
69	Van Gogh Find Yourself (***) Walter DeForest takes on the persona of Vincent Van Gogh magically transported to 2016 as he sketches members of the audience, and relates aspects of Van Gogh's life in response to questions. While his sketchers are not in the style of Van Gogh, he does a remarkable job of staying in character and weaving in a fairly complete (auto)biography of the painter. Along the way, he asserts that both the slicing of his ear, and the gunshot that killed him were the actions of others who he chose to protect.	Natural Food Kafe	2016	14
70	Panti: High Heels in Low Places (***) The Irish drag queen tells colorful tales full of allusions to gay sex of how he became the national symbol for LGBT rights in Ireland.	Traverse	2016	11
71	Bubble Schmeisis (***) A Jewish boy goes to summer camp, and is taken by his grandfather to his first steam bath.	Summerhall	2016	25
72	Rose of Jericho (***) The son of an abuser becomes a soldier and tries to curb his violent tendencies towards his wife though four tours of duty in the world's trouble spots. Great acting, but I was tired of hearing of abusers at this year's Fringe	theSpace at Surgeons Hall	2016	25
73	Stories to Tell in the Middle of Night (***) Like a late night DJ, Francesca Millican-Slater calmly tells innumerable stories ranging from a man who starts to walk around his block each morning to "keep the world turning" to another fellow who creates valentines between two people based on the contents of their bins.	Summerhall	2016	28

74	Milk (***) This play has three stories that are only tangentially related to each other: 1) the daughter of a prostitute tries get her friend to show he cares for her; 2) an elderly couple cling to each other as he becomes fearful of the world; and 3) a couple must deal with an unhappy baby. The tales are diverse and fresh with fine acting throughout. However, the punishment for the father, and his wife's reluctance to get help over such a long period of time both seemed veer from reality.	Traverse Theatre	2016	19
75	Le Bossu (***) This is a clean retelling of "The Hunchback of Notre Dame." Esmeralda was beautiful and exotic, Quasimodo sincere and naïve, and Archdeacon Frollo stern and conflicted.	Bedlam Theatre	2016	7
76	A Boy Named Sue (***) A young teenager who pimps himself online finds comfort in the flat of a gay doctor who is concerned about his reclusive lover. Each of the three is leery of the world, and must find a way to re-connect with their significant others. The choice to have the doctor living in an unrealistic flat with glass exterior walls (whether metaphorical or not) diminishes the realism of the play, and with that it's power.	C Nova	2016	10
77	Poena 5X1 (***) A businesswoman/scientist presents a talk about a drug that can be used to punish people by causing nightmares. Though the story starts out exploring the ethical issues when dealing with criminals, it veers off into a less interesting story that is more personal to the scientist. In hindsight, the play starts of poorly with her having to deal with inexplicable problems with her video presentation.	Underbelly Med Quad	2016	20

78	Guy Masterson: Love and Canine Integration (***) Actor/director Masterson turns his talents to performing a stand-up routine based on his courtship of his German wife who was an international model, and then dealing with her dog from hell. His tale of wooing is endearing partly because he reveals how it was she who seems to be in control instead of this usually dominant man. Though he offers dad gags as one intermission, his use of Barbie and Ken dolls is a sexually crude form of blackout for the overlong, repetitive tale about her dog.	Assembly Roxy	2016	3
79	Last Call (***) A woman narrates a Dutch graphic novel following a day in the life of a young woman that is presented on a video screen while a pianist accompanies her. This unique production had interesting moments, but had troubles keeping a good pace as the complexity of the panels varied widely. The subplot with car keys made little sense.	Summerhall	2016	16
80	Nel (***) At the behest of her boss and friends, a content foley artist tries to change her life by becoming more outgoing. He exploration of sound effects was novel and charming.	Pleasance Dome	2016	3
81	The remains of Tom Lehrer (performed by Adam Kay) (***) Kay talks about the ditty writer/performer's life, and presents many of his songs. This was probably a very good show, but I had a headache that made it difficult to concentrate.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2016	28

82	A Series of Unfortunate Breakups (***) This show has three independent couples in different stages of relationships breakup: 1) a young teen "breaks up" with her boyfriend (even though he didn't know they were a couple) because she thinks a rock star has the hots for her; 2) a fresher discovers that her boyfriend of three months is a narcissist who readily sleeps around; and 3) after being unfaithful to his long term girlfriend, a fellow spends a year trying to rebuild the relationship. While the Lothario story had unbelievable characters who were played for cheap laughs, the other two stories had their touching moments mixed with some light touches. A letter supposedly written by rock star was doubling touching in revealing her naiveté, and her friend's hidden feelings.	C Nova	2016	21
83	Growing Pains (***) Using rap and some songs a fellow tells of his leaving an abusive father and unsupportive friends, going to London, and finding the girl of his dreams. Too familiar.	Underbelly Cowgate	2016	26
84	Life by the Throat (***) The son of an abuser becomes a petty criminal, and waits until his late 30s to turn his life around. Another play that seems all too familiar.	Underbelly Cowgate	2016	26
85	O is for Hoolet (***) A woman answers questions about the Scots dialect. Handing out the pre-written questions seemed a waste of time.	Scottish Storytelling Centre	2016	29
86	I Keep a Woman in My Flat Chained to a Radiator (***) The woman and her jailer work together to prepare a meal for his dinner date that evening. She is never mistreated, and chooses to be chained, but there is no element of S&M to be seen.	Zoo	2016	29

87	House and Amongst the Reeds (***) This show presents two independent stories: 1) after five years, an ostracized daughter returns for her mother's birthday; and 2) a homeless pregnant Vietnamese girl finds support in an upbeat Black girl. The interactions between the two daughters and their hard mother is riveting, and enough for any show. The second, less complex, play pales by comparison.	Assembly George Square	2016	18
88	Escape from the Planet of the Day that Time Forgot (***) This spoof has a 1930s scientist, his young female assistant, and a college student climb aboard an ironing board spaceship to search for the source of an unusual meteorite. For the most part, they keep a light touch with many quips that maintains the tone. A couple sequences are overlong, and a second expedition has little to add.	Assembly Roxy	2016	13
89	Nicole Henriksen is Makin' It Rain (***) Nicole alternates between one of her strip tease routines and telling of her life as a stripper. She does a good job of asserting that all women in the various levels of the sex trade deserve to be treated fairly without prejudice. However, the tales from her non-professional life feel like just another self-indulgent Fringe autobiography.	Underbelly Cowgate	2016	8
90	Daffodils (A Play with Songs) (***) In New Zealand an engaging young man marries a quirky farm girl, but they find that their life is twisted by his father's adultery. This seemed like a play that was good, but should have been presented in a Fringe venue other than the Traverse.	Traverse	2016	11
91	Cosmic Fear or the The Day Brad Pitt Got Paranoia (***) Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie, and a movie producer work through a seemingly endless series of movie scenarios starring Pitt addressing the global climate change.	Bedlam Theatre	2016	7

92	Three for Two by Phil Booth (***) This show is composed of three independent stories: 1) a house painter negotiates the price his client must pay to photograph him; 2) an older, wealthy gay must deal with his doubts about his young lover; and 3) a footballer's butler is conflicted about the player's indiscretions. These are good clean plays that are well acted, but nothing sets them apart.	Zoo	2016	15
93	How is Uncle John? (***) This two hander has a smitten teenager go to Italy with her Greek lover only to be forced into the sex trade while her mother copes with her disappearance by limiting herself to her own house.	Assembly Hall Mound	2016	4
94	A Good Clean Heart (***) A Welsh adopted teenager goes to London to meet his brother and mother for the first time. Though his is half-brother is of Jamaican descent, that is decidedly secondary to his urban naiveté.	Underbelly Cowgate	2016	6
95	Delphine (***) A meek, naïve 30-year old woman tells of her experiences with her first boyfriend that started just four months ago.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	28
96	Royal Vauxhall (***) In 1988, Princess Diana, Freddy Mercury, and Kenny Everett head over to the Royal Vauxhall Tavern to party.	Underbelly Med Quad	2016	25
97	Discretion Guaranteed (***) Cast of four assault the audience with a wide range of scenes that all have to deal with aspects of the phone sex industry. Powerful at times, but uneven and unfocused.	Paradise in the Vault	2016	25
98	Deal with the Dragon (***) This solo show has a dragon/devil character in human form encourage an artist to greater accomplishments. This update of the Dr. Faustus story set in San Francisco works well. His German accent added a subtle air of menace to the dragon character.	C Nova	2016	21
99	Swansong (***) Global warming has left four people in a pedal boat in the middle of an ocean trying to figure out what they should write in a diary. It was cute at times, but in the end it was just fluff.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	28

100	Agent of Influence: The Secret Life of Pamela Moore (***) In the late 1930s, a high society journalist is recruited to help determine if Edward VIII is spying for the NAZIs. The initial idea of her doing an in depth piece on Wallace Simpson as cover made perfect sense, but having her jump out of a plane to retrieve a bathing suit strained credulity beyond the breaking point. Similarly, there was no need for her to disrobe.	Underbelly Cowgate	2016	19
101	Foehn Effect (***) A young woman tells of her robbery and rape at knife point in the Canary Islands, and dealing with the authorities and her family afterwards. Though powerful, and well told, there was nothing new here for me.	C nova	2016	14
102	Bucket List (***) The daughter of Mexican woman killed for protesting work conditions vows the kill the people responsible. The play does a good job of conveying the squalor of the maquiladora towns along the Mexican border, and the protagonist is powerful in her role. However, her character and the play are overambitious when they spend time dealing with international leaders.	Pleasance Dome	2016	17
103	Northanger Abbey (***) This adaptation of the Jane Austen novel using a raft of puppets playing the secondary characters worked pretty well even for someone who did not know the story. Despite its brevity, the play succeeds in connecting the critical parts of the story in a sensible manner. I must admit that I did doze in a couple of the quieter passages, but my companions thoroughly enjoyed it.	Underbelly Cowgate	2016	19
104	Touch Therapy (***) Based on an event in 1975, a therapist to treat a lesbian wife by forcing her to have sex with her husband. While the skittishness of the wife worked well, adding a repulsion to being touched at all seemed to push her issue beyond that of just being a lesbian.	Paradise in the Vault	2016	15

105	Breakfast Plays: The Girl in the Machine (***) A junior partner in a law firm is tasked with dealing with the legal problems arising from an app that creates new music from the music of dead song writers, but also offers to upload the user's mind.	Traverse	2016	28
106	A Number by Caryl Churchill (***) A man must deal with a series of clones of his dead son, each with a different level of acceptance of his situation.	C nova	2016	27
107	Overshadowed (***) A high school girl asserts control over her life by choosing to become anorexic at the behest of a beguiling, rhyming monster. Each of the portrayals of her sister, mother, and boyfriend seem spot on, but the scene in which she makes the choice because of a spoiled math homework doesn't provide enough background for such a momentous decision. She was supposedly quite popular in school, and yet she has no close friend in which to confide.	Assembly Roxy	2016	13
108	All the Things I Lied About (***) A young woman presents a survey of the lies she tells from white lies to being unfaithful to her lovers. She explored the topic reasonably well, but the show deteriorated when she got the audience involved with squirt guns.	Summerhall	2016	10
109	Breakfast Plays: The Conversation (***) The playwright Rob Drummond gets drunk and has a conversation with an online chatBot about a wide range of subjects. As a computer scientist, I could understand the logic underlying her answers.	Traverse	2016	27
110	Hair of the Dog with Village Pub Theatre, Aug 8 (***) Five short plays read script in hand all dealing with relationships between couples.	Traverse	2016	8
111	Hair of the Dog with Village Pub Theatre, Aug 15 (***) Five short plays read script in hand all dealing with the aftermath of a long night of drinking.	Traverse	2016	15

112	Hair of the Dog with Village Pub Theatre, Aug 15 (***) Five short plays read script in hand all dealing with disoriented people. Because of the topic, three of the plays were just too incoherent for me. The one gem had two aliens from another planet tasting Edinburgh pub life.	Traverse	2016	22
113	Breakfast Plays: Bin Head (***) After being ejected from a bar a woman talks with a paranoid man who is afraid to take his head out of a bin.	Traverse	2016	26
114	Adventures of a Redheaded Coffeshop Girl(***) A young Canadian woman serves an internship with Jane Goodall in her chimpanzee compound.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2016	6
115	The Gin Chronicles: A Scottish Adventure (***) After treating us to a gin and tonic, we are treated to a 1947 radio mystery in which NAZIs are trying to steal all of the juniper berries in Scotland. The four actors and sound effects fellow try to maintain the whimsy, but there a many lapses. The final fight scene is particularly worthless.	artSpace at St Mark's	2016	19
116	In Tents and Purposes (***) Two twentysomething women have divergent career paths with one succeeding, and the other still looking for a job after ten years.	Assembly George Square	2016	10
117	In Fidelity (***) Rob Drummon asks single volunteers to come on stage, pares them down to two, and then asks them questions concerned with dating and fidelity. The questions range from their opinions to facts about their very personal lives. In general, I find audience participation shows to feel like a cheap thrill at the participants' expense, and this show has that distasteful quality.	Traverse	2016	4
118	A Common Man: The Bridge That Tom Built (***) An actor presents the life of the Thomas Paine, the American Revolutionary War writer and orator. This is a straightforward mix of history and biography that was informative and entertaining enough	C Nova	2016	5

119	Expensive Shit (***) Set in a Nigerian night club bathroom, its attendant and three other women scheme to escape their lives by "pulling" a man, or developing impressive dance routines.	Traverse	2016	4
120	Calisto: A Queer Epic (***) Four independent stories from across time are interleaved: 1) An lesbian post-Elizabethan actress' lover poses as her husband; 2) Turing dealing with his deceased lover's mother; 3) a 1980s Nebraska woman leaves her husband to make porn films in California; and 4) in the distant future a man only has only a male android to keep him company. The stories are so diverse that the interweaving requires that small cast to make many costume changes that would be unnecessary if they would present the stories as an anthology. As is, the interleaving reduces the flow and impact of each.	Pleasance Dome	2016	22
121	Philip Pullman's The Ruby in the Smoke (***) This murder mystery has a young woman victim trying to follow the clues in a letter to find a ruby left to her by her slain father. The tale is confusing because it has just too many plot twists to fit into its one hour slot. Add another hour, and it could be very good.	Pleasance Dome	2016	15
122	Driftwood (***) Five gymnasts/acrobats try to amalgamate dance and circus routines. At its heart, this is a series of short circus acts separated by short movement pieces that add nothing. Particularly worthless were the five sections where each actor has their chance to interact with a lamp that is lowered from the ceiling in their own uninspired way.	Assembly George Square	2016	24
123	Wil Greenway: The Way the City Ate the Stars (***) Greenway, with an occasional assist from singer and a guitarist presents a tale of an unrequited lover and an uncle responding to an accidental request for help from a woman in labor. Wil is a good storyteller, but there is nothing exceptional here. His two assistants contributed nothing other than a way to create space between sections of the stories.	Underbelly Med Quad	2016	22

124	Private Manning Goes to Washington (***) The computer programmer/activist Aaron Swartz asks a friend to help him write a play that would have Chelsea Manning confront President Obama about his approach to whistle blowing. I was pleased that the friend was allowed to voice an argument damning Manning's action, but it was clear that the playwright sided with the whistle blower. But the real problem was that the two men were just cyphers for a debate, and had no real lives.	theSpace on Niddry St.	2016	24
125	Greater Belfast (***) Matt Regan "sings" and speaks of Belfast as a string quartet plays in the background. The quartet was beautiful, but I could rarely understand his him, and found his songs repetitive and jarring. However, my Scottish friend found that "the blend of emotive language and beautiful music conveying the atmosphere of Belfast created a wonderful theatrical experience."	Traverse	2016	4
126	Perfidious Lion (***) For this solo show Bettine Mackenzie is always in the character of a high strung widow creating a formal dinner party for five friends in the servant quarters of her rundown manor. From her inconsiderate interactions with her Columbian maid to her snide remarks to the façade of normality Mackenzie creates a seamless and believable character. But single perspective is the downfall of the play as we have no explanation for all of the other character's odd reactions to her.	Underbelly Cowgate	2016	4
127	E15(***) A group of pregnant women refuse to be evicted from their council hostel, and promote an ongoing protest promoting use of boarded up houses that are in fine condition.	Summerhall	2016	9

128	Villain (***) For me, this one woman show had three characters: an understanding social worker who rushed between clients, the title character who had been reviled in the media for her crime, and a successful telemarketer who begins to doubt her job. In reality there were only two characters, but the poor delineation and chaotic time stream made this difficult to apprehend.	Underbelly Med Quad	2016	11
129	Jules Verne's 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea (***) In the mid 19th century, two survivors of a naval attack are taken aboard Captain Nemo's amazing submarine, and then given a tour of the undersea world. This show is not as entertaining as "Lighthouse at the End of the World" because of there is less action, and the settings are more limited.	C Nova	2016	27
130	Erik Satie's – Faction (***) Alistair McGowan plays a 50-year old Satie who talks a little about his adult life, and plays works by Satie and Debussy. The music was nice, though a bit repetitive, but I expected more facts about his life instead of impressions.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	28
131	Save + Quit (***) This show has two independent two-handers with the first having a new grammar school teacher deal with her workload outside the classroom, and a young man deciding to sell a treasured X-box. The second story again had a man and woman, but the plot evaded both my companion and me.	Assembly George Square	2016	23
132	Tank (***) In the middle 1960s, an inexperienced girl helps John Lilly to try to teach English to dolphins. The mix of cast hijinks and dolphin abuse did not sit well with me. It certainly seemed that the supposedly recorded "verbatim" words of the teacher should never have been acceptable to her superiors.	Pleasance Dome	2016	18
133	Allison After a Fire (***) After a forest fire destroys their home, a wife has trouble dealing the loss of animal life. This seemed like a one note story cthat moved too slowly for me.	Greenside at Infirmary Street	2016	23

134	How to Win Against History (***) This show depicts the life of Henry Paget, 5th Marquess of Anglesey after he inherited his vast family fortune in 1898, and how for the next seven years he spent much of it on furs, parties, and touring experimental theater in which he starred. The piece is constructed of a mostly series of scenes out plays with Paget always in a sequined dress joined by his actor/friend that range from dance hall routines to a narcissistic solo performance. While I understand the company choosing to present all the bizarre things the fellow did, keeping blue dressed persona throughout divorced it from reality, and started to bore me.	Assembly George Square	2016	18
135	Wonderman (***) In a World War II, a hospitalized injured Allied pilot repeatedly wakes up in his bed to find himself in surreal stories. The stories vary from a boarding house run by murderous landlady to a him being a country cook who is guided a slaughterhouse for pigs and people. Though the stories are diverse, the grand reveal does not seem to justify their common theme, nor the play itself.	Underbelly Potterrow	2016	13
136	The Sister (***) This character driven play explores submission and self-esteem as two sisters change their relationships with two men and each other as their sense of self wanes and waxes. The idea is interesting but the play was displaced too far from reality to draw me in. In particular, when one pair ran away from a pair of hand shadow animals, the play lost my attention.	Paradise in Augustines	2016	13
137	The Trial (***) This version of Kafka's story of a man who is charged with an unknown crime within an arcane criminal system has the protagonist driven by lust, and a sense of self-importance. His constant sexual antics detract from the intended feeling of futility.	Summerhall	2016	10

138	Bonita & Billie Holiday (***) Bonita re-enacts a performance of Billie Holiday right after she left prison. Whether Bonita was tired, or it was a directorial choice, the whole show felt subdued. The backstage scenes added little to our understanding of the woman, and her singing lacked both emotion and energy.	Assembly Roxy	2016	13
139	Infinity Pool: A Modern Retelling of Madame Bovary (***) A young woman uses a multimedia presentation, including slides of her texting, to tell the story of an adulterous woman. She was so serious about her task that it dampened the whole show for me.	Bedlam Theatre	2016	7
140	The Toyland Murders (***) An inspector and his sergeant investigate a series of murders in a muppet city. The premise sounds like fun, and much of the audience of the cast's friends enjoyed it, but it was surprisingly dull for me. It seems that production fell into the trap that loud music and yelling can replace character motivation and a real mystery plot.	Bedlam Theatre	2016	7
141	World Without Me (***) A woman recites a seemingly endless list of what the world would be like if mankind simply vanished now. The list was revealing at times, but since there is no action, I found myself closing my eyes and allowing her images to just flow through my consciousness as a stream.	Summerhall	2016	17
142	Circleville, Circlevalley (***) A friend of one of the participants disrupts the supportive environment of weekly drama therapy session of a therapist and three of her clients.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	8
143	Femage a Trois (***) Three women's stories. One about caring for senile demented father was interesting.	theSpace on Niddry St.	2016	26

144	Happy Together (***) A director "randomly" selects two "audience" members to perform a play using cue cards, while the show intersperses vignettes from the pair's future in reverse chronological order from 2020. While the acting was fine, the whole production was too "clever" by half as sometimes the cue cards were read and sometimes they were not, and the constant removal of set furniture slowed the progress of the show. The whole cue card and audience façade was superfluous, and the use of a spatula as a threatening knife lent an air of sloppiness to the production.	C Cubed	2016	21
145	Mr. Incredible (***) This solo show has a fellow repeatedly visiting a therapist and talking about how he misses his former girlfriend, Holly. This just seemed like an excuse for quips about modern times and relationships, with little depth. Even though he was supposedly talking to a therapist, he had no personal growth.	Underbelly Cowgate	2016	21
146	Another Fine Mess (***) Two men who have an act performing as Laurel and Hardy, along with a girlfriend, must deal with an illness of the Hardy actor. Besides the backstage drama, the show does provide a few short renditions of Laurel and Hardy routines as well as a few very soft shoe dances. It just seems that the illness pervades the whole show so that it seems slow and dull.	theSpace on the Mile	2016	24
147	The Nine Lives of Antoine de Saint-Expury (***) A fellow portrays the author of the "Little Prince" reviews his many exotic aviation related jobs while his female companion plays Death and his wife. I found his sensitive, breezy personality charming, but the storyline seemed a blur.	Assembly George Square	2016	22

148	Hurricane Michael (***) Adf plays the meteorologist Michael Fish who was tasked to improve the viewership of the BBC weather, but later failed to reported the impending arrival of a major hurricane. Adf plays down Fish's meteorological skill, and plays up his showmanship almost to slapstick levels. His use of audience members serves no purpose except to make the play needlessly silly.	Assembly George Square	2016	22
149	A Remarkable Person (***) A writer and her two alter egos try to figure out how to write a self-help book that will make her admired without the public seeing that that is her goal. The story highlights the conundrums of such books with their advice of "trying to play" or improving one's self by becoming selfless. While the initial scenes seem perceptive, the later ones seem just a re-hash of the thesis.	Pleasance Dome	2016	5
150	My Name is Gideon: Songs, Space Travel and Everything In-Between (***) Gideon is a singer/storyteller with a Rube Goldberg trunk who normally does house concerts. Though he has a winning personality, I was left with the feeling that I had just watched a busker who rented a room.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	21
151	Grace (***) The gymnast/acrobat Emma Serjeant plays a young woman who reviews her life as a photographer and lover as recoils from being hit by an automobile. Like "Driftwood," this show seemed to be a 15-minute circus act that was padded out to be an hour long play with a lot of replication throughout it. When she was not repeating the same phrases over and over again, most of her words were lost in the background music.	Assembly Checkpoint	2016	24
152	Last Dream (on Earth) (***) After being given headphones, we sit in a darkened room and hear looped music, and intermittent snippets of stories about the first man in space, and a seaborne emigration from Morocco. The music was nice, but nothing special, and the stories were so chopped up that they lost most of their impact.	Assembly Mound	2016	19

153	XX (***) Five performers use an algorithm to decide who will play whom in a series of ten duets, and which monologue each will do about love and relationships. Not surprisingly, there was no flow to the scenes, and the play was just a mess.	Paradise in the Vault	2016	28
154	Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again (***) This uneven show addresses revolution in many spheres of life. The chaotic approach was fitting for a revolution, but also meant much made little sense. However, both the initial scene that had a man and a woman try to describe their sexual plans in politically correct ways, and a later scene of a woman simply asking for Mondays off, were both great.	Traverse	2016	16
	On the Conditions and Possibilities of Hillary Clinton Taking Me as Her Young Lover (***) A young fellow presents a whimsical, but weak PowerPoint presentation argument based on the title.	Summerhall	2016	14
155	Denton and Me (***) A family friend of actor/playwright Sam Rowe gives him the fictionalized autobiography of the writer Denton Welch and is deeply influenced by his life and writing style. Though at times beautiful, the slow progress of the plot combined with the lousy acoustics of the Anatomy Lecture Theatre made it difficult for me to keep awake. There was flash in a tea cup that I never did understand.	Summerhall	2016	10
156	Ada/Ava by Manual Cinema (***) A multimedia presentation of a woman who must deal with the death of sister with whom she lives in a remote house. The dark story is accompanied by a cello and guitar that provide an unrelenting somber tone to the play that put me to sleep with its monotone.	Underbelly Potterrow	2016	8
157	Camille (***) This story of the sculptress Camille Claudel was just too sparse and arty for me.	Summerhall	2016	15

158	Troika (***) This is composed ten vignettes of sexual pairings with each using one person from the previous pair until the last contains one from the first. This version is updated from the original using modern situations and less overt sexual situations. The updates are interesting, but the tale loses some of its power without the raw equivalence that sex provides.	Space Triplex	2016	5
159	Partial Nudity (***) A cocky amateur male stripper shares a dressing room with a dismissive female professional stripper. After seeing "Nicole Henriksen is Makin' It Rain," this comes across as quite shallow.	Zoo	2016	15
160	Mr. Kingdom's Queen Victoria (***) Before assuming the title role, Kingdom admits that he could not get a handle on how to make the play, and the play reflects that. There is no thread to connect his chaotic presentation of the monarch.	Assembly Mound	2016	12
161	Immaculate (***) A woman discovers that she is pregnant even though she thinks she has not had sex for a year. She ends up having to deal with archangel Gabriel arguing with Lucifer, her former lover and his girlfriend.	C Nova	2016	5
162	The Auld Alliance (***) Just before the Battle of Waterloo, a French ship runs aground off the Fife coast, and the households nearby must deal with its survivor while searching for a chest of gold.	Mayfield Salisbury Church	2016	8
163	Tristram Shandy: Live at Scotland (***) The character created by Laurence Sterne in the middle 18th century, presents his life to a TV interviewer utilizing a large acting company. This farce did not work well for me because I had not read the books, and therefore the many allusions to the novels were lost on me. This one big inside joke that should be skipped unless you have read the books.	C Nova	2016	18
164	Parish F?te-ality: A Game of Scones (***) Farce about a priest trying to take over the world by murdering a town.	C	2016	26

165	I, Who Have Hands More Innocent (***) A woman recites selections of poetry in written by a Croatian in the 20th century that reflect her inferior position within that society. Because she recited in Croatian, we had to read supertitles that were, at times, faster than I could read. When she switched to perfect English for the last stanza, I wondered why she had not used English throughout—the sounds of Croatian are not exceptionally pleasing.	Zoo	2016	17
166	Heads Up (***) A man sits at a desk and shifts between the lives of four characters as global change alters many lives. This was just too dense, and confusing for me. Tim liked it though.	Summerhall	2016	16
167	Love for Sale (***) Accompanied by a pianist, Kelly Burke portrays a World War II chanteuse sings a seemingly endless medley of songs of drudgery. Her voice and the song selection lack range, and become boring quickly.	Assembly Mound	2016	14
168	Krapp 39 (***) Actor obsessing about become 39.	Pleasance Courtyard	2016	25
169	Echoes (***) Nine years after he leaves, a husband who returns to see his young daughter finds his path blocked by her strange mother. The story reveals the state of the dysfunctional marriage well, but devolves into an ill-founded horror show after that.	Zoo	2016	17
170	Be Prepared (**) A chaotic mish mash of man dealing with the death of his father at a funeral	Underbelly Cowgate	2016	26
171	Sweet Child of Mine (**) A 32-year old Australian tells of her pursuit of art through a mixture of videos of her parents talking to her, dance, and spoken word. Her father had toured with her for the past year, but told her only two weeks ago that he could not join her on stage in Edinburgh. Even had her father been with her, this would have still been a very self-centered show, though arty.	Gilded Balloon Te6viot	2016	3

172	Just by Ali Smith (**) A policeman arrests a girl as she is about to remove an umbrella from the back of a murder victim. From the production design to the script to the plot to the acting this is mediocre high school play at best. Don't bother unless you are relative of the cast.	Assembly George Square	2016	20
173	OwlTime (**) Contrary to the Fringe catalog description, this show has a man who really cannot dress himself presenting a disorganized argument about the ills of the world. The actor is sincere, but seems not quite all there.	C nova	2016	14
174	Lucy McCormick: Triple Threat (**) It seems like the goal of the show was to see how much gratuitous sex and food mess can be used in the portrayal of the life of Jesus. She interprets his anointing with oil by smearing mayonnaise on her body, has a male dancer/angel smear Nutella around her mouth before snogging and humping Judas, and lifts her leg so the audience can have a clear view of her repeatedly thrusting Doubting Thomas' fingers into her vagina to prove her Jesus has nail holes. I suppose she achieved her goal, but it seems like a waste of her talents.	Underbelly Cowgate	2016	13
175	MacBain (*) Courtney Love interviews her heroin addicted rock star husband Kurt Cobain, and then they provide their rendition of Macbeth. Though we often hear Shakespeare's words, their roles as Macbeth and his Lady hide with beauty with a lack of conviction and druggy hallucinations and rants. Though Macbeth is touchstone, the rambling, repetitive incoherence seemed interminable after just a half hour of its one and half hours!	Summerhall	2016	3

176	Skrimshanks (*) Two buffoons guide ten entering audience members onto the stage, and then leave them standing there for the whole hour while making fun of them. This was the most mean spirited show I have seen in years because they belittle people who were not even volunteers for such abuse. In the show I attended, they brow beat a meek fellow into throwing away his collection of flyers and then smeared lipstick on his forehead.	Assembly George Square	2016	17
1	A Girl is a Half-formed Thing (*****) A girl grows up with an older brother with brain cancer, an unhappy mother, and no father, and then a rape alters her whole life. This is the performance to see this year. Aoife Duffin moves easily from one character to another in an instant with subtlety, and yet clarity, even when but a word or two must be said before returning.	Traverse	2015	11
2	Jethro Compton's Frontier Trilogy: Blood Red Moon (*****) This first, and best, part of the trilogy has two dissimilar brothers coming West to pan for gold in a claim they purchased. This is a classic story of the Western genre with more complex interactions among the characters than most such movies allowed. The strengths and weaknesses of both men come to the fore at different times as their circumstances change. I should note that each story of the trilogy easily stands alone, but they are tangentially connected in chronological order.	C nova	2015	8

3	Jethro Compton's Frontier Trilogy: The Clock Strikes Noon (*****) The second part of the trilogy takes place in a two-room isolated church where a farmer and the sheriff prepare for an onslaught of gunmen hired by the rapacious railroad. As with the first story, the setting may be classic, but the addition of the daughter of the railroad's owner as a tough negotiator allows the story to transcend the clichés of the genre, and develop in novel ways. There are subtleties here, where each person can legitimately change their mind on important matters. I should note that each story of the trilogy easily stands alone, but they are tangentially connected in chronological order.	C nova	2015	8
4	I Went to a Fabulous Party (*****) A gay couple invite a bunch of gay men to their house for a party. Even though sex dominates the conversations and movements, the diverse cast finds ways to assert each of their individualities in catty and loving ways. I wish I could list each character because they combine into such a satisfying mélange despite or because of their diversity.	C too	2015	18
5	Out of the Blue (*****) The guys from Oxford were back with their great songs and choreographed hijinks for their best show in years. One of my traditions is to see them on the last day of the Fringe when they are decked out in kilts, and they are aware that it is their last concert before this group disbands. Besides the music, it is always touching to see their camaraderie.	Assembly George Square	2015	31

6	Jethro Compton's Frontier Trilogy: Rattlesnake Kiss (*****) After relishing the first two parts of the trilogy, this story of the padre of a small, isolated, church and a lawman looking for an outlaw provided a satisfying conclusion to the saga. As with the other two stories, there is no black hat or white hat here--everyone is both flawed and virtuous. In this case, the seeming treachery of a woman has repercussions for her and her victim that reverberate through the entire story. I should note that each story of the trilogy easily stands alone, but they are tangentially connected in chronological order.	C nova	2015	8
7	Love Birds (*****) The star attraction of a vaudeville troupe composed entirely of birds decides to leave, and the rest of the performers offer new acts that their conservative manager finds objectionable. With its strong voices, good lyrics, colorful costumes, catch tunes, smart choreography, and cute story, this show is ready to tour. The penguin barbershop quartet fulfill their Mary Poppins promise by being both harmonious and quick dancers.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	18
8	Doris, Dolly, and the Dressing Room Divas (*****) Three dressers and an expressive pianist provide short biographies and impersonated songs of Judy Garland, Doris Day, Julie Andrews, Liza Minelli, and Dolly Parton. Each singer captures the style of her celebrity with three familiar songs that enchanted the crowd. Besides the singers, I found that I enjoyed the wonderful expressions of their accomplished accompanist.	Assembly Hall	2015	16

9	The Paradise Project (*****) This two hander about creating utopian societies uses two modes: 1) reading short stories relating to the topic, and 2) having a couple spending weeks building and living in a fallout shelter to learn what rules to set and how to set them. Both the stories and the experiment proved thought provoking and worthy of long discussions afterwards. The story about a dying 400-year old tree served to highlight the uniqueness of this time, and the effort to set up a voting for just two people was both difficult and hilarious	Summerhall	2015	17
10	The Solid Life of Sugar Water (*****) A couple takes turns giving their impressions of their dates, time in bed, and dealing with her pregnancy. Even though he has a deformed arm and she is deaf those are irrelevant to the vast majority of the story. Their descriptions of their thinking during sex are graphic, and his more closely matched mine that I've ever heard or read.	Pleasance Dome	2015	30
11	Cornermen (*****) An unemployed trio of manager, trainer, and cutman, sign a young amateur boxer, and try to guide him to a championship. There is no actual boxing in this play, instead this is a story about the fight game from the vantage point of fight contracts, strategy sessions, and tactics during a fight. The ultimate fight is a chess game that reveals the loyalties of all involved.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	24
12	Ed Byrne – Outside Looking In (*****) Byrne provided his usual mix of funny stories that were full of sly wit. His stories ranged from bombing in front of bankers to a weeklong bout of diarrhea to dealing with people expressing their annoyance when he brings his kids into a Costa coffee shop. I loved his story of supporting his 4-year old boy's selection of sparkly pink trainers with hearts on them.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2015	30

13	Tomorrow (*****) We see the life in a home for senior citizens with diminished capacity that has a caring and experienced staff. I know that it sounds dull, but the staging using full head masks and the matter of factness of staff in the face of unusual behavior gives this a verisimilitude that often brought tears to my eyes. The initial assembly line for creating those masks and then handed to adults as if they were babies was a perfect metaphor for adults who find that they must care for parents who cannot care for themselves.	Traverse	2015	11
14	A Gambler's Guide to Dying (*****) Gary McNair recounts his grandfather's gambling philosophy, and how it influenced their close friendship. Of how to prolong a dream, and allowing a bet to energize a cancer ridden walk to death. The tale of his Scottish grandfather's mob beating in a bar after betting on England revealed a realist who was willing to accept both the winning and losing in life.	Traverse	2015	6
15	Foxfinder (*****) In a desperate future England, an ascetic foxfinder arrives at a farm to search for evidence of a fox infestation that is supposedly the source of all the ills of the nation. The parallel to Jews in Nazi Germany is obvious, but the play's strength lies in the three different ways the farmer, his wife, and the foxfinder respond to the fruitless search. I loved how the farmer's view of the government's response to the events in the finale was fantastical, and yet a probably a good prediction.	Bedlam Theatre	2015	9

16	Fully Committed starring Marcus Brigstocke (*****) Besides taking reservation requests for a restaurant, a harried telephone receptionist must deal with a demanding chef/owner, a remote matre d', and various interruptions from staff, friends, and family. Brigstocke does a remarkable job of providing different characterizations in quick succession for each of the oft repeated pantheon. Layered on top of this acting, we have several stories of his father, auditions, and extraordinary responsibilities that the plot neatly solves in a very satisfying way.	Underbelly Potterrow	2015	20
17	The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Family (*****) Ben Norris tells of taking a hitchhiking trip in reverse order of the houses his taciturn father lived in to try to better understand him Though unmentioned, he had a cameraman along to take photos and videos that play with animated maps to show his progress in a humorous fashion on a large backdrop. His word choice, particularly his metaphors, really made the show special.	Underbelly Cowgate	2015	28
18	How to Keep an Alien (*****) A perky Irish actress describes meeting her Australian lover, and then their long, complex, and erratic efforts to allow her to emigrate to Ireland. From their initial miming of fantastical methods of suicide while rehearsing a dreadful play, to a wonderful collage of photos of the pair at the end, this is a heartwarming tale of devotion in the face of bureaucratic adversity. The omnipresent huge binder of their assembled documentation serves as a constant reminder just how mammoth their task was.	Traverse	2015	6
19	Man to Man (*****) We follow a woman's life in Germany from the advent of Nazism to the fall of the Berlin Wall as she assumes the identity of her husband to survive. The actress further demonstrates her desperation as she hides in a suitcase, perches on a roof, and literally climbs the walls. This is not a simplistic tale of a victim, for she also seduces, kills, and abuses others.	Underbelly Potterrow	2015	23

20	Urinetown (*****) This deconstructed musical is set in a drought ravaged town where there is a law \that all citizens must use toilet facilities owned by a big corporation. This well executed musical is full of self-referential remarks on how things are done in musicals. The show allows itself to violate some of the standard motifs because it is not a “happy” musical	Assembly Hall	2015	19
21	Confessional by Tennessee Williams (****) The regular patrons in low end bar have the raw interactions that only familiarity and booze can produce. While the staging with a divided audience is problematic for hearing, the company performs William’s deeply felt dialog beautifully. Whether dealing with a girl she’s supported, an unfaithful lover, or an unlicensed doctor, the hairdresser protagonist dissects each person with a perfectly aimed jagged knife rant.	C cubed	2015	6
22	As Is (****) This play from the mid 1980s is about how a gay man and those around him deal with his diagnosis and treatment for AIDS. Though the play is thirty years old it works well as both a reminder of the initial panic of the AIDS epidemic, and the more general theme of support for those in need. The key to the success of the show is the wit and bitterness of the protagonist and the depth of caring of his lover.	Bedlam Theatre	2015	15
23	Around the World in 80 Days (****) In the 1870s, Phileas Fogg makes a wager that he can circumnavigate the world in 80 days, and then we see his attempt to do it with his French valet, a suspicious English police detective, an American adventuress. This low tech production keeps the light hearted story rolling along at a pace that never had me looking at my watch. The elephant made of a head of cord, a trunk of 45 rpm records, and feet of toilet plungers was a wonderful creation.	C south	2015	26

24	Nelson: The Sailors' Story (****) Nocholas Collett portrays several sailors from the Battle of Trafalgar, including Admiral Nelson, as well as a homeless survivor of a Falkland War ship that was sunk. His tale of the battle is riveting as he switches back and forth from Nelson to his ship's doctor to a gunner to powder monkey. He did a good job of differentiating the roles, except that the introduction of the homeless sailor was confusing.	Zoo	2015	31
25	In Light of … (****) Two women rely on free word associating, a beach ball, a deck of giant playing cards, little lights, and physical movements to symbolize confrontation or supportive friendship. This is one of those plays where I was never sure what was going on, but it all felt right. As a case in point, the deck of cards were originally used in some unexplained card game, but later they seemed to represent either photos or memories.	Sweet	2015	30
26	The Blues Brothers – Live (****) Jake and Elwood are back with three backup singers and a septet to provide rock and blues from the 1960s. This show is part of my first and last day ritual for the Fringe because I like to get a chance to get out and dance to some good music. The band is tight, the singers talented, the musical director is having a good time, and the entire audience usually gets out of their seats and shakes their booties	C Chamber St.	2015	5
27	The Girl from Nowhere (****) In the 1960s, a runaway country singer discovers Janis Joplin's style, but is haunted by her small Texas town roots. Despite the radical musical change her progression feels inevitable in hindsight. The sincere snippets of music that she performs add to both the ambience, and an understanding of her talent and drive.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	5
28	Swallow (****) A disfigured jilted lover, a transvestite, and a fearful hermit each must overcome adversity in their own way. The held my interest because the paths they used were so different and yet fit their circumstances and life story. The use of a lost pelican as an avenue to recovery seemed inspired	Traverse	2015	11

29	A Life With the Beatles (****) Ian Sexon plays Neil Aspinall, who was the Beatle's road manager and CEO of Apple Corps, describing his backstage experiences from the earliest days until they broke up. This show is full of little tidbits that kept it interesting to a Beatlephile like me. He evoked the claustrophobic feeling toward the end of their touring particularly well.	Sweet Grassmarket	2015	21
30	Adam Hills: Clown Heart (****) As usual, Hills presented a good-hearted show that combined spontaneity and some routines. This time the spontaneity was based on trying to phone the wife of an audience member and have it seem like he was at a wild party, and the routines involved child rearing, his father dying, and a friend dying of cancer who poses nude online every Tuesday. It was touching that his father and he had a tradition of ending each of their conversations "on a high note" by finishing by each vocalizing a high pitch.	Assembly Hall	2015	24
31	Christians (****) A pastor of an American mega-church gives a sermon that hell does not exist, and though the initial reaction is muted, the repercussions grow in unexpected ways. The large chorus establishes the mood of the evangelical church well, the pastor is charismatic, his argument is sound, and the voices heard keep the play interesting, but the play is flawed. Later songs contribute little, and the otherwise thoughtful pastor never tries to defuse the situation by appealing to Jesus' role as the forgiving son of God.	Traverse	2015	11
32	Dylan Thomas: The Man, The Myth (****) Guy Masterson and the granddaughter of Dylan Thomas present a biography of the Welsh poet by alternating her reading from her book about Thomas' life, and Masterson performing excerpts from his works while photos of cited locations were projected above them. I could not ask for a better arrangement of information, images, and live performance. It was a pleasure to see Masterson recite poetry he clearly relishes.	Assembly Roxy	2015	8

33	The Communist Threat (****) In the 1950s, two British MI5 agents, who do not know each other, meet in Vienna to carry out an assassination. One is an erudite assassin, and the other a working class guy who doesn't work in the field, but their probing question of each other hint at a distrust of strangers. The plot seems obvious to us, but the twists still caught me.	Zoo Southside	2015	24
34	Raz by Jim Cartwright (****) This fast paced play has a very fit truck driver reliving his night out with his buddies mixing drugs and pub crawling. As the leader of his group, he executes his plan for a good time with military precision that works well as long as he is in control of himself. From his initial self-conscious selection of clothing and tanning method to his keen awareness of the limitations of his friends to his fleeting glimpses of his former lover the whole play is keenly written with a fast wit, and a knowing finale.	Assembly George Square	2015	17
35	The Great Downhill Journey of Little Tommy (****) A four piece rock band, with a pen and ink artist drawing on a huge shadow canvas behind them, tell a musical tale of a young man's adventure as he meets workmen, a hunter, and even a liquor distiller. Though the music ranged across many styles, I enjoyed it all. I sat right in front of the manic keyboardist/guitarist, and was amazed at both his virtuosity and how much he perspired during the show.	Summerhall	2015	29

36	Walking the Tightrope: The Tension Between Art and Politics (****) In response to three cultural events being closed last summer because of political pressure, the Underbelly commissioned twelve plays addressing freedom of expression. The seven today had: 1) a major donor objecting to new rules that would prevent her son from interning for her theater charity; 2) a playwright unable to find an insult that his producers think would not offend someone; 3) a Black man violently sodomizes a drugged White woman volunteer in front of an audience as a "legitimate" piece of art; 4) two actors arguing about the need to update the Koran while slowly becoming clowns; 5) a Black auditioning actress objecting to participating in one of the three closed plays that was written by a White but has an all Black cast performing as if they were in a zoo; 6) a young Fringe actor arguing with his mother as to whether a theater company should be boycotted because one of their funding source; and 7) repeating an innocuous scene, and changing the nouns to different politically charged words in each version. Though some of the well-acted plays were patently absurd, others were quite thought provoking.	Underbelly Potterrow	2015	22
37	Sweet Dreams: Songs by Annie Lennox (****) Michael Griffiths charmed us as he used a chronological biography of Annie Lennox to introduce his interpretations of his songs. He had only a keyboard so he wisely did not try to go for the full power of many of her songs.	Assembly Bosco	2015	20
38	Crash (****) A financial advisor looks back at the highs and lows of the past year of his personal and financial life. Though his egoless approach to financial decisions has allowed him to cut his losses and made him a successful businessman, the play cleverly demonstrates how that it is much harder to apply to his personal life. His final financial triumph while reeling from betrayal neatly underscores this difference.	Traverse	2015	6

39	Big Bite Size Breakfast Show (Menu 3) (****) This show had six mini-plays: a man raises a duckling that become his closest friend; a prostitute, her john, and her jilted lover uses single words to communicate; a passive door-to-door trainee is tutored; a man lacking the sense of touch meets a woman who lacks the sense of smell and taste; at a bus stop at man meets a woman who goes through life rating kissers; and an Australian construction worker deals with an unwanted friend request from Cate Blanchett. Unlike Menu 1, each of these plays had at least one character about whom I cared, and made each have some larger meaning. The feeling of unexpected rejection by the naïve imprinted duck, the automatic position of outsider of a person lacking touch or smell, and the different view of acting of the hardhat, each made their plays more interesting and worthwhile for me.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	7
40	Little Thing, Big Thing (****) A petty ex-con and a nun are chased across Ireland for a mysterious roll of film she has. The chemistry between the unlikely buddies is in evidence throughout their many narrow escapes. This has a finely tuned mix of danger, evolving friendship, and comedy that is rare.	Assembly George Square	2015	12
41	17 Border Crossings (****) As the title indicates, Thaddeus Phillips describes 17 border crossings ranging from the troubled crossing from Hungary to Yugoslavia during the 1990s war to a psychological border during a during a drug induced mental trip in South America. No matter the variation he always succeeded at conveying the germane sensations of crossing the border. From a description of a delivery of a bucket of KFC chicken through a Gaza Strip tunnel to a motor scooter trip across a Peru-Brazil border with a rod to beat back stray dog packs, the diversity and imagery created was remarkable.	Summerhall	2015	27

42	John Godber's Happy Jack (****) A tough old coal miner and his wife tell his life story starting from his entering the mines at 16, and through their working class married life. While they spent much of their lives squabbling it was clear that they always loved each other.	Quaker Meeting House	2015	19
43	Underneath (****) Pat Kinevane first interacts with audience members, and then he mixes movement and speech to tell the story of a badly disfigured girl who must constantly deal with ridicule from her peers, but is aided by her neighbors and employers. Kinevane is charming, and seeing his tattered black costumed figure swirl in sheets of gold lame provide a great metaphor for the girl's efforts to hide. The powerful final act has an appropriate harsh mix of injustice and justice.	Dance Base	2015	14
44	Trevor Noah: Lost in Translation (****) Noah started by pointing out how there could never be Black James Bond because he could never disappear into an Edinburgh crowd to escape bad guys, and the rest of the show continued to focus on prejudice in the world. He did have many funny routines including being under suspicion for Ebola on an airplane because he transferred from Africa, and another about trying to figure out how to behave to prevent being shot by a cop when he was pulled over by a Los Angeles cop. I left feeling that he was a one trick pony, and wondered how he will do in the more political world of the Daily Show.	Assembly Hall	2015	28
45	Camille O'Sullivan – Brel (****) The French-Irish singer returns to the songwriter of her youth to interpret 14 of Jacque Brel's songs. I see Camille every year, and she never fails to impress me with her heartfelt voice and her playful interactions with her band and the audience. I only gave this four stars because the band played so loud at times that many of Brel's lyrics eluded me.	The Queen's Hall	2015	15

46	Ndeble Funeral (****) In a Johannesburg slum, a HIV positive woman is visited by an upbeat friend and then a white government auditor. Unlike previous South African stories this show leaves apartheid behind, and looks at how harsh life still is even under the ANC. The combination of duets by the friends, the trio's native dancing, and a creative coffin made from flood supplies creates a multi-faceted picture of country now.	Summerhall	2015	10
47	Two Sore Legs (****) Brenda Murphy tells of her life in Belfast where she had six children by a married man, and had to deal with disapproval from almost all corners, and yet created a loving family. This is a wonderful mix of family joys, the Irish troubles, and the complexity of being Catholic in a modern world. It was always fun to hear of her disapproving father nonetheless taking on the sanctimonious priest.	Assembly George Square	2015	12
48	I am Not Myself These Days (****) Tom Stuart plays an alcoholic transvestite who re-enacts his year in New York City, including his months of living with his male prostitute boyfriend. His "Aqua" persona, who had two hemispherical goldfish aquariums for breasts, had a complex mix of flash and softness that seemed real though pathetically doomed. The key to the power of the play lays in the surreal mix of queen shows, love, crack, bondage, and alcohol.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	26
49	Trans Scripts (****) Several transgender women recreate verbatim conversations from others about their experiences from abuse to societal acceptance to their own comfort in their new bodies. The wide range of social, economic, and race of the women allowed us to hear of both their common and special experiences. I was surprised when I was the audience member offered to feel the large breasts of one who asserted they were natural, and due simply to hormone therapy.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	15

50	Tonight with Donny Stixx (****) A teenager on the autism scale with a demanding mother loves to perform his magic show. The actor's alternating between actual speech and his inner thoughts is easily accepted by the audience and critical to understanding the boy. Though his autism explains most of his actions, his dismissal of his father seemed poorly explained.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	13
51	The Jennifer Tremblay Trilogy Part I: The List (****) In rural Canada, a woman uses lists to create hierarchy of her many activities, but finds that her system has failed her. She is a wonderfully conflicted woman who wanted to come to the country, but then finds little has improved in her life, and now she feels isolated besides. Her link with her best friend, who approaches life and mothering in a much different way, serves as the wellspring for the bulk of the play.	Assembly Roxy	2015	8
52	Wendy Hoose by Johnny McKnight (****) After meeting on a chat room a young fellow visits a woman at her home for a mutually agreed upon one night stand. The show takes an unexpected turn when he finds that she has no legs, and explores the prejudices of both people. The accommodations have a perfect pacing.	The Assembly Rooms	2015	21
53	Heartbeats and Algorithms (****) A computer programmer must contend with a program she wrote that starts to accurately predict her actions. Her low key personality suits the physical displacement of the initial virtual chatroom, but seemed increasingly inappropriate as she becomes more desperate to become unpredictable. Nonetheless, whether intended or not, her unanswered request for someone with which to dance seemed emblematic of the difficulty of leaving a virtual life.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	5

54	Down and Out in Paris and London (****) To learn of poverty first hand, Eric Blair (pen name George Orwell) moved into a working class tenement in Paris, and in 2003 Polly Toynbee moves into social housing in London. Both learn of the many unexpected difficulties that the poor must confront just to survive. This is a good clean tale of immersion in poverty with the poor portrayed as neither heroes nor villains, but with economic predators everywhere.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	5
55	A Fine Line (****) A senior citizen recounts her lifelong loving with her childhood best friend. Whether describing dealing with the animosity of the husband of her friend, or the pair's shared grief, she conveyed a quiet equanimity that inspired me. Though her love was as deep as any, the lack of sexual tension made it all the more pure.	Assembly Hall	2015	7
56	64 Squares (****) In 1939, the story alternates between a Viennese lawyer held in solitary confinement by the Gestapo, and that same lawyer on a cruise ship playing chess with the world champion. The stories neatly intertwine as the real story unfolds. Though chess is obviously part of the start, you need not be an aficionado to enjoy the interplay between the two settings.	Underbelly Cowgate	2015	7
57	The Night Watch (****) In 18th century Spain, a British sergeant carries an injured boy he had hired as a spy into the night watch's tent only to have his captain discover that the boy is a girl scared of mistreatment by the British. The play spends much of its time having the captain and the girl argue over the impact and morality of war. Just as these arguments are exhausted the discovery of a watch and letter allows the story to investigate a whole other set of values dealing with honor and family.	C nova	2015	31

58	The Remnants: Threadbare (****) The bulk of this show has the girlfriend of a research social scientist tell a story of two lovers that are live and on video. The interactions between the lovers has a ring of truth that most young companies miss, and I liked the added discussion the temporal relationship of thought and emotion. The problem here lies in the scientist's dismissive attitude toward his girlfriend's story that is jarring, and ill founded.	C nova	2015	14
59	What Would Spock Do? (****) A fellow describes how he loved the Star Trek TV program as a kid, and yet did not know how to respond when he later met an attractive woman who idolized Mr. Spock. As a former trekkie (or trekker if you wish), I could relate to his enthusiasm, though his loud declarations seemed more like an actor than a fan. I liked the way the story hinges on the events of Leonard Nimoy's life.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2015	22
60	Iphigenia in Splott (****) This solo show has a beautiful young woman, who spends her time clubbing and drinking herself into oblivion, meeting the man of her dreams. While the clubbing section is fairly standard, the bulk of the story is more interesting because she becomes a more nuanced character. The outcome of her law suit allowed the play to do some preaching—maybe a little too much.	Pleasance Dome	2015	29
61	Abacus (****) Using two Steadicams and visualization software a man argues that our current political system of nation states is obsolete and does not promote altruism on a large scale. He is personable and persuasive, and the Steadicams plugged into video processors makes many interesting images. I was so fascinated by the Steadicams the I spent much of my time watching their operators.	Summerhall	2015	26

62	The Rat Pack – Live (****) Backed by a ten piece band, Frank, Dean, and Sammy clown around and sing standards as well as some interesting, more obscure, songs. This is part of my first day ritual because it is consistently a pleasure to watch, though I may have become a little jaded. I appreciated that the musical director allowed more instrument solos this year, and that this year's "Dean" actually sung in Martin's casual style.	C Chamber St	2015	5
63	Big Shots (****) Besides an abridged story of the movie "The Godfather," this homage also has scenes dedicated to Mario Puzo, Al Pacino, Marlon Brando, and the cultural diversity of the six-member cast. Most of the scenes involve precisely choreographed movements of the entire company that are incredibly well done, as well as frequent songs with live and recorded music. The problem with the show is that all the tangential scenes lead to a fragmented play that lacks any of the impact of the original storyline.	Bedlam Theatre	2015	19
64	Going Viral (****) Daniel Bye uses a tale of the spread of a virus that causes uncontrollable weeping as a touchstone to explore viruses and their epidemiology. He combines interacting with the audience as himself to educate with performing parts of the larger tale that provide real reasons for weeping. I liked the audience guessing game for the Basic Reproduction Number (the average number of cases one case generates during its infectious period) revealed that ebola is only 2, and measles is 18, but I found that he was not clear which character he was when telling his stories.	Summerhall	2015	23
65	Spillikin: A Love Story (****) It is 2029, and a widow suffering from Alzheimer's disease starts to think that the robot designer for her by her i husband is her husband, while two other actors recreate their dating experience. The high tech robot piqued my interest, but by adding her interest in the best man, the husband's social incompetence become more intriguing.	Pleasance Dome	2015	25

66	Wilde Without the Boy (****) Gerard Logan plays Oscar Wilde recounting his addiction to his young lover, Lord Alfred Douglas, that led Wilde to spend two years in jail and permanent bankruptcy. Utilizing many of Wilde's words from "De Profundis" this at once beautiful and heartbreaking as the literate Wilde repeatedly falls under the spell of Douglas despite knowing better. Wilde's anguish permeates the whole story, but I was left with the question of how much of this portrayal was accurate, and how much was a 21st century imagining of a gay man who championed aestheticism.	Assembly Hall	2015	12
67	Black is the Color of My Voice (****) Apphia Campbell plays a singer closely based on the life of Nina Simone. Her character moves from Bach piano prodigy and gospel singer supported by her parents and community to become a jazz singer who included civil rights issues in her songs. Her voice is strong, and the story of Black prejudice straightforward.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2015	25
68	Fake It 'til You Make It (****) The husband of the actress Bryony Kimmings, who suffers from clinical depression, performs this play with her that is about how he and she have had to deal with his illness. This is a hard play for me to rate because on the one hand I admire his courage to appear before an audience, and on the other hand, had he not been the actor the play would have much less power. I did like his various headdresses to shield his eyes, and a little metal sculpture/machine that was never quite explained.	Traverse	2015	15
69	Open (****) The customers of a takeaway shop the night before the last election voice their opinions to each other or just the audience on a wide range of topics including the Trident submarine, politicians being out of touch, NHS standards, multi-culturism, poor voter turnout, and unemployment benefits. I was greatly impressed that the opinions expressed were valid, and cut across the political spectrum without a noticeable bias.	Zoo	2015	28

70	Fiction (****) In a completely dark room, each audience member has a pair of headphones to take an aural journey to a hotel, a car, and another location. As the sounds move from scene to scene it is difficult to piece it all together, but there is a sense of dreamy coherence by the end. Since pictures of the recurring hotel room were projected at the beginning it was easier to imagine the scenes set there, but the elevator and lobby settings allowed us to translate the script into our own world.	Pleasance Dome	2015	25
71	Hotel Paradiso (****) Four mute actors in large masks tell the story of a day in a family run hotel dealing with its clientele as well as a robber and the two policemen pursing him. After an initial, slow, scene to establish the protagonist and the routines of the hotel's staff, the balance is fast paced and consistently amusing. There was one inconsistency where a murdered bellboy reappears, but otherwise this is a smooth professional production.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	27
72	The Human Ear (****) The estranged brother of a woman shows up at her door only for her to learn shortly from a policeman that her brother may have been found dead five days earlier. The acting is amazing as the two actors switch between times and roles in instant as the lights change, sometimes for only a word. While quick changes highlight the skill of the actors, it also makes the story disjoint to the point that the motivation of the "brother" is lost.	Summerhall	2015	10
73	Impossible (****) Harry Houdini has develops a friendship with the spiritualist/author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle despite Houdini revealing famous mediums as frauds. Doyle's continued belief despite evidence to the contrary as well as his assertion that Houdini had supernatural powers were dismaying, but based on fact. The séance by Doyle's wife to contact Houdini's mother provided a wonderfully awkward situation for Houdini.	Pleasance Dome	2015	21

74	Citizen Puppet (****) This puppet comedy has the people of a town built around Jack's beanstalk having to respond to the disaster of the giant falling on part of their town. From an old assertive woman, to the perplexed sheriff, to the druggy narrator each city is unique with a different take on the event. Though the parallels with similar real interviews were fun, they were not as witty as the company's "Table."	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	13
75	Dorian Gray (****) Smartly executed with a cast of four using picture frames in a dance routine.	Pleasance Dome	2015	20
76	Cinema (****) The resident cat that survives a catastrophic fire in an Arab movie theater describes its regular customers. The use of a cat was an inspired creation to permit the exploration of a diverse set of characters that had only the theater in common. The story of the fire itself takes a twist that changes our whole perspective on the event.	Summerhall	2015	13
77	Oak Tree (****) Tim Crouch, the writer/director/actor of this piece, each performance guides a new, completely unprepared actor through a story about a meeting between a hypnotist and the father of a child that the hypnotist has killed in an auto accident. While I still think that this an unacceptable abuse of power by Crouch, it is at least somewhat excusable for a play where Crouch is playing the part of person who can abuse his power over an hypnotized subject, and does. While the double loop of power is an interesting trick, it severely limits the actor from applying his craft because Crouch provides virtually no background information about the father beforehand, but the script is fixed, and leaves no room for the actor to truly inhabit his role.	Traverse	2015	16
78	Jethro Compton presents Sirenia (****) A lighthouse keeper discovers a half-drowned woman on the rocks just before a huge storm. This intimate setting conveys the isolation and privations of a lighthouse well. As the play proceeds the woman's mysterious reason for being there keeps the plot shifting nicely.	C nova	2015	23

79	The Girl Who Fell in Love with the Moon (***) Five white-faced, colorfully garbed characters each tell a tale involving some heavenly bodies. Much of each story is told in rhyme, and easily understood song. Most of the action maintains the fun-filled mood, with only the final story violating the formula to create a bittersweet finale.	Pleasance Dome	2015	28
80	Departures: A Song Cycle (***) A London Tube station manager contrives to delay trains so that the waiting passengers continue to develop a sense of community. As the strangers pair off their Sondheim-like songs convey a wide variety of concerns to their accepting "neighbors." Almost all the voices are strong, and the off stage band was superb.	C too	2015	14
81	This Much (or An Act of Violence Towards the Institution of Marriage) (***) Gar is living with his fastidious lover, Anthony, but he cannot resist the wild Albert who he meets in a park. While acted with brio, it was hard to imagine Gar developing a relationship with either man. The final scene of breakdown was quite strong until the last two minutes.	Zoo	2015	31
82	Antiwords (***) The brew master at the brewery where Vaclav Havel worked in Czechoslovakia asked him to share a case of beer in an effort to get Havel to write a confession. In this wordless interpretation the two men are played by two women in huge masks who actually drink several beers as the brew master becomes drunk and Havel discretely disposes of his beer. I accepted a beer from the Havel character at one point so she would not have to drink it.	Summerhall	2015	29

83	Big Bite-Size Lunch Hour: Lunch in Cairo (***) This program is set in Cairo, and has two plays: 1) a play where a Black American Muslim woman defends her use of a veil with her Egyptian roommate, and 2) a play in which a Kenyan prostitute tries to seduce a quiet American celebrating his 30th birthday. The veil story presents both sides of the argument well, and the prostitute's life is touching. The prostitute's last kiss reveals the depth of her feelings in a subtle but horrific way.	Assembly Checkpoint	2015	24
84	Daniel Cainer: 21st Century Jew (***) Cainer sits behind a keyboard and signs his own long songs in the style of ditties about his family, and the life of Jews now. The songs are creative, well performed, and address their topics. I was fascinated with a chart that showed that due to intermarriage and different birth rates, liberal Jews are disappearing and Orthodox Jews are proliferating.	Underbelly Cowgate	2015	14
85	Confirmation (****) Chris Thorpe pursues the psychological concept of confirmation (testing for things that confirm your view) as it applies to politics. He spends too long talking about and assuming the role of Glen, an intelligent racist leader who interviewed, with whom he became friends. Similarly, his discussion of whether the Holocaust killed six million or for million Jews was much longer than necessary.	Summerhall	2015	26
86	The Glorious Damnation of Eddie Small (***) A young, undisciplined, blue grass guitar player makes a deal with the devil (a la Robert Johnson) to become a renowned guitar player. The blue grass performances by the four musicians were a nice break from standard Fringe fare, but the story was pedestrian. I felt sorry for the protagonist who had to deal with a guitar with a string that broke just as the play started.	Bedlam Theatre	2015	9

87	Whiskey Tango Foxtrot (***) Rebecca Crookshank describes her life in the RAF from basic training all the way until she leaves the service after a tour on the Falklands. This is a take on the military where a group of women are treated as almost equals and obey the same rules and overcome the same obstacles as the men, but when they are isolated they are subject to abuse. Her friendship with her "Wing Woman," and her soul searching after a tough leader dies gives the show a personal touch that provides a good counterpoint to the rigid military life in which all soldiers must live.	Underbelly Cowgate	2015	9
88	Tony's Last Tape (***) Tony Benn, the Democratic Socialist MP in the Labour Party for 47 years, makes a tape where he reviews his life and argues his positions. I liked his political positions, but since much of the play had to do with politicians with which I was I was unfamiliar I had to skip over parts. Still, I came away admiring the man who stuck to his principles of protecting the powerless for almost a half century despite himself being in a small minority himself.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	17
89	The Sunset Five (***) This sendup of "Oceans 11" and "Mission Impossible" has a local bar owner assemble her quiz night compatriots to carry off a heist of the local magnate's casino. While it was fun to see how their quiz night specialties could be applied to the caper, the mix of high jinx and expertise sometimes just did not work. The final twist in the caper was quite nice, but the familial connection to the magnate had no place here.	Pleasance Dome	2015	12

90	The Jennifer Tremblay Trilogy Part II:The Carousel (***) A woman describes all the events having to do with her mother ending up in a convent for her childhood with her mother and grandmother as touchstones. The longitudinal approach provides a richness of context that empowers the story, but a printed family tree was necessary to help me sort out the poorly differentiated characters. In particular, the frequent interactions between the woman and immediate female ancestors provide a sense of continuity as well as explanation for their actions, but there were no visual clues as to which of the three women was speaking.	Assembly Roxy	2015	9
91	Big Bite Size Breakfast Show (Menu 2) (***) This show has five mini-plays of which only three are memorable: 1) the audience votes on the revelations made by three people in a romantic triangle; 2) a guard and a woman argue whether she may press a mysterious red button he is guarding; and 3) three touring techno musicians complain about their boredom in a virtual tour. Of these three, only the latter two seemed fresh and interesting. The banter and philosophical arguments over the button were fun, and the extrapolation of computerized music to a computerized tour was thought provoking.	Pleasance Dome	2015	9
92	The Element in the Room: A Radioactive Musical Comedy about the Death and Life of Marie Curie (***) In order to receive a gram of radium paid for by American women, Marie Curie had to endure a public relations tour of America. A fellow in drag alternates between playing Marie Curie and himself as combines tales from Curie's life, centering on the tour, and teaching about the properties of radium. His clever approach to explaining a radioactive decay chain involves passing a ball of yarn among the audience members who happen to hold the cards of the elements in the path from radium to lead.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	5

93	The Orchid and the Crow (***) A personable survivor of stage 4 testicular cancer tells of his life as an agnostic Jew, and his admiration for Lance Armstrong as he suffered through three months of chemotherapy. He performs his own good rock songs and ballads to accompany his stories that range from Passover and Christmas celebrations to treatments while wearing a hospital gown. I particularly liked his story of his Santa Claus denying uncle holding him still as a baby during his bris circumcision ceremony as proof to God that the Jews will honor their god's wishes.	Assembly Roxy	2015	23
94	To Kill a Machine (***) Though Alan Turing had solved the Enigma cypher in World War II, two government agents set about entrapping him for his homosexual activities. Gwydion Rhys portrays the Asberger suffering Turing with a remarkably sensitive touch. The recurring game show motif of the agents' plotting destroys the verisimilitude that Rhys creates.	Zoo	2015	27
95	Loch Ness Monster Hunter (***) In the 1930s, an adventurer arrives at Loch Ness to report to a newspaper on his search for the Loch Ness Monster mentioned in a letter to the newspaper. This comedy combines silliness, community spirit, and self-promotion to create a fun piece of fluff. The show does a good job of not going across my line of silliness that would have made it just stupid and not fun for me.	Bedlam Theatre	2015	24
96	The Daily Tribunal (***) Two homeless friends are offended by a newspaper article about a middle class man who makes a living by posing as a beggar, and keep trying to write their own articles to earn 500 pounds from the newspaper. Though the rougher privations were ignored, the two actors still enough time to provide a real picture of lost men that were neither drug addicts nor mentally unbalanced. Since I was the only audience member, it skewed the performance so that the many audience interactions had to rely on me.	Sweet Grassmarket	2015	29

97	Key Change (***) We start with an abused wife and a drug addict, and follow their lives before and inside a women's prison where they meet a grandmother and another woman. Even though their lives before prison have some bearing on their prison experience, they are predictable and contribute little. I found the portrayal of all prison employees as caring and considerate disingenuous, and the use of momentary lines of masking tape confusing.	Summerhall	2015	23
98	Labels (***) A second generation Brit of Indian descent uses self-adhesive labels to explore prejudice. This is a fairly light play even though his and his parents' lives have felt prejudice and heard Paki name calling throughout their lives. I found the section having some of the audience making paper airplanes a waste of time.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	29
99	The Mountain Top (***) The night before he will be assassinated Martin Luther King has an unusual conversation with the motel's maid. This earthy King chain smokes, has stinky shoes, and yet must still work on his speech for the next day. This slice of life play had verisimilitude, but to achieve that sense of real people, the play spent too much time on the ordinary activities of life.	Venue 13	2015	18
100	Grav (***) Gareth Bale portrays Ray Granall, the famed Welsh rugby player from the 1980s and 1990s, relating events from his life. The show reveals a complex man who, despite being an award winning athlete, was quite insecure in his athleticism, and contended with OCD. His tale of his home town team defeating the mighty New Zealand reflected a charming innocent pride without a hint a hubris.	Assembly Hall	2015	6

101	Adam Long's Dickens Abridged (***) Four talented musician/actors provide a biography of Dickens as well as abridged versions of several of his books. As with all of these abridgement plays, the more you know about the topic, the more you will enjoy the whimsical allusions. Unfortunately for me, I am not that well versed in Dickens, and so about half of the show's content was lost on me though I recognized topnotch execution throughout.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	17
102	Pardon / In Cuffs (***) Three actors trade roles as a Danish prosecutor and the people charged with crimes that they interview. The verbatim work provides a somewhat interesting glimpse into the minds of the criminals and the Dutch judicial process. The best part was last when a defense attorney coached a woman to tell the truth without seeming over rehearsed	Traverse	2015	
103	Where Do Little Birds Go? (***) Based on a true story from the 1960s, a young woman recounts journeying to London to work as a bar maid/actress only to become a hostess/prostitute at a nightclub that is kidnapped by the Kray twins to entertain an escaped murderer. Since she and her uncle knew that she was working in a nightclub controlled by the Krays, the progression of the story, though horrific, seemed almost inevitable and devoid of impact. The only interesting aspect was how the murderer was portrayed sympathetically as a naïve simpleton.	Underbelly Cowgate	2015	7
104	The Very Grey Matter of Edward Blank (***) An audio tape transcriber never leaves his room, and relies on four hallucinated characters to help with his editing, but also to avoid dealing with the real world. I liked the way his day was constructed as insane play alternating with inspired prose, with an occasional interjection of his past life to explain how he ended up in his room. The use of a special tape as the touchstone to possible recovery was a nice invention.	Assembly Roxy	2015	6

105	If I Were Me (***) An unassertive copy editor who is constantly belittled in an advertising firm, attends a meeting that should bolster his self-confidence. The story uses a wide range of props, including tons of tennis balls and cardboard cutouts of the fellow in a fun ways. The two scenes in an elevator are an inspired device to demonstrate assertiveness, self-confidence, and acceptance.	Underbelly Cowgate	2015	14
106	Police Cops (***) This low tech send-up of buddy cop films has a recruit seek out a retired supercop to help him tackle the local crime lord. The plot, and choreography were there, but they chose silliness over cleverness too often for my taste. I particularly did not like their choice of making the crime boss a cat for some reason.	Zoo	2015	31
107	Mistaken:Quartet of Plays for One Actor (***) William McGeough does a good job of portraying four different gay men in very different situations. The plays range from coming out to dates gone wrong to leaving a lover. While he was a good actor, the show itself was forgettable.	C nova	2015	22
108	E15 (***) The cast of six tell the stories of the homeless unwed pregnant women who led a protest about their inadequate council housing in London. The play has a good mix of descriptions of both the horrible conditions and the protester's activities, including squatting, sit-ins, and a petition with 10,000 signatures. I could not help but notice that one of the actresses playing a homeless leader had a set of very expensive finger nails that really clashed with the supposed settings.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2015	30
109	The Wonderful Discovery of Witches in the County of Lancaster (***) In 1615, two former magistrates travel the countryside with the 16-year old girl whose testimony had her mother and grandmother killed as witches six years before. The story is really about how the trio deals with a loss of patronage, and the teenager coming to grips wither past, and the ongoing possibility that she is a witch. The final use of a voodoo-like doll was a perfect revelation	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	29

110	The Garden (***) Will the discovery of a plan in their small apartment change the lives of a c couple living in an overcrowded dystopia? The symbolism of the plant is obvious, but the couple's reactions add another layer of complexity. This opera's short length and terse lyrics left me feeling that it ended abruptly, but it didn't.	Traverse	2015	22
111	Jo Brand (***) The older fat comedienne is a master of one liners, but such comedy is not my cup of tea.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2015	21
112	Bette Midler and Me (***) I got this one wrong; seeing Sue Kelvin I thought she was trying to be a Bette Midler imitator, when this was consistently a story weaving Midler's life with how it affected the outlook of Kelvin. I was constantly bemoaning how Kelvin had to have another singer help provide the power and range of Midler, when that is perfectly fine for such an homage. My friends thought this was a great show and story, and I regret that I was unable to shed my misguided preconceived notions and enjoy this wonderful show.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2015	17
113	To Space (***) A woman conducts a science demonstration using whey, and then recounts her lifelong goal to travel into space even though she is not qualified because of her age and education. She well conveys her fascination with space using NASA images and her own past efforts. Seeing her don her own NASA space suit overalls was both sweet and pathetic.	Summerhall	2015	27
114	The Stolen Inches (***) The son of famous film producer is creating documentary about his family, but then his brother sues his family for restricting his life because he was short. Though this sounds like it would be a satire or absurdist, the four actors play this as a reality TV show with only the mother being unbelievable. With a short presentation of his evidence, the short brother offers fairly legitimate proof of his assertion, but his pronouncements at the end of the play tarnish his credibility.	C nova	2015	16

115	Rebounding Hail (***) A girl shares a room piled high with books with a companion voice who guides her as she opens the books the action comes alive on stage. This is a wonderful premise, and some of the choices of books contribute in multiple ways to the plot. With a better choice of books, and sources for the protagonists this could be much more thought provoking and witty.	Underbelly Cowgate	2015	14
116	The Gospel According to Jesus, Queen of Heaven (***) The transgender playwright Jo Clifford preaches the gospel of acceptance and love. This is a quiet church service that settles the soul. We even had communion!	Summerhall	2015	27
117	Leftovers (***) This piece has a newlywed wife's fears ruin her life for years to come when her husband does not return from war. There are some very nice dances making use of a bed, and the early interactions with her husband and wife are rich. The finally twist really confused things, and hurt the play.	Zoo	2015	28
118	La Ronde (***) We are presented with a series of ten short scenes of pairs of lovers of different social positions having sex that has one lover of each pair moving into the next scene until we return to the unrepeated lover in the first pair appears in the last scene. Though the same two actors play the lovers in all the scenes, their roles explore a wide variety of marital and economic standing which highlighted the thesis that sex crosses all boundaries. While I appreciated the concept, I must admit that I appreciated the beauty and sexiness of the actress in the soft porn nude staging even more.	C nova	2015	16

119	Our Ladies of Perpetual Succour (***) Six 16-year old girls from Oban start by rehearing a beautiful choir piece at the Edinburgh Choir competition, but then doffed their uniforms to reveal sexy clothes and go on adventures of drinking and clubbing. There is mostly drama, a little comedy, and rock and roll mixed in just the right proportions that would make this a very good show for many people. However, their thick accents hindered my understanding of much of their speech, and all of their lyrics.	Traverse Theatre	2015	19
120	Flossy and Boo's Curiosity Shop (***) This family show has two women telling zany tales and singing ditties as well as gentle audience participation. The women try to keep the show entertaining for children by maintaining a fast pace with a frequently changing variety of acts. The three-year old next to next to me was rapt about half the time, and otherwise had a delightful time playing with her theatre chair—such is the life of a children's entertainer.	Bedlam Theatre	2015	15
121	Cell (***) Three puppeteers control a ¾ size man who learns that he has ALS, the same disease that Stephen Hawkings has. This quiet, slow piece often warmed my heart, but the awkward shadow puppetry interludes lacked the same quality. I found his efforts to make a home for a goldfish particularly endearing.	Underbelly Cowgate	2015	14
122	Bruce (***) With two black clothed puppeteers, a single block shaped puppet portrays all of the characters in a story of an inept cop who has life that includes riding wooing a woman, riding in a space ship, and then taking advantage of time travel to reconstruct his own life. This is fun to watch, and well performed. The storyline has a nice circularity where earlier events in the show are explained in the context of future efforts.	Underbelly Cowgate	2015	9

123	Willie and Sebastian (***) Willie is an old theatre producer who pines for the woman he lost and now prefers his close friend, and bon vivant, Sebastian. There are many fine interactions among the three here, but Willie's initial presentation of his barely clad penis inches from the face of a woman in the front row was way too rude for me. I should note that the three actors, Andy Gray, Grant Stott, and Michelle Gallagher are well liked celebrities of the Brits, and they seemed to charm the audience.	Gilded Balloon	2015	13
124	Electric Dreams (***) Three librarians assisted a woman trying to reconstruct her life after she discovered she part of a series of experiments involving electroshock therapy. The horror of the real Canadian experiments, their funding by the CIA, and the CIA's use of the techniques for interrogation gives the whole piece tremendous power. However, it is substantially weakened when the woman tries to expand the CIAs prescription for shock and awe to a conspiracy theory about the recent economic collapse.	Pleasance Dome	2015	18
125	Eating Seals and Seagull's Eggs (***) In 1953, the Irish government decided to evacuate the entire population from the Blasket Islands, and among them was Peig Sayers who authored a much hated compulsory Irish text, Peig. Photos, excerpts from official documents, and lines from Peig projected on the screen provide a sense of place and time. It was a hard life for the islanders, and even Sayers was illiterate, and had her brother write down her tales.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	28
126	The Year of the Hare (***) A Finnish man is fired and his wife leaves him on the same day so he heads north and takes on a injured rabbit as a companion. His search for happiness takes him many places, but he and we find little insight. The final act, when he seemingly has transformed comes out of nowhere, and made little sense to me.	Pleasance Dome	2015	13

127	The Game's Afoot. An Encounter with Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle (***) The author David Stuart Davies provided a biography of Doyle as it related to Sherlock Holmes by reading from his prepared notes. Though he did provide some information that was new to me, most of the lecture seemed a review. I did find it interesting that Doyle and Oscar Wilde dined together with the publisher of "Strand Magazine," and that Sherlock's deductive style may have been based on his medical school instructor, Dr. Joseph Bell.	Arthur Conan Doyle Centre	2015	12
128	Sleep Trees: Mafia? (***) This comedy has a young man trying to join his two older brothers in the Mafia, but first he must successfully commit a crime. The three actors can be fun to watch, and have a talented rock trio providing an upbeat score. This is a good show that is full of lighthearted energy that just didn't resonate with me.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	5
129	Cheque Please (***) A depressed waitress comments on her feelings and thoughts as she works, meets friends, and goes to a counseling group. She brings her darkness everywhere though she tries to hide it, and she shows no change throughout the play. I guess her feeling that life is, and will always be, difficult was what the play wanted to convey, and it achieved its goal.	Zoo	2015	29
130	Cartography (***) A young woman who loves maps has a weak heart that we know gives her only four years to live. This devised show uses string across the audience and ladders to convey travel and cartographic trigonometry. I am getting tired of the use of poorly played ukuleles to attempt add a sense of fun at the expense of musicality	C nova	2015	30

131	Institute (***) This big production has two file clerks working with cameras watching their every move, and alarm sounding whenever they make an inappropriate move. As more people became involved the play became less understandable, even for Tim. One notable dance by the two men had them repeatedly intertwine in the most loving way.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	13
132	The Jennifer Tremblay Trilogy Part III: The Deliverance (***) A woman tries to get her brother to visit their dying mother, and relives the events that led to his estrangement. While the other two parts of the trilogy used the woman's mother and grandmother as a bridging thread, this story is defined by men, specifically her mothers' husbands and, by extension, her brother. As the men came to forefront, I realized that virtually all of the Trilogy's significant men were defined as abusive and self-centered, and that jaundiced view diminishes the whole, and particularly this play.	Assembly Roxy	2015	9
133	Parlour Games (***) It is a dark and stormy night when the lights go out, and three young siblings create almost silent plays in the style of 1920s silent films. The simple plays, and their interactions seemed appropriate for 4, 11, and 13 year old children, but the play did seem too long. They used a wide range of techniques with flashlights to great effect.	Zoo	2015	31
134	Knowledge and a Girl (***) Snow White resents her stepmother who is the infertile queen who revels in her beauty while either flirting with or seducing every man she meets. Everything of the traditional tale is here, but each has a black twist, including the seven dwarfs repeatedly raping Snow White. The sadism of the king, particularly the repeated blinding of the dwarves with a hot poker, fit the dark interpretation but contributed little.	C too	2015	15

135	Disorder (***) A mother meets her seemingly estranged son, and relives the long manic section and then long depressive section of her life. I was fine with her bipolar disease being represented by an actor, but the minimal interactions with her caring husband, and their unexplained financial plight really hurt. Also missing was any explanation of what even precipitated her being committed.	C nova	2015	30
136	Chicken (***) In a small state in a future divided England we watch a family that chose to work in a chicken processing plant instead of a bicycle factory. This dark play fails in its effort to mix dystopia, and magic into a satisfying whole. The vision of the daughter as a witch who empathizes with the onslaught of chickens, a la Hitchcock's "Birds", just didn't work for me.	Summerhall	2015	10
137	Some People Talk About Violence (***) Audience members had envelopes to the four actors to determine their roles in a story about a young woman who watches "Big Bang Theory" all day while her mother frets, her brother feels compelled to leave his lover in Australia to return to help his family, and a narrator acts as compere. The stories of each of their frustrations are compelling, but it is constantly interrupted by antics such as a game of slap hands, improv free association, and even dance numbers. If the time allotted to these interruptions been used to explore the family interacting this might have been an excellent play.	Summerhall	2015	10
138	The Rape of Lucrece (***) Gerard Logan performs Shakespeare's narrative poem about the rape of a Roman general's wife by his close friend. Logan does a fine job with the beautifully written work, but it was just too long for me to handle without a break. Next time I'll have a big cup of coffee before attempting it.	Assembly Hall	2015	7

139	The Letter: To be or to MBE (***) The dancer Jonzi D plays himself and others as he learns that he has been offered to an MBE. While he was initially excited, the responses from his friends and family were wide ranging, though probably no in hip-hop rhyme as he portrayed them. The section involving a drug dealer was confusing, but his family Christmas dinner with his matriarch sister provided a perfect climax.	Assembly George Square	2015	28
140	Oh Hello! (***) An actor plays Charles Hawtrey, a star of the "Carry On" film series, who recounts his drunken life as a flamboyant gay man. This play suffers from concentrating at least of a third of its time on the unremarkable years of alcoholic degradation after he left the series at the expense of spending anytime on his long, remarkable career before the series. Though the "Carry On" fan seated next to me enjoyed the many references to the series' stars, he too left disappointed.	Assembly Hall	2015	7
141	A + E (***) This play alternates between two storylines: 1) three young women are in A + E waiting to hear the outcome of their friend falling and breaking her neck; and 2) the meetings before the fall of that woman and her boyfriend. The interactions between the three flawed women were catty and unremarkable, but the other story was full of creative wordplay. I think that the final scene was supposed to provide clarification, but it did not for me.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	27
142	Traverse Breakfast Plays: How Could You Slap a Girl? (***) This reading of a play has a young fellow and his boss rob a woman who has many stories to tell. Though the men robbed her, she is the dishonest one. The young man's story about his girlfriend seems contradictory when it was not supposed to be.	Traverse	2015	25

143	Swing By Around 8 (***) To try out swinging a couple invite another couple for the evening who a friend recommended, but they are not sure the guests are there for swinging. The situation of subtly trying to discover if guests are into swinging would be a rich source of comedy, but that meant that the motivation of the guests had to remain hidden from us too, and that left a big hole in the play. A truth telling drinking game works well, but it left me wondering at the source of the antipathy between the two guests.	C nova	2015	16
144	Bump (***) A teacher who doesn't like children and spends her time doing her nails rear ends an unemployed fellow, and they sort of hit it off. The antic montages of activity are well choreographed, but their real time vignettes reveal a consistent mismatch that was not reflected in the finale. In comparison to his needy incompetence she seemed too accomplished to explain her interest in him.	Gilded Balloon at Pleasance Dome	2015	16
145	Broken Windows (***) Caitlin Ince interviewed five young women about gender bias, and now presents their words verbatim in character as well as short songs based on each of her impressions. The recreation of the interviews worked well, but the songs were weak in all of their facets. I felt that the array of unused objects strewn around the floor should have been replaced with the seven props she actually used.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	27
146	Richard Parker (***) On a ship, a man obsessed with coincidence accosts a fellow with the same name as his. The acting, particularly by the obsessed man is great, but the coincidences cited are often ones I had heard before. The playwright was faced with portraying an extended time on a life raft, and ended up making the play feel over long.	C nova	2015	9
147	A Very British Childhood (***) An idyllic 1950s home falls apart as the events in a house in the woods are revealed. The initial scene is a great match to the Dick and Jane books of early grammar school, and the plot twists are well conceived. Though, somehow, this show was only memorable when I read another review of it.	Pleasance Dome	2015	21

148	The Hideout (***) Aphrodite, Hades, and Dionysus run a 1920s night club, and provide a silly rendition of the story of the Minotaur. Where there are a few well done parts, the bulk felt like an amateur show with mediocre script, dancing, and singing. The idea of two tap dancers being the minotaur was fun though.	C nova	2015	30
149	Satan Speaks: 'Why I Don't Exist' (***) Satan takes over the body of an actor to argue why people's view of him is paradoxical. The actor seems a nice fellow, and the citations from the Bible are well chosen, but the whole thing is slight. It reminded me of my teenage arguments with a pastor about the obvious inconsistencies in the Bible.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2015	7
150	Jekyll (***) An inspirational speaker who relies on interrogation affects people's lives both near and far. Her intense questioning seemed aggressive but effective, and her acolyte's progress appropriate, but her unproductive biographer contributed little to the story. The final meeting between the acolyte and her mentor was as revealing as it was short.	C Chambers Street	2015	5
151	The Remnants: As Thyself (***) Start from an analysis of a painting of Narcissus, this work is divided into several reappearing stories. As with the other Remnants production, a scientist and his female companion have two different views of the events; his is analytic and unfeeling, and hers is more approachable and socially aware. The pas de deux between a surprisingly adroit large man and a slight woman had them display a complex mix of aggression and support.	C nova	2015	22

152	Ada (***) As a computer science lecturer, I was looking forward to this biography of the first computer programmer, Ada Lovelace. However, from the initial flawed description of an algorithm to the inexplicable repetition of scenes this show came across as a bit slipshod. They had a video of a replica of Babbage's computer, but for some reason, it was placed as a unlabeled backdrop when they did provide captions for other, less relevant, machines.	Bedlam Theatre	2015	16
153	Traverse Breakfast Plays: The Walt Disney Project (***) In 2056, three Quebec rebels are trying to devise a plan to revive the cryogenically preserved Walt Disney to use his winning smile to convince the people of Quebec to build a utopian city. The Walt Disney character has an odd role as he is the only person that is not real, but he provides criticism of their fantastical plan. It is hard to imagine this would grow to a full size play	Traverse Theatre	2015	30
154	Fable (***) After supposedly chatting on a dating site, a woman with a weak heart travels north to meet a Scottish poet/woodsman. Both are looking for something beyond themselves, and their searches cross, but this feels like a sparse play. The looped guitar music was too loud for the reverberating Anatomy Lecture Theatre.	Summerhall	2015	29
155	CUT (***) A flight attendant thinks a man is stalking her from being a passenger on her jet to the subway, and even to her home. The play takes place in special room that can be made pitch black, and certainly adds an air of disquiet to the piece. Despite this physical advantage, the show is quite disappointing because it never thrills in the way that the ads leads one to believe.	Underbelly George Square	2015	7

156	Big Bite Size Breakfast Show (Menu 1) (***) The five mini-plays have: four rock festival attendees trying collapse a tent, a fellow's opinion of a woman transforming over years, a clingy woman repeatedly adapting to a philandering date, a deluded wife trying to convince her husband to make a horrific commitment, and a ten-minute "Pride and Prejudice." Unlike previous years I found few characters sincere enough to be worthy of my attention or caring. Only the girl who arranged the festival tent, and the transformed fellow touched me, and even he had to overcome an irrelevant of how he looked sleeping.	Pleasance Dome	2015	5
157	Traverse Breakfast Plays: No Desert Roses (***) This Egyptian play has the playwright self-consciously talking to the Traverse audience as well as three characters sitting behind her. The African immigrant character seemed to be there to highlight cultural differences, the old woman spoke of her loves and quick boredom, and the third seemed simply out of place and of little use. On the whole, it felt quite fragmented with little to offer.	Traverse Theatre	2015	29
158	Some Thing New (***) Five actors guide the audience through word and drawing tasks while occasionally interacting among themselves. This odd mix of workshop and play has its moments, but the obvious artificiality of our guides degrades all aspects of the work. It may be worthwhile to receive a critique from an art professor, but there is little gained from a poser's commentary, and when a supposed art professor take umbrage of another actor's comments it crosses the fourth wall too many times to serve any useful purpose.	C nova	2015	16

159	Traverse Breakfast Plays: Ctrl-Z (***) A family is stuck in traffic while their son is in a hospital bed so drugged that he is constantly repeating the same song. In the UNIX computer operating system, pressing the Ctrl and Z keys at the same time causes the current program to be suspended (not terminated), and allows it to be continued later. In both settings, the people's lives are essentially suspended, but the whole play just seems too slow moving to be of much interest.	Traverse Theatre	2015	27
160	Traverse Breakfast Plays: The Elephant Speaks Ukrainian (***) A very short play about a woman in modern Ukraine who must deal with her daughter and lover while waiting for her husband to return from the war with the rebels.	Traverse Theatre	2015	26
161	Waking Beauty (***) This version of "Sleeping Beauty" has the girl fall sick because of a woman who maybe a witch. The story suffers from having the same actress playing both the narrator and "witch" entering and leaving the room frequently without a clear delineation of which role she is playing until she speaks for a while. The choice of having a sudden back story of the girl and the "witch" instead of presenting the story in chronological order also weakens the power of the piece.	C nova	2015	8
162	Traverse Breakfast Plays: Plays by Berkun Oya This show had two Turkish plays: 1) at a beach a mother laments to another woman, who she slowly mistakes for year daughter, that her absent son has chosen a Kurdish girlfriend; and 2) a man allows a young demonstrator running from the police to take refuge in his apartment. Both plays had their moments, but I think they relied on knowledge of Turkish current events for some of their power.	Traverse Theatre	2015	28
163	Unmythable (***) Jason and the Argonauts overarches an abridged version of many Greek myths. Each story was too short to be worth anything. Though I did like a scene where three men try to stay quiet in the Trojan Horse.	Pleasance Dome	2015	19

164	Lennon: Through a Glass Onion (***) John Waters on vocals and guitar accompanied by Stewart D'Arrietta on piano mixes events from John Lennon's life with mediocre interpretations of his songs.	Assembly Hall	2015	20
165	The Turn of the Screw (***) We hear the tale of a new governess, her two charges, a mysterious house, and an impending death. Was it the warm room, late night, glass of wine, or the telling that just failed to keep my attention? I know that the beginning moved slowly and whenever I returned there was nothing there to keep my interest for long.	Assembly Hall	2015	10
166	Am I Dead Yet (***) This is another play that left little for me to remember. There were two policeman looking for parts of a man hit by a train who come upon a his severed head, and a CPR demonstration, but the rest is a blank.	Traverse	2015	22
167	My Name is Saoirse (***) A naïve young Irish woman discovers sex and alcohol on the same night, and then must deal with the ensuing pregnancy. Each year there is a play that I just cannot remember, and this it. I know the actress did fine, it is just that amid all the plays I have seen, this one was easily forgotten by me.	Assembly Hall	2015	7
168	Paintings and Cake (***) Sorry folks, but I had completely forgotten this play by the next day. Since I am not tired, nor was I, I suppose that is my review. This is an easily forgotten play with nothing good or bad to make it remarkable.	C nova	2015	15
169	The Emperor of America (***) This musical is set in the San Francisco of the 1850s Gold Rush with the real life failed businessman who became Emperor Norton of America, and Protector of Mexico as its touchstone. As someone who grew up in a suburb of San Francisco, I did enjoy revisiting the tales of the Barbary Coast and its shanghai bars, but the story seemed diffuse. While everyone else seemed to master a frontier accent, I found Mark Twain speaking with a French accent particularly disconcerting and inexplicable.	C too	2015	12

170	The Accidental Adventures of Sherlock Holmes (***) Three actors play the traditional characters as Holmes unknowingly kills a potential client with the backswing of his golf club, and then must find the culprit. Last day of the Fringe, I'm rested, and I still nodded off during this piece. It was fun to see Sherlock played by a short woman.	C Chamber St.	2015	31
171	The Titanic Orchestra (***) Four bums wait at an abandoned rail station with the intent of boarding a train that has stopped, and stealing a random suitcase. The story takes a turn toward the fantastic when a box is delivered that contains a fellow who magically provides money and wine. As the box takes on magical properties the whole story becomes a muddle.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	18
172	When Blair had Bush and Bunga (***) Tony Blair, Silvio Berlusconi, George Bush, and their advisors meet at a resort to discuss the invasion of Iraq. This silly comedy has Blair and his wife inordinately subservient to their advisors, Berlusconi constantly chasing women, and Bush portrayed as a dumb, drunk hawk. Except for Bush's drinking each portrayal had elements of truth, but they had been push to such absurd levels that I, unlike the bulk of the audience, quickly found this long farce a bore.	Pleasance Courtyard	2015	18
173	Be Better (**) An incompetent acolyte is both encouraged and belittled by her inspirational idol during their presentations. Both women fit their molds perfectly, but I had real trouble laughing at the incompetence of the girl because of the sincerity she conveyed and the subtleness of her mistakes. The latter part of the play became truly and incomprehensible.	Bedlam Theatre	2015	24

174	The Strange Friendship of Arthur Conan Doyle and Harry Houdini (**) This boring lecture had a video of an interview of Doyle from the 1930s talking about spiritualism, and a dull recording of a séance attended by the speaker. The most interesting thing was a reprint of a 1931 article in Hearst's International Cosmpolitan in which Conan Doyle was interviewed.	Arthur Conan Doyle Centre	2015	25
175	Sex Rated G (**) A woman accompanied by taped music and a slide show responds to sexual words on the screen that all begin with the letter G. Other than occasional slide with some interesting statistics, most of the images and songs have little to offer. The good natured actress has little range, and her monotonous ditties left the audience so unimpressed they never clapped after each one.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2015	18
176	Current Location (**) Four women in a choir live near a town where a recent event may be an omen that the town will be destroyed, but they do not believe it. This piece has each of the four arguing with another member to no effect. In the end, it all made no sense to me.	Summerhall	2015	26
177	Picasso Stole the Mona Lisa (**) The poet Guillaume Apollinaire wakes to find the Mona Lisa on an easel in his Parisian apartment. As he is by his friend Picasso, and his nosey neighbor this quickly becomes a farce of little value. At one point during a series of blackouts, the neighbor, who is trying to escape the two men, is shown able to escape, but instead is tugging on the poet's pants for no reason.	C nova	2015	24

178	Light Boxes (**) A family in a village must deal with February, a month/person combination, that has banned flight and made their town permanently cold and depressed. This is one of those plays that seemed like it lay at the edge of my comprehension because some small parts made sense, in the end, it was just an inexplicable mess as a whole. While waging war with February the use of boiling water to create paths in the snow made sense, but what gave rise to the later incredibly invasive and deadly moss?	Summerhall	2015	17
179	Donald Does Dusty (**) Diana Torr presents a homage to gay brother who was a minor singer and actor who idolized Dusty Springfield. She combined lip syncing Springfield songs, video clips of her TV shows in which her brother appeared in the chorus, and even film of his funeral. Though she clearly cares for him still, the whole show seemed both amateurish and self-centered, and offered little to me.	Summerhall	2015	26
180	Margaret Thatcher Queen of Soho (**) A transvestite Margaret Thatcher and two aides, in a cabaret style, review her time as prime minister with particular attention to Section 28 that prevented local authorities from promoting homosexuality. I quickly grew tired of the loud, broad, Thatcher with her constant mugging. As an American most of the political references were lost on me, though a majority of the audience had a good time.	Assembly George Square	2015	18
181	Daze of My Life (**) A theater major presents a solo show about her life that she developed for her University of Southern California course on solo shows. Though she initially asserts that she is a "people pleaser," this driven, talented woman proceeds to give a chronological montage of her life's events with little evidence for her thesis. The biggest problem for me was discerning which character was speaking because she in virtually the same voice, albeit sometimes Spanish, throughout the play.	Paradise in the Vault	2015	15

182	EricktheFred (**) A silent, dour, man prepares for his clown act, and then spends much of his time chasing butterflies at the end of poles, and disentangling himself. This is a slow, sad tale that would work better in a small venue, but his staging required a more traditional room with wings. When he started by spending seemingly five minutes applying his make-up, he set a boring tone that he evidently wanted to keep reinforcing throughout the play.	Assembly Roxy	2015	13
183	Marriage (**) In Victorian England, with the help of a stinking matchmaker, four badly flawed men try to woo the hand of an incompetent young woman. Every character is so one-dimensional that I found that I was just rooting for the play to end. For instance, after the woman has a decidedly awkward private conversation with the protagonist that is limited to twenty words, she regales her aunt with the joy and love engender by it.	Assembly George Square	2015	12
184	Festivus (**) Two young couples share drugs, confidences, and indiscretions at an overnight rock festival. This play explores all the possible combinations of a lout, a smart manipulator, a flighty irresponsible girl, and a gregarious flirt while saying little of value. I imagine that it resonates with the experiences of many in the audience, but I've grown tired of seeing the same old twenty-something foolishness on display with nothing new except the setting.	C nova	2015	8
185	I'm Not Here Right Now (**) A fellow sits along side the stage and narrates the story of a professor who must deal with peers that doubter her sightings of an abominable snowman, and a loving outdoorsman father who may not be so perfect. She acts well, and he reads well, but I don't come to a play to have it read to me. The text does do a good job of conveying her deep connection with the outdoors though.	Summerhall	2015	10

186	Tribute Acts (**) Two young women explore their estrangement from their fathers through video interviews of the fathers of each other. They realized their vision well, but it was not enough to remove the feeling that this is a piece by two people who spent most of their preparation thinking about themselves instead of the audience. They confirmed this by ending the show with a tribute to their favorite YouTube clip of Bill Clinton playing a saxophone which had little relevance to the rest of the show.	Assembly Roxy	2015	8
187	S.E.N (**) In a detention classroom, a teacher must manage a manic teenager, and a quiet Muslim girl. I did not have a problem with the acting, but I hated the idea that such an incompetent teacher would ever still have a steady job. While a substitute teacher can have real problems with class discipline, watching a supposed permanent teacher be so unprofessional reeked of a playwright's fantasy.	Bedlam Theatre	2015	9
188	Stuart Bowden: Wilting in Reverse (**) Bowden looped music, awkward dancing, repeated audience participation, and low production values in general to tell the story of a colonist on a dry planet who sabotages the spaceship so he can stay with the woman he likes. Bowden establishes the silly, humor of the inept from the beginning by entering the dark set and immediately running into a chair, and then grumbling about the strategic chair being left there, It was an hour of demonstrating just how bad a show can be if that is the goal of the performer.	Underbelly Cowgate	2015	10
189	Phantasmagoria (*) The audience is ushered into a small darkened room to hear a rendition of Lewis Carroll's poem about a ghost discussing the role of ghosts in the world. While the two ushers attempt to maintain decorum and move props as needed, the orator unknowingly provided a demonstration of acting excess. He alternated between whispers too quiet to be heard, and bellowing so loud that in the small room he was unintelligible.	C nova	2015	23

1	When it Rains (*****) This multifaceted play has a pair of married couple approach adversity in two different ways. What a great mix of philosophy, video backdrop creativity, small touches of humor, and techniques for dealing with serious marital issues. A four minute rendition of a Jacques Brel song in French epitomizes the wit as the subtitled words fit the situation perfectly, but the audience is apprised on the screen when the song is half over.	Pleasance Dome	2014	22
2	Lungs (*****) A man and woman argue over whether to have a baby or not. The pair achieve a perfect balance as she wavers and rants, and he patiently give his opinion and expresses his love for her. The theater-in-the-round is ideal when he stands at the center, and she paces around him.	Roundabout @ Summerhall	2014	11
3	Kingmaker (*****) A powerful woman Tory MP, the presumptive Tory Prime Minister candidate, and his young competitor have a secret meeting that may have a bearing on the election. This is an engaging verbal fight full of political thrusts and parries as each person appears to gain the upper hand at times. If you political intrigue, then you will love this.	Pleasance Courtyard	2014	4
4	Return to the Voice (*****) With two men on horns occasionally accompanying them, a chorus of six men and six women sang complex choral arrangements of Gaelic and Scottish songs. I have never heard voices intertwined in such complex ways. I was so entranced that I was completely surprised when an hour and half had passed, and the concert ended.	Summerhall @ St. Giles Cathedral	2014	20
5	Pioneer (*****) Years after the first mission to Mars failed in 2025, as a second crew nears Mars, four contemporaneous, but distant stories unfold that will determine whether Mission Control will allow the spaceship to land. This is an ambitious story well told with a huge amazing set suitable for the Assembly Hall. It is only in the last act that we see how he threads come together in a very satisfying whole.	Zoo Southside	2014	23

6	Helen Lawrence (*****) After escaping mental assessment for the murder of her husband, Helen arrives in post World War II Vancouver to find her lover among the corruption of the city. This International Festival piece has video cameras capture the action take place with a blue screen backdrop, and then projects the actors in black and white on a full size translucent movie screen complete with virtual furnishings and rooms. The film noir story is engrossing, and comparing the color live action with the black and white movie made us aware of the contribution the lack of color was to convey the mood that is emblematic of the genre.	King's Theatre	2014	26
7	Camille O'Sullivan: 10 (*****) The Irish singer agĝain provided her typical personal show that is a mix of quiet ballads and Joplinesque rock with her wishing the amps had an 11. I marvel at how she can make a huge room full of people feel like they are all on her personal journey. Even though she had a troubling cough, this seemed like the best concert of the five of hers I have seen.	Assembly Rooms	2014	7
8	The Bastard Children of Remington Steele (*****) Three orphans discover another orphan who lives in the attic and thinks she is the daughter of the TV detective based on repeatedly watching three episodes on a VCR. The quirkiness of the "daughter," and the generosity and need for family of the three proved heartwarming and sincere. Though I enjoyed the series, it is quickly explained at the beginning, and I don't think it will be a stumbling block for others.	Underbelly	2014	8
9	Light (*****) Brain implants connect most people in one large network, and some people are starting to rebel against the leader's attempt to control them. This show takes place in a completely dark room, in which sound effects and LED light bars can create a surprisingly wide range of effective visual effects. Most memorable are the seemingly street block long chases that cover only twenty feet.	Pleasance Dome	2014	8

10	Dinner is Swerved (*****) Sixteen of us are ushered into cushion festooned room to share some food, conversation, non-competitive games, and exercises in mindfulness. The four people in the company were quietly friendly and made this a very nice way to end my longest day of play going. The food was unusual, but not threatening, and the guided dreaming and mindfulness training made me think of Mark and his nine-day silent retreats. As a bonus, I came away with a couple of new friends in London, Jon and Nicole.	C nova	2014	24
11	On the Upside Down World (*****) Based on the memoirs of the wife of first High Judge of New Zealand, that wife relates both her direct experiences with Maori as she develops close relationships with some, including an adopted son, and the political and martial events during her twenty year stay. Her early adoption of a chief's seven-year old son, and mix of motherly love and continued feeling of cultural superiority gave the story more complexity than a simple tale of growing appreciation of the Maori. Because I spent six weeks touring New Zealand, and developed a tremendous respect for the Maori, I found her enlightenment heart warming.	Assembly Roxy	2014	5
12	Spoiling (*****) An Irishman is sent by the Scottish National Party to ensure that their firebrand Foreign Minister in waiting will deliver a bland speech when meeting the UK Foreign minister. The sparring and revelations of the mutually suspicious pair is both incisive and clever. Her purity of spirit proves both dangerous and winning.	Traverse Theatre	2014	12

13	Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (*****) In 1971, the gonzo journalist Hunter S. Thompson is hired to cover a desert race in Las Vegas, and then to cover a convention of District Attorneys dealing with drug use. Together with his attorney, this is a wild, hallucinogenic-filled ride back into the 1960s that swept me away with their outrageous pronouncements and bizarre visions brought to life on the stage. Their episode with a young hitchhiker reminded me of my own near death experience when two wild men in a convertible picked me up and then proceeded to speed along a curvy river road until the front wheel collapsed under the front suspension and we somehow slid to a safe stop.	Pleasance Courtyard	2014	15
14	The Addams Family (*****) This big musical adaptation of the Charles Addams' single-panel cartoons has the family meeting the normal Iowa family of Wednesday's boyfriend. All the characters have their expected quirks as well as good voices, with only Pugsley looking too slim. The long, complex, reconciliation tango of Gomez and Morticia reminded me of the extended routines of Fred and Ginger.	Assembly Hall	2014	20
15	Cuckooed (*****) Comedian Mark Thomas combines anecdotes from his protests and ruses with video interviews of his friends to layout how BAE Systems, the largest British arms manufacturer, planted a spy in the anti-arms organization with which he was associated. His tale of bike locking himself to a truck axle was both admirable and funny. His most memorable ruse was setting up a booth at an arms dealing conference, and convincing an Indonesian general to admit on tape that his army violated the civil rights of his countrymen.	Traverse Theatre	2014	14

16	Thrill Me: The Leopoldo and Loeb Story (*****) With a piano accompaniment list, this is the true story from the 1920s of a young fellow who follows his lover as they commit more and more serious crimes. The pair are well mismatched as the sycophant is torn by his love and morality, and the self-centered object of his affections thinks of himself as a Nietzschean Superman. The play has a satisfying twist at the end.	C Chambers St.	2014	2
17	Dear Mr. Kaiser (*****) Based on a true story, a World War I POW asks permission of the Kaiser to return to England to visit his dying mother, and promises to return in ten days. This is a charming, and heart warming story that is all the more powerful because it is true. The conflict between his honor as a British officer to escape, and his honor to keep his word to the Kaiser allow us to feel humanity overcoming war.	Bedlam Theatre	2014	6
18	Chatroom (*****) Four teenagers welcome a depressed teen to their local chatroom, but a pair have sinister plans for him. From the verbally skilled manipulator to the raw, suicidal boy, each of the five plays their part perfectly. The final scenes work beautifully so that each remains true to character.	C Nova	2014	8
19	The Eradication of Schizophrenia in Western Lapland (*****) I am sorry to say that I will not give you the plot of this one because that would destroy an essential part of the experience. Don't try reading a synopsis. There are subtleties in the performance that you will only discover after discussing it with others after the play.	Summerhall	2014	11
20	Richard Herring: Lord of the Dance Settee (*****) Unlike previous shows that had a focal topic, this is a collection of anecdotes and observations from disparate parts of Herrings life. It really doesn't matter because Herring is the consummate comedian who never pauses as he reels off one funny piece after another. Nonetheless, I hope he returns to his research because no one does that as well as he does.	Assembly George Square	2014	5

21	Out of the Blue (*****) The guys from Oxford were back with their great songs and choreographed hijinks. One of my traditions is to see them on the last day of the Fringe when they are decked out in kilts, and they are aware that it is their last concert before this group disbands. Besides the music, it is always touching to see their camaraderie.	Assembly George Square	2014	25
22	Naked in Alaska (*****) Valerie Hager tells of her life as a drug addict who dropped out of high school, but cleaned up her act, and at twenty followed her friend, Raven, into 15 year career as an exotic dancer. As her career blossoms under Raven's tutelage, the relationship slowly changes as Valerie becomes more self-confident, and Raven's domineering ways begin to interfere with dancing community. Hager has the fine acting skills to convey the back stage stories of her friends, and has retained the gymnastic skill to suspend herself in many difficult positions on a pole.	Assembly Roxy	2014	8
23	Waiting for Hitchcock (*****) After his projector fails, our host entertains the audience with a combination of classic and novel up close magic tricks. He finishes with his rendition of Hitchcock's first movie filled with magical creations out of thin air. I love magic, and Jägerhorn's sleight of hand is top notch, and his animated music stands are great fun.	Hill Street Solo Theatre	2014	3
24	The Quant (*****) A financial modeler teaches an investment bank's risk management course that covers both risk factors and the more seedy side of the business. This is quite well written and educational, but people without a financial bent would probably give it four stars. I found his back stories about the individual quants who caused billions of losses particularly fascinating.	Hill Street Solo Theatre	2014	3

25	The Big Bite-Size Plays Breakfast (Menu 2) (*****) These five plays cover neighborly competition, optimizing life experiences, insensitive dating games, reactions to Islamic head scarves, and dealing with a transported 15th century clan chief as a romantic competitor. This was a good line-up with three strong dramas bookended by two absurd comedies. I found "Lunchbreak Manifesto" the most intriguing as a young woman has vowed to herself to make better use of her free time by doing something completely different every noon hour; in this case she explores motherhood by cuddling a baby doll on a park bench while talking to a stranger.	Pleasance Dome	2014	3
26	The Capone Trilogy: Loki (*****) In a 1940s film noir hotel room, a sexy singer must contend with multiple suitors and the cops. This is the way a farce should be done: frantic, but not loud. We are treated to her continual consternation as inconvenient questions, and her lies pile up on her.	C Nova	2014	8
27	The Capone Trilogy: Lucifer (*****) Its 1934 and in a rundown hotel room Nick Nitti is trying to keep the Chicago mob together after Al Capone is sent to prison. Much of the power of the play comes from the existential conflict between the love Nick has for his wife, and the encroaching brutality of his new role. The ending harkens back to the Hayes Production Code of the movies, but is fitting in this case.	C nova	2014	22
28	Burton (*****) The Welsh actor Rhodi Miles plays Richard Burton at age 46 who talks about his whole from being the 12th son of a Welsh miner to his acting experiences to his many lovers. With his rugged look, Welsh accent, and clean text, Miles creates a top notch Fringe solo biography show. I learned many things, and was most surprised that despite his constant philandering Burton remained married to the same woman until he met Elizabeth Taylor	Assembly Hall	2014	18

29	The Curious Incident of the Frog in My Sightline (*****) A young man wakes up to find himself in a world composed completely of frogs, and comes upon a herpetologist who only too readily spouts factoids about frogs. This is a slight, whimsical show that kept its course, and just hit all the right spots for me. I cannot forget learning of the real paradoxical frog whose offspring are larger than the adults, and then shrink as they become frogs.	Zoo Southside	2014	10
30	Duck, Death, and the Tulip (*****) This children's show use puppets for a duck, death, and tulip, as well as an actor for death to tell a gentle tale of life and then death. The kids and I enjoyed the simple interactions among the three objects. Even now I am crying as I think of how kindly death and the duck share swimming and warming each other.	Summerhall	2014	24
31	The Curing Room (*****) In 1945, six naked Russian soldiers are left locked in a barren castle room when the Germans retreat. This is the most intense play I have seen at the Fringe this year. It is gritty, gory, and gruesome, but it is all in the service of giving a sense of verisimilitude that is missing from similar stories.	Pleasance Dome	2014	14
32	Pss Pss (*****) A silent man and woman use a few props to create a varied circus act. Just the need to reach a trapeze bar leads to a routine with a ladder that lasts an entertaining ten minutes before it actually gets set-up. For me, the woman's expressions were constantly beguiling.	Zoo Southside	2014	10
33	Thief (*****) The "Sailor" tells his life's story as a male prostitute who makes his living in the seediest bars by attracting high end clients and then customers, having sex, and then taking their money. For me, this is a tale of how childhood emotional deprivation in a squalid environment can lead to a man an asocial self-loathing man who can only find a connection to life through thrill seeking and cutting. His treatment of his one loyal friend epitomized this.	Hill Street Solo Theatre	2014	3

34	Voca People (****) Eight aliens from the planet Voca must create enough a cappella music to recharge their space ship. After learning English and music from my companion, Tim, the group starts off with a ten-minute tour de force medley of recent pop tunes. Though they have cute dance routines, and great voices, the rest of the show is dependent on audience participation, and does not come close to matching the opening act.	Pleasance Courtyard	2014	11
35	Fragile (****) An angry fellow recounts how an instance of child abuse changed his whole life. As he revealed his despair and loss of trust in his parents and self-damnation this became of the most intense piece I saw at the Fringe this year. Only the final scene of throwing boxes of tapes around seemed over the top.	Zoo	2014	19
36	The Man Who Would Be King (****) In modern Afghanistan, the remaining mercenary of a pair tells a British officer how his compatriot became king of the natives. The story is well told with excellent use of a shawl as a stand-in for a native aide. The modern setting de-legitimizes Kipling's explanation of how two men could create an army superior to all others.	Zoo	2014	20
37	Movin' Melvin Brown: The Ray Charles Experience (****) Backed by a good rock band, Brown combines his tap dancing with songs from both Ray Charles career and his contemporaries. Brown has a fine voice to imitate Charles, and has the welcoming demeanor of a professional showman. Similar to the Blues Brothers act, he works hard to get the audience up and dancing.	C Chamber St.	2014	25

38	Blood at the Root (****) At a Louisiana high school, when a Black woman and two friends choose to sit under the "sacred" oak tree, three nooses appear on it the next day. The six characters give the play a chance to investigate prejudice from many perspectives, but the lack of backstories and the lack of a conservative voice make this more a polemic than an exploration. Only the gay and the White girlfriend of the Black woman have any sense of balance that makes them more than cardboard cutouts.	Assembly George Square	2014	24
39	James Bannon: Running with the Firm (****) Bannon, now an actor, tells of his experiences as an undercover cop infiltrating a football (soccer) hooligan gang. His stories are riveting and revealing, though it seemed a little self-serving. He did superb job of building tension as ignorant partner digs himself deeper and deeper when interrogated by the gang, and then Bannon talking his way out by saying his partner is his brother-in-law.	Assembly Roxy	2014	20
40	Lands of Glass (****) A glass factory owner decides to build a 200 mile railroad as a monument. Much of the charm of this piece arises from the music created on glass instruments including a xylophone and drums. The lead singer had a great voice, but the other cast members were much weaker	Summerhall	2014	18
41	Nothing (****) After an audience member chooses one of several characters to start as well as a number from one to three, the cast emerges from among the audience to tell their stories. The number indicates which of the three stories the first actor must tell, but the other actors are free to choose which of their three they will characterize and how and when they will they will speak up, including improvised interruptions. While the style of presentation is novel, it is the disjoint stories themselves that make this show work so well.	Summerhall	2014	17

42	Circa: Beyond (****) Besides a contortionist, this circus troupe relies on strength and balance for most of their acts. It was a nice twist that the strong person was a woman. I was most impressed with a man who twist and turned while keeping a flat piece of paper in contact with his hand.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2014	24
43	The Object Lesson (****) The audience walks into a large room that has piles of cardboard boxes around its perimeter that we are invited to investigate for five minutes before the performer starts to create the show from objects stashed in the boxes. As the show proceeds at sometimes dull pace, he uses a variety of exercises to help us focus on the characteristics of everyday objects, such as their placement, utility, and relative personal value. As it happens I was in a position to see how he achieves his finale of pulling an enormous number of things from a medium size cardboard box.	Summerhall	2014	23
44	Lippy (****) This play tries to guess why in 2000, four Irish women locked themselves in their house and starved themselves to death. As we watch them deal with their slow withering, and hear some last notes from one of them, we come to the discomforting conclusion that it will remain a mystery. The prologue that has a “professional” lip reader misinterpret the words of a talk show host planted the seed that without enough context few valid conclusions can be drawn.	Traverse Theatre	2014	22
45	Title and Deed by Will Eno (****) A visitor tells of his life and the odd customs of his native land. Just his halting speech pattern with its expansive silences makes the character fittingly alien. I loved his description of his culture’s method of wooing by choosing the musical instrument that you have never played and then serenading your lover.	Assembly Hall	2014	7

46	The Rat Pack – Live (****) Backed by a ten piece band, Frank, Dean, and Sammy clown around and sing standards as well as some interesting, more obscure, songs. This is part of my first day ritual because it is consistently a pleasure to watch, though I may have become a little jaded. I appreciated that the musical director allowed more instrument solos this year, and the wonderful ad libs "Dean" had when handed an anachronistic wireless microphone to replace his faulty wired one.	C Chambers St	2014	2 & 25
47	Dalloway (****) Rebecca Vaughan recreates the world of Virginia Wolff's Clarissa Dalloway by portraying the ten main characters from the novel. I found it remarkable that the play offered enough of each character to create a satisfying whole. On the other hand, to achieve that the play is so dense with words that I both admired Vaughan's stamina, and felt that the play became too exhausting for me.	Assembly Roxy	2014	5
48	The Blues Brothers – Live (****) Jake and Elwood are back with two back singers and a sextet to provide rock and blues from the 1960s. This show is part of my first and last day ritual for the Fringe because I like to get a chance to get out and dance to some good music. The band is tight, the singers talented, the musical director is having a good time, and the entire audience always gets out of their seats and shakes their booties. On the last day, I stood at the back and danced almost the whole time with a couple who returned from the night before.	C Chambers St.	2014	2 & 25

49	Reduced Shakespeare Company in The Complete History of Comedy (abridged) The three men bring their professional stylings to comedy by initially providing a chronology of comedy, and then look at the types of comedy based on a recently "discovered" Chinese text on the subject. I admire how they take their well organized presentation formula, and get the most fun out of it. However, I did not find it funny when their ancient author creation, Rebozo, became a god.	Pleasance Courtyard	2014	9
50	Sanitise (****) This physical theater piece has a woman obsessed with cleanliness finding joy in an unusual ways. The bathroom set, with its tub, sink, and toilet, provide the perfect environment for her to exhibit her attention to detail in her search for dirt. Though she finds some satisfaction in a mail order a dominatrix outfit, it is clear that she can only really find release in the yin of her yang.	Underbelly	2014	4
51	This is Living (****) After she drowns and her 3-year old daughter almost drowns, a woman continues to interact with her husband when he is asleep. Their meetings allow them to lovingly help each other reconcile themselves to the accident by reviewing their past and preparing him to be a single dad. Their tenderness and love was quite heart warming.	Bedlam Theatre	2014	6
52	Bill Clinton Hercules (****) A Clinton impersonator provides interesting anecdotes of his life in Arkansas and Washington D.C. As a political junkie, I found his behind the scenes stories wonderful. As was fitting, the show ran beyond its time slot because of a boring, longwinded polemic at the end.	Assembly George Square	2014	10

53	Bond! (****) With just three steel rectangles for props, Gavin Robertson creates a complete James Bond movie, including the opening credits with dancing women. Since I have seen every Bond film multiple times, I could not help but love this creative homage. Only the once humorous routine of an aged Bond failing his physical tests seemed dated since that was part of the recent "Skyfall."	Zoo	2014	19
54	Kate (****) During World War II, a nice rural young woman comes to Reykjavik, Iceland and discovers how the British soldiers have impacted her uncle's family. By having the uncle run a kiosk for the army, as well as have a daughter this well designed play has the opportunity to look at both the social and economic consequences of the British "invasion." The problem with play for me is that it raises issues of child molestation, and blackmail that the epilogue completely ignores.	Pleasance Courtyard	2014	4
55	The Despondent Divorcee (****) In the late 1940s, a young reporter gathers the facts about unknown woman who jumps to her death at the re-opening of a New York hotel. By combining flashbacks, and his own interviews with the large cast a complete picture of the web of connections among hotel staff develops nicely. With some facts revealed by the woman's sister in the final scene, I felt that there was evidence that the sister may have been murdered, which would have suited the film noir sensibility of the play.	C cubed	2014	17
56	Anthem for a Doomed Youth (****) Guy Masterson reads selected stories and poems from World War I. This is a very personal presentation and Masterson clearly empathizes with the men who fought in the trenches. From the Christmas truce to stories of battles in quagmire trenches, his selections are thoughtful, and I admire his efforts to rein in his emoting to avoid tainting the soldier's efforts.	Assembly Roxy	2014	7

57	The Big Bite-Size Plays Breakfast (Menu 3) (****) The five short plays cover Mothra displaying his acting versatility, an omniscient fellow, a prim but sexually distracted schoolteacher, an overly sensitive husband and an accountant trying to form a friendship, and a film noir send up. As usual, all are well done, and worth watching. I found the "Answer Man" most intriguing as we follow a young woman wasting her limited question as she learns that she is free to ask anything of him, and yet, in the end, discovers that she (and I) have no big question that needed to be answered.	Pleasance Dome	2014	4
58	The Player's Advice to Shakespeare (****) An actor in Shakespeare's company decides he must leave London to join the tenant farmers who are rebelling against the landlords who are evicting them in order to raise sheep. Though the entry point is London stage life, the meat of the play is his gritty tale of life outside the city with its vagabonds, filth, gruesome punishments, idealists, and doomed clashes between the rebels and the well armed forces of authority. In the end, we are faced with the fact that Shakespeare wrote for the wealthy and ignored the plight of the masses.	C Nova	2014	5
59	Bloom (****) Two men recount the lives of two men they met in a Glasgow soup kitchen. Both the story of the Californian who determines that he is best suited to be a drug dealer, and the story of working class Glaswegian who falls apart when his big brother is killed are well told and poignant. Both the Californian's ferry crossing and the young brother's party crashing keenly conveyed a sense of unease.	Underbelly	2014	23
60	Dead to Me (****) A skeptical businessman uses a gift certificate to visit a psychic. The psychic is lovely to him, and quite happy and free when she is alone. In the end, his evolution and her reaction work very well together, and left me more fearful of him than her.	Roundabout @ Summerhall	2014	12

61	Tape (****) A druggy invites a friend from high school to his hotel room with a plan of learning what really happened on a date at the end of their senior year. At the time, I was annoyed by his setting the scene by emptying beer cans to make the room more disheveled, but in hindsight I realize that that act fits the man who spends his life obsessively planning but cannot handle the curves that life throws him. The epilogue, and the fact that the incriminating tape is at times readily available to the blackmailed fellow both are drawbacks.	C too	2014	10
62	Traverse Breakfast Plays: The Broth (****) When the daughter and adult granddaughter visit her grandmother, they find her relaxing at the kitchen table with the grandfather slumped dead in the middle of the table. This black comedy moves back and forth from drama to farce as the plot twists. The grandfather looked a lot like my Scottish friend Brian.	Traverse Theatre	2014	12
63	The Initiate (****) When his son is bullied because of news of pirates in Somalia, a Somali cab driver decides to raise money and return to his homeland to negotiate the freedom of a kidnapped English couple. His initial dealing with his family is caring and motivating, and the visit to Somalia is engrossing, but the ambiguity of final act left me dissatisfied. A fire alarm went off in the middle, but the actors did a marvelous job of re-entering their roles when we returned to the theater.	Roundabout @ Summerhall	2014	15
64	Unfaithful (****) A middle-aged plumber is seduced by a young woman, and then must deal with the fallout when he tells his wife. The ramifications of the taciturn husband's lies, and the neglected wife's reactions keep the plot interesting. The seducer and her gigolo boyfriend are not nearly as well drawn	Traverse Theatre	2014	13

65	Away from Home (****) A gay escort becomes involved with an older football (soccer) star on a rival team who must remain in the closet. The story does a wonderful job of weaving the three threads of team loyalty, professional sport gay life, and unexpectedly deepening relationships. I was also impressed how well the versatile set worked to put the cramped space of The Box completely out of my mind.	Assembly George Square	2014	21
66	Forgotten Voices (****) Five actors sit in chairs and recite accounts from World War I in close to chronological order. The accounts are generally well chosen, and vividly depict the transition from the initial unrealistic optimism to the mire of trench warfare to the Christmas truce to the arrival of the Americans, and finally to Germany's surrender. The American depiction bothered me because it seemed like they arrived and immediately advanced irrespective of the trenches.	Pleasance Courtyard	2014	18
67	Freak (****) A naïve 16-year old is interested but a little baffled by sex while her depressed 30-year old aunt tries to find solace in sex. Both the slight, childlike teen, and the bigger, brittle aunt have the appearance as well as voices that match their well written characters. It was refreshing to hear a girl's ambivalent self-aware thoughts on sex in a play instead of the more typical drunk, or other-oriented characterizations.	Assembly George Square	2014	23
68	The Secret Wives of Andy Williams (****) A young novitiate is sent to an abbey/orphanage populated with quirky nuns and orphans. This is prequel to "The Bastard Children of Remington Steele," focuses more on the nuns' odd habits including wearing a TV antenna hat so they can watch the Andy Williams show. The whimsy and warmth is toned down a bit, but while these are occasionally "bad nuns", there are always good people.	Underbelly	2014	16

69	Dylan Thomas: Clown in the Moon (****) Rhodri Miles plays the poet as he reminisces about his life, and reads some of his poetry. As with his Burton role, Miles has the voice well suited to Thomas. Though the play has the facts, opinions, and epigrams of Thomas, somehow I came away feeling I did not understand what drove the man other than his love of Wales and words.	Assembly Hall	2014	25
70	Outings (****) Five actors read real accounts of people revealing that they are gay to friends and family. The stories are certainly interesting and insightful, but actors sitting in chairs are not as enjoyable as a regular play. I had not thought of how gays will usually have to come out many times as they deal with their disjoint social communities.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2014	22
71	Dame Diana Rigg: No Turn Unstoned (****) The actress intersperse excerpts from her book that is a collection of worst actor's reviews with anecdotes from her life. Though the excerpts are entertaining, I think the audience wanted to hear more about her life. There was an opportunity for questions at the end, but I would have preferred a more thorough reflection by the actress.	Assembly Checkpoint	2014	16
72	Sirens (****) Six young women address the plight of women through screaming, song, jokes, video images, and the spoken word. From the first chorus of screams, I knew I was in for the unique exploration of a topic that this Belgian company has created over the years. They are no longer kids, but their can still create a coherent message from disjoint, and sometimes seemingly chaotic, acts.	Summerhall	2014	16
73	Black Faggot (****) Two Samoans combine dance, jokes, and stories to tell of life as gay men in Samoa. The ongoing story of a young man coming to grips with his sexuality works well. One memorable repeated gags has the huge man playing an effeminate gay who is constantly upset as he tries to keep his lover from making such a mess of his furnishings when he cums.	Assembly Roxy	2014	20

74	Civil Rogues (****) To elude Cromwell's soldiers, three actors remain in drag and become servants of a lady who knows she will be Cromwell's target soon. This farce works well as the trio must somehow switch genders frequently as the same woman hires them to create a secret play. The wife of a sergeant who is hired as a seamstress provides a glimpse into the everyday life of those vexing times and gives the play some weight without disturbing its inherent frivolity.	Pleasance Courtyard	2014	19
75	Janis Joplin: Full Tilt (****) Backed by a full rock band, Angela Darcy, as Joplin, tells of her life and belts out her songs. Darcy has the voice and much of the demeanor of Joplin, but, not surprisingly, there was a certain rawness missing from this slick show. She dismissed the "Holding Company" in one sentence, and I was hoping more tales of backstage life, and less a rock concert.	Assembly Checkpoint	2014	20
76	Torsten the Bareback Saint (****) Andy Bell, lead singer of the band Erasure, s backed by a keyboardist and videos to sing of the life of Torsten. Bell's voice is topnotch, the music is very good, and the lyrics often vocative, but there is no coherent story here. Who could forget Bell in full spiked heels and hose.	Assembly George Square	2014	13
77	Dracula (****) Dracula sees the photo of the fiancée of the realtor visiting his castle in Transylvania, and decides that he must travel to London to have her. Every actor in this large musical can play multiple instruments so the sound is full and varied as well as loud. However, because of the volume, I could rarely understand the lyrics.	Pleasance Courtyard	2014	14u

78	The Matchmaker (****) This two-hander centers on an Irish farmer turned matchmaker and his efforts to match a long series of odd characters. I found the recurring dissatisfied woman the most fun as she complains first about her new husband's lack of sexual energy, and then continues fault with later matches until he finally finds a fellow who can match her appetite. As much as I liked her, the rest of lovelorn made the show feel like an episodic TV series with no natural end.	Assembly George Square	2014	25
79	The Capone Trilogy: Vindici (***) In 1942 Chicago, a cop lays a trap for the man his thinks killed his wife. This is done in the classic, gritty film noir style with fine acting throughout. The huge problem is that they chose to do this in a cramped, hot, hotel room with lousy sight lines that prevented me from seeing significant aspects of the story. If you go, then sit in the front row near the entrance door.	C Nova	2014	5
80	Traverse Breakfast Plays: Blinded by the Light (***) This play has two settings: in 1984 three coal miners support the national coal strike by staying in their coal mine, and in 2284 two young people live in a community that lives in the coal mine to avoid the toxic air on the surface. The interactions of the miners, particularly their slow disillusionment, works well, but the futurists seem more ideas than real people. Despite its title, I don't remember the girl of the future shielding her eyes when she reaches the surface.	Traverse Theatre	2014	20
81	What Do You Mean (***) A naïve playwright creates his play as he writes and learns of the intricacies of putting on a play. This self-referential comedy has many good aspects including little interruptions that provide definitions of terms and great acting by the playwright and producer. I lost interest when it veered from its recursive nature into pure slapstick.	Spotlites @ The Merchants' Hall	2014	21

82	I Promise You Some Sex and Violence (***) A confused gay man sets up his female housemate with his nervous Black best friend. The text and action of this farce works well with the gay man's sexual confusion revealed in only minute ways. The big problem is the nervous characterization of the best friend to the point of neurosis.	King's Hall	2014	18
83	Replay (***) A piano teacher becomes obsessed with her young pupil. While such a plot description makes it sound like a story focused on sexual pedophilia, it seems to be more about a sensitive musician who forms a deep connection to a boy because of his playing. His naiveté and her own confusion make for a complex mix.	C Cubed	2014	5
84	God is in My Typewriter (***) Anna-Mari Laulumaa portrays the life of the troubled life of poet Anne Sexton by starting with physical theatre, and then mixes therapy sessions with excerpts from her life. As could be expected with these sources, the theme was Sexton's fragile mental states, and their familial sources. Laulumaa maintains the delicate balance of despair and emotional intensity without exhausting me.	Hill Street Solo Theatre	2014	3
85	Chlorine (***) A manic young woman singer learns to deal with the other patients and her supervisor in a mental word. She and her companion do a fine job of swinging in and out of coherence as they both improve in fits and starts. When her companion picks up an electric guitar and the supervisor plays a snare drum, the trio produced some entertaining songs too.	Zoo Southside	2014	10
86	Wingman (***) As his mother is dying of cancer, a fellow's long absent father suddenly injects himself into the man's life. The man's efforts to exclude his persistent and obnoxious father are both humorous and futile. Though I slowly warmed to the father, and thus the play, Tim readily accepted him and the play.	Pleasance Dome	2014	14

87	God on Trial (***) The day before they will be gassed at Auschwitz, the Jews in a barracks decide to hold a trial to decide whether God has broken his covenant with the Jews. This has a good mix of the horrific facts of the concentration camp, Biblical citations, and jurisprudence. The final pronouncement by the presiding "judge," a non-Jew, seemed judicially weak.	C nova	2014	11
88	Eden Gate (***) This elaborate production has the audience treated as a group of survivors in a secure building who are seeking a cure from a virus that has reduced the population to 300,000 people. Both the whole process of badges, examinations, and intelligence tests as was well as a covert conspiracy plot fit the setting, and I appreciated how the cast subtly supervised the chaos of the revolt. It was interesting to see how poorly I handled the situation, and I wish they had set aside time to learn of how other audiences had performed.	C nova	2014	17
89	Traverse Breakfast Plays: Fat Alice (***) An incompetent philanderer and his longtime girlfriend must deal with a huge foot suddenly extending through her ceiling from the apartment above. The comedy arising from the discovery of their huge neighbors works well, but nowhere do we see a reason for the girlfriend to stay with this chronically indecisive man. Here aghast description of her encounter with a woman who fills a room is wonderfully evocative.	Traverse Theatre	2014	15
90	Contractions (***) The Human Resource department of a company is quite intrusive as it enforces the no fraternization clause of its employees' contracts. This black comedy does a good job of having their demands slowly become more and more unfeeling and absurd. I never could figure out why there were two pairs of the same characters that alternated scenes.	C nova	2014	24

91	Bottleneck (***) Its 1989 in Liverpool, and a 14-year old boy must deal with growing up, child abuse, and his love of his football team. Between me being tired, and his thick Liverpudlian accent I could barely understand half of this. Tim liked it, but then he could understand what was said.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2014	21
92	Altamont (***) A middle-aged guy in mutton chops and a tasseled leather vest plays a young man going to the huge, free rock concert in 1968 at the Altamont Speedway near San Francisco that saw a man killed by the Hells Angel as the Rolling Stones played "Under My Thumb." He does an excellent of describing the both the physical and social scene of the day's chaos as the people tried to find peace, love, and drugs in a venue that was ill prepared for such a massive turnout. As a former hippie who grew near Altamont, I think I found his appearance disconcerting, and think the show would be much improved if it was presented as a reminiscence.	C nova	2014	17
93	Ennio Marchetto: The Living Paper Cartoon (***) Using popular music associated with celebrities and characters, seemingly every minute Marchetto changes into a new paper costume that he can unfold into the costume of another popular person. His costumes are creative, and often amazing, and the music often rousing, but his selection of celebrities is problematic because of the diverse audience. The young people don't get the references to old film stars, and the older people, like me, don't recognize many of the current pop icons.	Pleasance Courtyard	2014	15
94	13 Sunken Years (***) A young Finnish woman wants to leave her remote village but must deal with her senile grandmother and her mother's ghost. Though the acting is finally tuned, the story is too sparse. The use of a translucent plastic sheet hanging from the three foot raised stage was an innovative way to have the actors swim in the river that dominates their lives.	Assembly Rooms	2014	20

95	Mush and Me (***) This play explores inter-religion relationships by following romance of a Jewish woman and a Muslim man. The show does a credible job of looking at both the interpersonal issues between the two, and the societal pressures the couple encounters. It did seem that her initial rejection of his food restrictions did not fit her later character.	Underbelly	2014	24
96	So It Goes (***) With the help of a fellow, a young woman chose to remain silent as she presents us an homage to her dead father. Through whiteboards, physical theater, and projected photos we can see just how much love she shared with her father who loved to run. I granted her a lot of latitude because of her winning smile.	Underbelly	2014	24
97	Little on the Inside (***) Two Black women form a tight bond in their first day of prison. The relationship develops on many planes, from physical to sharing fantasies. Most memorable is the scene when the taciturn woman demands that the other woman lie about something, even something inconsequential, and she cannot seem to do it well.	Summerhall	2014	16
98	Every Brilliant Thing (***) When six years old, to combat his mother's depression, the playwright/actor began making a list of the brilliant things in the world, and then kept at it. As we entered he gave each of us a slip of paper with a numbered item from the list, and during the show he would call a number and the member holding that item would read it out loud. There is a building momentum of joy as we learn of his life as the list grows, but, in the end, this felt like a hollow one shot affair.	Roundabout @ Summerhall	2014	15

99	Chaplin (***) An old Chaplin in wheel chair watches his younger version reenact significant events from his childhood until he was exiled from the USA. Though there were interesting facts revealed, and the clips from his movies were fun, there was nothing exceptional here, except overload background music. It was a good, solid biographical play about a famous person.	Pleasance Courtyard	2014	4
100	Rhys James: Begins (***) This 23-year old has a knack for good, fairly clean, jokes and rap. He wisely chooses subjects with which he is quite familiar—his youthful looks and dating. I liked his opening video that purported to show a PR firm trying to package him by associating him with Harry Potter.	Pleasance Courtyard	2014	4
101	The Most Serious Ailments of St. Krank's (***) At the turn of the 20th century, a young doctor arrives at the St. Krankenspiegel Hospital in Great Yarmouth to prove himself under the tutelage of a great doctor. Whether in the hospital or on the beach, this gentle farce works well throughout, and especially benefits from excellent singing voices. The lead character has just the right mix of enthusiasm and self-doubt.	Bedlam Theatre	2014	6
102	Boosters (***) A young woman describes all aspects of common people dealing with British justice system with particular attention to prisoners. Though poignant at the time, it is another of those plays that leaves little behind a few days later.	Zoo	2014	19
103	Happy (***) While her virtually unseen boyfriend spends all of his time in the bathroom, Cat tries to find happiness. Even two days later, there is nothing memorable about this play.	Pleasance Dome	2014	16
104	The Trial of Jane Fonda (***) Anne Archer, as Jane Fonda in 1988, meets with six Vietnam vets to clear the air about her visit to Hanoi in 1972. The video footage from the trip and the six veteran's deeply held repugnance all fit together well. On the other hand, Archer's wooden portrayal of Fonda lacked energy and conviction.	Assembly Rooms	2014	14

105	Lorraine & Alan (***) A socially inept marine biologist tries to make a life with seal that was transformed into woman. This is a nice play as she becomes acquainted with human ways, and then must endure a life away from her beloved sea. It is a little dissatisfying that neither demonstrate much real personal growth.	Pleasance Dome	2014	7
106	The Height of the Eiffel Tower (***) Morgana O'Reilly plays an Australian woman who welcomes an old friend while her unruly children constantly cause trouble. Before the show started, the friendly O'Reilly offered us two plates of cookies she made the night before to celebrate the end of the Fringe. This light fare is quite amusing as the quick talking mother's efforts to impress are constantly foiled by her children's crass behavior and her London daughter's call about being a hand model.	Assembly Hall	2014	25
107	The Horror! The Horror! – The Final Curtain (***) In the time of silent films, a music hall owner still presents the acts from the bygone era. This is a good natured homage that is fun because it doesn't take itself too seriously when presenting song and dance acts, as well as a magician and a spiritualist. As the title indicates, there is a darker, macabre side to the story that doesn't quite work as well.	Bedlam Theatre	2014	6
108	Yellow Fever (***) A painter obsessed with the Vincent Van Gogh and his model must deal with his focus on the color yellow. While I found it easy to accept painter character as a neurotic, her reason for staying was never clear to me. The scene with a "severed" ear fit him perfectly, and finally made her something more than caricature.	Venue 13	2014	9

109	Shrew (***) A young woman rails against the mistreatment of Kate by Shakespeare in "Taming of the Shrew" by reading excerpts and analyzing her position. In a nice twist, with her passion and biting tongue, she is Kate arguing about Kate. Even though her passion had her throw books of the play with such abandon that she hit an audience member with one, her argument was clear enough that it made me reassess just how inappropriate Kate's transformation was.	C cubed	2014	17
110	Chef (***) A woman who is the chef in her prison tells of her life, and her love of food. She mixes tales of her father's cruelty and glimpses at the lives of prison kitchen workers with recipes and paeans to specific foods. I found the scene with the knife confusing.	Underbelly	2014	9
111	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu One) (***) This menu has six short plays, and is the weakest of the menus. The one exception was the humorous story of how the parents of a longtime lesbian feel betrayed when she decides that she is straight and is engaged. At the other end of the scale was "The Great War," which was decidedly unfunny as it brought happy-talk news to coverage of the carnage of World War I.	Pleasance Dome	2014	11
112	Horizontal Collaboration (***) Four actors sit at a table and read a script for the first time in which they sit as an international panel of lawyers reading the evidence for the trial of the wife of an African rebel leader for his murder. The plot takes many twists and turns as we hear of her testimony as well as that of her servant. The story is quite interesting, but the gimmick of new actors each day adds nothing to the play, and only highlights that this is just an audio book presented live.	Traverse Theatre	2014	9

113	Travesti (***). Six men speak the verbatim interviews of women asked about their experiences with mistreatment in various settings. I certainly learned some new things, such as how all had had to deal with men grabbing their bums in bars. On the other, it seems that all the women were in their twenties, and I would have preferred a more varied sample.	Pleasance Dome	2014	7
114	The Duck Pond (***) This is a retelling of Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake with the princess swan becoming a duck that becomes a young man to whom the Prince is quite attracted. Everything is here—the Prince is proper and naïve and even does some ballet in toe shoes (which I held in a present box for much of the show), the wizard is villainous, the wizard's daughter is quite an attractive dancer, and a little music box even plays the theme. I suppose if I loved "Swan Lake," then I would have appreciated it more like the rest of the audience.	Bedlam Theatre	2014	6
115	Lynn Ruth Miller: Not Dead Yet (***) The octogenarian comedienne provides humorous anecdotes and ditties from throughout her life. This is not so much a comedy routine, as a light look at a long, diverse life from teaching swimming even though she cannot swim to recently mailing valentines to every prospective l mate. I even had the opportunity to have a short dance with her.	C Nova	2014	4
116	The Exchange (****) A retired sheep shearer and a retired line rider spend their days as the only customers of a barman in a tiny, remote Australian town. The utter repetitiveness of their arguments about who should shout (buy) the next drink proved a charming symbol of their deep dependency and friendship. I am not sure if it was because I've spent three months touring Australia or my decades long friendships, but the rest of young audience just did not get the play.	ZOO Southside	2014	10

117	Barge Baby (***) A young woman returns to her family's home, a barge, to have her baby. This is a likeable comedy with a loving family composed of a stoner father, hard working mother, and druggy sister, and straight husband. Everyone gets their chance here, but the undercurrent of discontent between the self-indulgent father and the undervalued mother keeps the story from drifting too far afield.	C Nova	2014	8
118	The Devil Without (***) A 500-year old Faust teaches the audience mind control, and then uses some of them to help keep the Devil at bay. This is a nice twist on a mentalist act, and has an interesting experiment in which the audience pairs up and then gets their pulses synchronized. I was surprised at how he could quickly hypnotize four random people, and then have each willingly describe what their spirit bodies see in the stairway on the other side of the theatre wall.	C nova	2014	21
119	Traverse Breakfast Plays: Walter (***) A woman begins to date a man with a passion for animals. I thought her slow progression of acceptance was well paced. The final picture of foxes was charming	Traverse Theatre	2014	17
120	Men in the Cities (***) This solo show starts by looking at a specific day and how each of its many gay characters deal with their alarm clock. As well as the playwright/performer's writer's block, we hear of too many disjoint characters for this play to feel like a cohesive whole. However, the frequent stories of a 10-year old boy do have continuity and create someone more than a cypher.	Traverse Theatre	2014	19
121	Tender Napalm (***) A pair of lovers on a deserted island alternate between passionate embraces, and verbal fantasies of violent acts. The fantasies range from UFO abductions to the woman asserting that she is the daughter of Poseidon as she grows innumerable tentacles. There is certainly commitment to the scene, but I couldn't figure out their motivation.	C nova	2014	17

122	I Killed Rasputin (***) After World War II, a journalist visits a Russian count who wrote a book about how he and others repeatedly tried to kill Rasputin, the monk who held inordinate sway in the Czar's court. This piece was just too surreal for me, with the count look an alien from Dr. Who. I think the best part was the puppet dog.	Assembly George Square	2014	12
123	Crazy Glue (***) A couple portray their romantic life in the style of a 1940s cartoon with a can of Crazy Glue often being an integral part of the action.. They referenced many idioms of that time including the huge rolling tongue of a wolf, squeaking sounds of clean glass, and the external loving hearts. Their approach was interesting for quite a while, but could not sustain the show for its full hour.	Assembly Roxy	2014	5
124	Super Tramp (***) Based on a true story, a teenager must deal with his alcoholic father shooting his mother. Besides the death of his loving mother, the Superman costumed boy has to try to function in school and avoid being put in a foster home. The most memorable part was him setting a ten wine bottles on their sides on the floor, and then walking across them to finally balance on the last one.	Zoo Southside	2014	25
125	Lavender Junction (***) Based on an interview with her grandmother, recounts her life growing up in India before World War II. With only the long train trips to religious boarding school for drama, this is a mundane tale in an exotic setting. There just isn't enough conflict here to make it interesting.	C nova	2014	23
126	Song Noir – The Director's Cut (***) With a backdrop of a video of black and white images in the style of film noir, and an accompanist on electric guitar and keyboard, a chanteuse sings eerie ballads of the style. Add her flair for overdramatic movements, and you could have a perfect evocation of the period. However, the "background" music from the video was so loud that it drowned out her voice so that most of her lyrics were unintelligible.	Summerhall	2014	16

127	The Hive (***) In a post-war future, to avoid the poisonous atmosphere and the possibility of interpersonal violence, 100,000 people live underground in individual small cubicles, and communicating only through video screens. As an inhabitant started to challenge the system, I found that my sense of science fiction coherence was constantly being challenged as the created world was just too full of contradictions and inconsistencies. However, I was struck with how well the painting of the set made it seemed like it had all been made of tarnished metal.	Pleasance Dome	2014	7
128	Traverse Breakfast Plays: Mother Ease (***) A volunteer arrives at a single mother's council flat to help her with rearing her baby. As the focus of the story moves back and forth between the women's pasts, the mother's resolve becomes the more interesting tale. The volunteer's final confession comes more as exposition than life.	Traverse Theatre	2014	16
129	Hayani (***) Two Black South African tell of their separate journeys back to their rural homes. The two stories intertwine in a confusing manner so that the two stories lacked cohesion. Though their dancing was very good, it added little to the show.	Assembly George Square	2014	21
130	The Interview (***) An American man wakes up tied to a chair in an undisclosed bunker with four American interrogators trying to get him to admit to something without telling him what they want him to admit to. Initially the scene seems to be a simple example of bad, torturing cop, and good, ethical cop, but his sincere desperation becomes obvious futility that slowly morphs into an overt polemic on torture and guns. With the addition of the devil and the final scene the show loses any sense of gravitas.	Underbelly	2014	5

131	Mark Ravenhill: Product (***) This one woman show has an editor pitching the starring role in an action movie to a famous actress. As her proposed role becomes more extreme the phantom actress becomes less interested in the part, and so did I. Since her love for the terrorist was never justified, the film's character seemed to have Stockholm Syndrome without being kidnapped.	Assembly Hall	2014	13
132	Zelda- The Last Flapper by William Luce (***) When her asylum psychiatrist is called away, a schizophrenic Zelda Fitzgerald takes the hour to recount her life. The Romanian actress blends chaos, and autobiographical tales to create a life of love, self-realization, and excess. The big drawback it that the side-titles required me to constantly look away and lose her performance, particularly when the titles had beautiful distracting poetic phrases.	Hill Street Solo Theatre	2014	3
133	Blind Hamlet (***) With no actors, and no director, the audience listens to the playwright's directions from an amplified iPod on the stage. Though I was one of the seven people invited on stage to play a game of "murder" with two murderers among us, the whole play seemed like a giant gimmick. For me, the relation to Hamlet was tenuous at best, and more a title designed to draw an audience.	Assembly Roxy	2014	9
134	Keeping Abreast (***) Three women and a man sit in chairs and read stories of women's experiences with breast cancer with the focus on education. Though a few of excerpts were aimed at caregivers, the bulk spoke to the victims, and women in general in a plea to examine themselves regularly. I sat next to such a mother whose daughter had accidently chosen this play, and admired her resolve to remain to avoid hurting her daughter.	Assembly George Square	2014	7

135	Split Decision (***) A young fellow counsels an overbearing wife with a drunk for a husband. I like the portrayal of the woman as a strong strident person with just a hint of remorse and heart. The frequent rhyming, particularly of the husband, was the main drawback to the play.	Assembly Rooms	2014	3
136	Traverse Breakfast Plays: The Day the Pope Emptied Croy (***) Two burglars in a church are suddenly confronted with a Christ-like individual. The slow transformation of the Christ to a sacrificial human is both subtle and gritty. Though the play is designed to be a little surreal, I found it just too unrealistic to have the leader continually allow his inept partner to sniff glue from a bag.	Traverse Theatre	2014	21
137	Sex, With Benefits (***) A family oriented gay man visits a wealthy man with whom he has been texting for three years. Both men clearly evince their different views on family and sex, and the conflict is the heart of the play, but their back stories seem shallow. The unrequested re-decorating with a stapler seemed oddly aggressive and invasive in such a situation.	Sweet	2014	9
138	Don't Let Go (***) A middle manager at a coffee factory is jolted out of his bland life by a red balloon. While the plot is simple and the acting good, many of the scenes of this devised piece make sense only to the actors. The highlight for me was when then much put upon secretary breaks loose and expresses her exuberance.	Bedlam Theatre	2014	6
139	Don Quixote (***) With the help of the gardener at his convalescent hospital, a man with senile dementia escapes to try to save damsel. Both Quixote and Sancho Panza are wonderfully translated into the modern world by their actors and their banter, but the rest of play is quite weak. There is an ongoing a cappella theme that serves no purpose, and the encounters with other characters bring the light flow of the pair to a deadening slow pace.	theSpace @ Sureons Hall	2014	21

140	Show 6 (***) In the future, a young man returns to his small, secure, privileged enclave, only to find that he must deal with the whispered words of man he hits and leave while driving. This is a very stylized piece with the characters speaking with significant nouns often omitted from their speech. The effort to break people out of a prison is so surreal that the whole play loses any impact.	Roundabout @ Summerhall	2014	11
141	Tea Time Story (***) This is a true story of a Chinese woman, played by Heather Lai, who voluntarily follows her husband to a work camp becomes friends with a young girl. This is a story love for her husband, compassion for others, and the injustice of the Chinese system in 1969. As the camp baker, her use of flour thrown in the air to change scenes was inspired.	Zoo	2014	24
142	St. Joan (***) Three actresses play Joan of Arc. The only memorable scene is the gruesome description of Joan burning on a huge pier. Despite the action of the play, it failed to keep my interest.	Bedlam Theatre	2014	13
143	Night Bus (***) A pair of actresses perform a variety of skits about night busses. The vignettes vary from comedic to musical to drama. The first, with an old woman pestering the other about the location of a particular red bus was the most memorable.	Pleasance Courtyard	2014	12
144	Lysistrata (***) In modern Greece, Lysistrata organizes women to occupy the Acropolis and withhold sex from their partners to protest the harsh Greek economic actions in response to the World Bank. Much of the rest of the play diverges from the original, and tries to show that such a protest is anachronistic, and will be ineffectual. Thus, the original play lauded women's wisdom, but this update consistently portrays Lysistrata as self-centered, power mad, and rather ignorant.	C Chambers St.	2014	24

145	Drunk Lion (***) Chris Davis tells a tale of setting free Mexico's Lion and then sharing many drinks and tales of women with him. A nice reminder of the setting is having the lion speak in Spanish, and the Chris' translating as well as the overarching Mexican magical realism of the premise. Davis' casual style gives the presentation the feel of a barfly telling a drunken story instead of a storyteller presenting a tale of value.	The Newsroom	2014	24
146	How to Disappear Completely (***) A lighting designer combines narrating a film he made about his mother dying of cancer, with a few stories from his own life. While the loss of a moother is always touching to the child, this piece seems to be too self centered, with little thought for his audience. I did like his explanations and demonstrations of the effects of the different types of lighting.	Underbelly	2014	4
147	Bette Davis Ain't for Sissies (***) Jessica Sherr plays Bette Davis as she describes her career while waiting to lose her Oscar nomination in 1939. Sherr wrote the play, and has the look and feel of Davis, but the text lets her down. Instead of following Davis' life in chronological order, the playwright chose to bounce around in such a way that the actress' life choices that made sense to Davis seem incoherent in the re-telling.	Assembly Rooms	2014	19
148	Standby for Tape Back-Up (**) This fellow attempts to read meaning into the video clips that remain on a video tape that has been frequently re-recorded on. Though there are a few witty synchronicities, seeing the introductive credits the "Fresh Prince" TV series replayed more than five times became torture. The best part was before the play started and he had "The Wizard of Oz" playing in synch with Pink Floyd's "Dark Side of the Moon."	Summerhall	2014	23

149	Trainspotting (**) Staged in a large dark room with the audience shuffled around movable walls as needed, this gritty play follows life of a Edinburgh heroin addict and his addicted friends as he repeatedly gets clean and then gets hooked again. Between their often undecipherable Scottish brogue, and my own lack of reading or watching the source material, only a few of the many vignettes made sense as a whole. Now that I have read a synopsis of the film, I can see how others would relish the play, but that was not me on that late Friday night.	Hill Street Drama Lodge	2014	22
150	The Lieutenant of Inishmore (**) This bloody Irish farce has a fellow accused of running over the cat of a violent IRAish man trying to find a way to avoid dire retribution. Because of the very heavy Irish brogues used, much of what was said was unintelligible, but, in hindsight, the play was much more about thoughtless action than words. The repeated spattering of "blood" on the ponchoed audience was also a big drawback, but the black shoe polish to dye a tabby was inspired tomfoolery.	Hill Street Drama Lodge	2014	22
151	RIVERRUN (**) A woman recites excerpts from Joyce's stream of conscience novel, "Finnegans Wake." The book has a reputation as one of the most difficult works of fiction in the English language, and the play is just as difficult. Nonetheless, I admire Olwen Fouéré's ability to remember and provide emotional content to a text that is often gibberish.	Traverse Theatre	2014	21
152	The Carousel (**) This one-woman show has three generations of women talking about their interactions and lives in rural Canada. I knew from the first minute that this play was going to be trouble for me when the actress switched between two of the women with no visual cues. What made deciphering the speakers even harder was that the youngest was never even given a name!	Traverse Theatre	2014	14

153	SmallWar (**) A live actor as well as multiple images of the same actor on a huge projected screen recites the words of non-leaders of World War I. While the words were touching, his presentation of those words was so flat that I could not stay awake. There was virtually no movement during the whole show.	Traverse	2014	13
154	Neverland (**) Nine characters imagine their version of a wonderland like Peter Pan's Never Never Land. The stories held little interest for me, and I began to count how many were left about half way through. On the other hand, their chorus work almost made the play worth it.	theSpace @ Venue 45	2014	11
155	Perfection (**) Accompanied by a guitarist/playwright, a Christian man tries to figure out why God would give us life, and then give us death. Since I believe that you cannot have life without death to provide a contrast, the central conflict of the piece held no interest for me. This seemed like a very personal project of the earnest young playwright, but it felt like religious tract than a play.	C nova	2014	25
156	The Dogs of War (**) Using excerpts from Shakespeare and new text, this UC Davis troupe explores the effects of war. The play does not work because there are too many characters and not enough plot to connect them into a cohesive whole. Though there is the occasional lyricism of Shakespeare, the prose is so disjoint that the jumble obscures the poetry.	Assembly George Square	2014	8
157	Bloody Trams (**) Two actors and a piano player relay verbatim comments by Edinburghians about the new trams. Having been coming to the Fringe for the past seven years, I know of some of the troubles of the trams, but I think this piece is really designed with the locals in mind. I was disappointed that the music and lyrics of the songs had little relation; it seemed like this show would have been perfect for ditties.	Traverse Theatre	2014	8

158	Mojo (***) A group of minor criminals hold up in their nightclub as they await an attack from a rival crime boss. From a weak boss to a cutlass as the weapon of choice to a violent sometime unrestrainable thug, little of this makes sense. I cared for none of the characters because none seemed real.	C Chambers St.	2014	22
159	Donald Robertson is Not a Stand-Up Comedian (**) A comedian tells a story of trying to teach a bullied school boy how to use jokes to assert control of his life. Since his own jokes were quite weak, this was an example of the blind leading the blind, and failed miserably. The only clever bit was the appearance of the boy at the end doing a short stand-up routine.	Traverse Theatre	2014	13
160	Sheeps: Wembley Previews (**) The premise here is that a three man sketch troop use the Fringe as a tune-up for an appearance as an opening act at Wembley by repeatedly reworking their first sketch. From the beginning they admit that the sketch is weak at best, and their variations do nothing to improve it. While the rest of the audience loved it, for me, after watching Richard Herring be funny for a solid hour, this absurdist running gag of unfunny left me cold.	Bedlam Theatre	2014	6
161	Nougat for Kings (**) The premise of this farce is to present a TV action series set in the swashbuckler era with the stock characters of modern tongue-in-cheek TV series. They are all here, including the fit leading man, an evil brother, a lecherous power authority, an martial arts expert woman, and the attractive though naïve damsel. As with most farces here, the director fell into the trap that louder and faster equates to funnier, when it often just obscures humor with its chaos.	Underbelly	2014	5
162	Puzzle the Puzzle (**) This slow Chinese piece has a reticent English speaking fairy help inspire a mute poet by moving around small models in his study. I am sorry to say that I that have not learned to appreciate this style of production.	C Nova	2014	3

163	Wuthering Heights (*) Though there are allusions to Bronte's novel, most of this show is about…well I don't really know. Much of the play has the four men running or galloping around on all fours. Though they warned us at the beginning that there wouldn't be a story, I think it only fair that they should not have named the play for a famous story—a theatrical game of bait and switch.	Summerhall	2014	23
164	The Flood (*) A World War I soldier repeatedly goes over the top followed by a nurse triaging the casualties by dividing pieces of meat into three buckets: the dead, the blighty, and those stitched back together and sent back to the front. The style of both the repetitive action and constantly repeated phrases are identical to the play "Anna" by the same company last year, and I find such lack of creativity dishonest and repugnant. It was all the worse because the nurse did have some evocative things to say if not for the playwright's slavish adherence to last year's phrasings.	Summerhall	2014	16
165	Kim Noble: You're Not Alone (*) In chatrooms and in DIY stores, Noble disguises himself, and then abuses his unsuspecting victims. Though he certainly puts effort into his disguises, intentionally misleading and hurting people, and then making it public for his own aggrandizement is despicable. In particular, his posing as a woman on a chatroom, and then revealing the private sexual conversations as well as the photos of a mislead fellow to the audience is an invasion of privacy, if not illegal.	Traverse Theatre	2014	19
1	Rick Wakeman (*****) The keyboardist who played in the band Yes, and had long solo career, alternates between playing the piano and providing anecdotes from his career. He demonstrated how his teacher had instructed him to play in different styles by playing the Beatle's "Eleanor Rigby" in the style of Prokofiev. This was the highpoint of this year's Fringe for me because it reinforced my intention to return to the piano when I retire.	Assembly Hall	2013	18

2	The Boss of It All (*****) An actor is hired to play the president of a company for an important contract signing, but then things go awry. Watching the actor wing his way through his role with virtually knowledge of the company is hilarious. It is also revealing of how a few well-chosen words can hide ignorance and even feign caring.	Assembly Roxy	2013	8
3	Long Live the Little Knife (*****) A married couple are forced to move from their small time swindle to a big time con. Their love for each other, and the clever and instructive cons make this a wonderful caper story. The Jackson Pollock inspired theater furnishings and programs with the latter individually numbered were a neat foreshadowing of the subsequent cons.	Traverse Theatre	2013	8
4	Super Hero Snail Boy (*****) In response to his big brother's death, an eleven year old boy starts to go through life thinking he has super powers. This fast-paced children's play provides savvy techniques for children to deal with anger, loss, and fear without being clinical. The same actor who appears in an inspired snail costume, also is the widower whose scene of re-engaging with his daughter had me teary.	Bedlam Theatre	2013	6
5	Andrew Maxwell: Banana Kingdom (*****) Maxwell covered a wide range of topics with no particular theme. It was rare that I would go more than a minute without laughing out loud.	Underbelly: Bristo Square	2013	11
6	I (Honestly) Love You (*****) Two people who have a disease that prevents them from lying find love and complications in each other's arms. Like good science fiction, this show sticks to a simple premise without changing anything else. The chemistry between the couple made this light piece special.	C Aquila	2013	12

7	’33 (A Kabarett) (*****) In 1933 Berlin, after every member of his troupe has been arrested, the emcee gives snippets of each act and provides the reasons the Nazis feared each. Bremner Duthie has a great voice which serves all of his roles well except that of the dancer. His writing is even more powerful as his comedian bitingly comments on the audience and the state of the Nazi society.	Hill Street Theatre	2013	5
8	It Goes Without Saying (*****) A professional mime mixes humor and pathos as he speaks about his life from 1960’s Montana (a state with people of few words) to travelling school mime to caring for his lover during 1990’s New York City AIDs epidemic. What a combination – a world class mime, and the words of sincerity. A silent, contorted kiss from his dying partner cannot be forgotten.	Hill Street Theatre	2013	5
9	Why is John Lennon Wearing a Skirt? (*****) A middle-aged woman recalls her life rejecting the female stereotypes that society attempted to impose upon her. Whether this is autobiographical or not, she convincingly acted like her anger came from her soul. Her constant wardrobe changes as she shifted from pants to skirts and back worked well as visual evidence of her resistance and capitulation to the demands of the culture of those times.	Hill Street Theatre	2013	5
10	Bin Laden: The One Man Show (*****) An actor plays Osama Bin Laden, and tells of his life from meeting his wife at university through the World Trade Center attack. The play makes a convincing argument that Bin Laden was a patriot and a genius at promoting the freedom of the Islamic countries near the Middle East. While I do not support terrorism, the historian in me did come away admiring his courage, resilience, and devotion to a righteous cause.	C nova	2013	10
11	Dark Vanilla Jungle (*****) A troubled woman deals with her continual abuse by imagining a relationship that does not exist. Gemma Whelan turns in the best performance I have seen in years. While this is not the most enjoyable show this year, it is a must see.	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	14

12	Ciara (*****) The daughter of a deceased crime lord must deal with his competitor while trying to run her art gallery. She had a great combination of steel, wisdom, and pain. She could try to play the upscale entrepreneur, but her past still invaded her life.	Traverse	2013	20
13	The Cock Factory (*****) This play opens with three grocery shopper weighing choices, but the scene quickly shifts to follow the processing of chickens from selection in the yard through butchery and delivery to a store. This six person physical theatre troupe epitomized the best of the Fringe for me, as it produced a show that was creative without being incoherent. For example, they transform ordinary shopping carts into a chicken coop, an inspection table, and then a whole packaging conveyor system.	Cowgatehead	2013	3
14	Mercy Killers (*****) While under arrest, a red neck car mechanic explains how the mortgage crisis and health system led to the death of his wife. Michael Milligan does a great job of despairing, raging against the system, and apologizing to his interrogator. His turmoil over his Rush Limbaugh free market politics and his own need for a safety net was perfect.	Assembly Hall	2013	24
15	Blues Brothers (*****) Jake and Elwood are here to provide '50s and '60s blues, with a horn section and back-up singers to provide a nice big sound. My yearly trek found that again the players had a good time, and so did the audience. I am impressed in how the show is designed to get even the most staid old Brits up on their feet dancing by the end of the show.	C Chambers Street	2013	4 & 26
16	Quietly (*****) Two 52-year old Belfast men meet in a bar to have a reconciliation over a bombing when they were 16. The work class Catholic's rage could be barely contained, while the stoic Protestant would not deny his youthful ideals. Both strong men conveyed their regrets while never backing down.	Traverse Theatre	2013	22

17	Blam! (*****) Four Dutch office workers slowly turn their office into an action movie set. This is a wonderful show as they transform normal office equipment into armor, weapons, and aliens, and then do all of the stunts you see in such movies. The final tilting stage transformation combined with their homage to super hero movies is just great!	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	26
18	The Play That Goes Wrong (*****) This is just a fun farce about murder mystery play with all of the usual trappings. This is broad slapstick that worked perfectly for me. I appreciated the contortions of the actors as they tried to keep the props on the wall during a phone call, and later tried to surreptiously lift a KO'd actress through the window.	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	23
19	Grounded (*****) After her pregnancy, an air force pilot is transferred from her jet to guiding an Afghan drone from Las Vegas. While always maintaining her fierce approach, she still conveys love for her husband and daughter. I had never thought of how mind numbing piloting a drone would be.	Traverse Theatre	2013	21
20	Avenue Q (****) This musical has a young college graduate moving into an urban neighborhood populated by people and "monster" muppets. The story is generally upbeat with good tunes and lyrics. The young cast is strong and the muppets keep things nicely quirky.	Assembly Hall	2013	14
21	Fade (****) A journalist arrives at a film director's house to conduct an interview only to find that his ex-girlfriend is also there. As the play progresses the manipulations of the director become more and more insidious, and dangerous for the fragile journalist.	Bedlam Theatre	2013	6

22	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu 2) (****) Six actors perform five short, generally light, plays ranging from a debate between praying mantis lovers to a man seeking consolation after his mother's funeral. These breakfast shows have become a yearly tradition for me because they are consistently satisfying, with the croissants and coffee just a bonus. My favorites from this menu were a tender story of a hung over woman waking to find herself in bed next to her first lesbian lover, and a humorous story of a BBC4 editor trying to make a script about Tourette syndrome palatable for his conservative audience while unconsciously speaking in double entendres.	Pleasance Dome	2013	7
23	L.O.V.E. (****) A man, woman, and a "lovely" young man mix Shakespeare's sonnets with physical theater. The energetic dancing/wrestling is wonderfully evocative of the author's lusty words. The extended scene with a very sharp pointy knife constantly grazing the dancers was thrilling.	Assembly Roxy	2013	17
24	Eugenie Grandet (****) This adaptation of Balzac's novel has the young heiress pining for her wastrel cousin while dealing with her miserly father. This straight costume drama is well acted, and engrossing. From her initial naivete to her later complex settlement, Eugenie's growth is fascinating and rings true.	Assembly George Square	2013	13
25	Brand New Ancients (****) A Kate Tempest raps an entire saga while backed by a tuba, drums, violin, and cello. From the outset, Kate established a rapport with audience I've seldom seen. Part of the pleasure of this show is watching the joy with which all of the musicians performer.	Traverse Theatre	2013	22
26	Music Show – Wedding (****) A large Korean cast uses a wedding and its reception as a backdrop for a vaudeville of music and dance. The audience jumped right in as rock and roll songs mixed with ballads, a slapstick father of the bride, and gangnam style dances. The show stopper was a soft rendition of "Over the Rainbow" on water filled glasses.	C Chamber St.	2013	19

27	The Halcyon Days (****) A dying woman and a forgetful movie actor form a bond in run down old folks home. Their friendship is as natural as their final choices. His palsied shuffle was perfect, as was her infatuation.	Assembly Hall	2013	23
28	Fight Night (****) Five candidates vie for election as the audience repeatedly votes based on a variety of attributes. Because attributes vary from appearance to choice of election methods, this show tells us as more about ourselves as electors than our actual political preferences. Each vote revealed something interesting until the one that asked people to literally leave the process, because some left because they did not like the show instead of just rejecting the majority candidate.	Traverse Theatre	2013	20
29	Adam Hills: Happyism (****) The Aussie comedian continues to provide good, relatively clean humor at the expense of only himself. As usual, his ad hoc work with the audience members demonstrated his great improve humor. He must of spent 10 minutes mining humor with a responsive Scottish GP.	Assembly Hall	2013	23
30	Oh My Irma (****) After her laundress roommate dies, a demented young woman investigates her roommate's main customer. The off balanced performance dove tails perfectly with the story as it moves from chaotic to a coherent story. The show is striking in how her dementia often leads her from what start out as fairly innocent acts to tragic consequences.	Hill Street Theatre	2013	4
31	Pip Utton: Churchill (****) The statue of Winston comes alive once a year, and relates the high and low points of his life. As I expected, Utton does a great job of impersonating Churchill, and selecting key aspects of his life to explain his actions. Though I knew much of Churchill, Utton revealed unbeknownst aspects of his childhood, and I still the re-enactment of his famous World War II speeches.	The Assembly Rooms	2013	10

32	Threeway (****) The morning after an unemployed husband, his nurse wife, and an invited Black businessman stranger have a ménage a trois, they find that they have switched bodies. Rather than playing this completely for laughs, this also explores the dangers of incompetence and the give and take of marriages. The discoveries of the husband turned nurse have a great blend of insight, humor, and pathos.	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	15
33	Breaking the Silence (****) After returning from a meeting in Warsaw of the descendants of Auschwitz survivors, a medical student pleads with her mother and grandmother to tell her of their family history. As would be expected, the re-enactment of scenes from the Warsaw Jewish Ghetto are powerful and disturbing, and the deep influence on succeeding generations of those acts are also thoughtfully explored. It is hard to imagine the horrible pain of parents giving up their children when the Nazis took away all children under 10 in just one day.	C nova	2013	10
34	The Pyramids of Margate (****) A shy, 40-year old IT man pines for a Polish co-worker while viewing much of the world in terms of Dr. Who of the 1970s. While he knows that much of his life is pathetic, he does demonstrate social courage and passion that makes him charming to me. Since I watched Dr. Who in the 1970s, I understand the references from personal experience, however the play provides the critical information so that even the uninitiated will not feel left out.	Hill Street Theatre	2013	4
35	Lies My Garden Told Me (****) A young woman starts out to climb a very tall tree and, by end of the day, she has befriended a flightless baby bird, a lost spider, and a poop-loving fly. While this is a perfect children's story, adults will find Fleur's physical story telling enchanting. From a strutting bird walking on the ground for the first time, to the spider's tale of being captured in a glass inside a house, she has left me with innumerable engaging memories.	Cowgatehead	2013	4

36	The Collision of Things (****) After a young London married couple rent a room to a Yorkshire fellow the threesome deals with their difficulties in the world. As the couple deals with estrangement, it is the roommate's search to understand his father that drives the show. The final symbolic leap of faith is well conceived.	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	18
37	The Rat Pack – Live (****) Frank, Dean, and Sammy along with a ten-piece band and two backup singers, sign their signature songs along with some more obscure ones. Unlike previous years, the Dean Martin impersonator actually matched Martin's casual phrasing instead of clipping their ends. All of the music and signing was spot on, though few of the musicians looked like they were having a good time.	C Chamber St	2013	7
38	Boys (****) At the end of the university year, four diverse male roommates and their two girlfriends recover from their party, and think about their future. This is no facile coming of age party piece, but rather a well- crafted exploration of friendships, employment dreams, and emotional trauma. The 30-year old hard partying waiter has his serious moments, but provides the best comedic scene when he recounts how he tried to explain an unflushable turd to a non-English speaking girl.	C Aquila	2013	19
39	The Tin Ring (****) Jane Arnfield tells the true story of a young Czech Jew who lost her family and lover, but survived the Holocaust. From an illegal bicycle ride, to her clandestine lovers meeting in a transit station, to her work in a Swedish factory this is a refreshing Holocaust story that focuses more on life than death. That is not say there are not horrific images from her starving days in a concentration camp, it is just that the story is about her will to overcome the obstacles.	Summerhall	2013	14

40	Stuart: A Life Backwards (****) An advocate for the homeless becomes enamored with a homeless man, Stuart, with cerebral palsy, and seeks to learn more of his past. Despite our pity for Stuart, we must reconcile his disarming charm with his own history of violence. He is not simple, and the play does a fine job of providing excerpts that make his later acts understandable, if not excusable.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2013	13
41	Undone (****) Starting from his bath in a small tub, a muscular man, slowly dresses and tells of his family. His sinuous body as well as his well-controlled voice permeate the whole piece. The text is poetic but a little too dense to be processed.	Assembly George Square	2013	22
42	Ed Byrne – Roaring Forties (****) As the title suggests, Byrne focuses this show on the beginning of his fifth decade. His humor continues to be gentle and self-deprecating.	EICC	2013	11
43	Sam Rose in the Shadows (****) The son of an overprotective father escapes from his house, and finds the outside world safer than his father thought. The stick puppets come to life and the Keeper of the Keys villain was suitably scary for the children. This is a children's show with a lesson for their parents.	Bedlam Theatre	2013	6
44	Donal O'Kelly's Skeffy (****) In modern day Ireland, as a drunk is being arrested he recounts the militant pacifist actions of James Joyce's friend Francis "Sheffy" Sheehy-Sheffinton. Between his hunger strike, and later lonely attempt to prevent looting during the Easter Rising in 1916, Sheffy provides an inspiring model of active pacifism. The initial brogue of the drunk was sometimes incomprehensible, but when it came to presenting Sheffy's life, both his speech and the story became clear.	Hill Street Theatre	2013	4
45	Forget What You Heard (about spoken word) (****) This is a sort of a cabaret for the spoken word. Two comperes present their own work, and then mixed three established poets with open mike volunteers for an hour. The high quality of almost all of the work impressed me.	Cowgatehead	2013	3

46	The Trials and Tribulation of Mr. Pickwick (****) Nigel Nevinson portrays the tale of Dicken's Mr. Pickwick going to debtors prison because of his refusal to pay a breach of marriage proposal settlement. I have never read the "Pickwick Papers," but I still found his slices of English life, both mundane and extreme, enlightening and entertaining. Among the many stories, the most memorable had the very proper Pickwick quite vexed after he thinks he has safely returned to his room in a Labyrinthian inn only to find that real owner who arrives shortly is a dismayed of a woman!	Hill Street Theatre	2013	5
47	Richard Herring – We're All Going to Die (****) Herring finds humor in all aspects of death, and kept the audience and me laughing most of the time. Unlike his recent shows, he did not do extensive research for this one, and it shows. There are more cultural references that lost me, and the logic of his dissection of Hamlet's "To be or not to be" speech is badly flawed in its use of the existence of the ghost of his father.	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	9
48	The Pearl (****) This is a sweet physical theater interpretation of Steinbeck's tale of how the discovery of a giant pearl destroys the lives of a diver's family. The actors do a great job of conveying their initial tender love, and then his transformation and her dismay. The underwater scene with its fishing net jellyfish was a creative interlude.	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	9
49	The Little Soldiers (****) This physical theater piece has brother circus performers vying for the attention of high wire artist. With just ladders and ropes the brothers aptly demonstrate their battle. A key character development has the woman stand on the ladder and uses the ropes to manipulate the brothers as puppets.	Pleasance Dome	2013	11

50	Longing for Grace (****) Grace Kiley plays the spirit of Princess Grace (ne Kelly) of Monaco at her own funeral as she reviews her life, particularly her limited choices during her reign. I found it quite illuminating to find out that she had many affairs when an actress, and that Prince Rainier (and later the citizens of Monaco) objected to her returning to her raison d'etre – acting. If you are not well acquainted with the movies of the 1950s, then this play will not be for you because most of her friends were movie stars at that time and referred to by only their first names.	Hill Street Theatre	2013	4
51	Party Piece (****) Three men and a woman, all university age, both party and talk about partying. This was endless fun as they spoke of their alcohol fueled foolishness, and executed gymnastic dance routines, while maintaining the ambience of a house party. While their tales were often funny, they did not strain credulity.	Bedlam Theatre	2013	6
52	If These Spasms Could Speak (****) Thirty year old actor/director Robert Softley talks about his life dealing with cerebral palsy and demonstrates his current abilities and the appearance of his body. I am grateful for the chance to get the answers to questions I might have wondered about and to those I should have asked. This was one of the most rewarding shows I have attended at the Fringe.	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	7
53	I'm with the Band (****) A four piece rock band, symbolizing the four parts of the United Kingdom, must deal with the energetic lead guitarist (Scotland) leaving because of financial difficulties. For me, each member reflected his country well, and the actual music was pretty good. The English keyboardist, in particular, reflected England's vitality and arrogance.	Traverse	2013	13

54	The State vs John Hayes (****) A condemned lesbian prisoner talks about her life growing up, her two murders, and her two personalities. Most of the time she seems quite likeable, but little touches suggest an underlying menace. Between her rhapsodizing about her gun, and her thunderous shaking of her cot, we see how each side committed its own murder.	C nova	2013	10
55	Chalk Farm (****) A mother must deal with her suspicion about her teenage sons involvement in the 2011 London riots. She well coveys the love, aspirations, and resentments of a low income single mother, and he has all the bravado that a teenager's lack of the sense of consequences can create. His incremental thought process as he is drawn deeper into the riot seems quite natural.	Underbelly Cowgate	2013	9
56	The List (****) A woman maintains a priority list of things to do, but a change of the priority of one item may have cost the life of her friend. The actress conveys both her isolation on the Canadian frontier and her consuming regret about her part in the death. The sequence of events that must occur to lead to the death is quite reasonable considering her friend's fears.	Summerhall	2013	16
57	Out of the Blue (****) The Oxford male a cappella group returns with their good natured choreography and great sound. As I expected, they performed both upbeat numbers and ballads with equal aplomb. Though most voices were good, I think I have become a bit jaded since I've seen them five times.	Assembly George Square	2013	26
58	Preen Back Yer Lugs (****) After countless world wars, Scotland is the only livable place on Earth, but the Scots must deal with emigrants from England that are organizing. This satire has a number of plot twists which allows it to probe a range of issues besides just Scotland's devolution. The final metamorphosis of the Scottish leader and his huge wind turbine leave satire behind for just plain silliness.	Pleasance Dome	2013	11

59	Missing (****) Through dance and physical theater we follow a woman's effort to understand herself. Her efforts range from dealing with co-workers while walking along a conveyor belts to being X-rayed to trying to get comfortable sitting with a lover. The use of lit, transparent screens to isolate specific interactions was novel and effective.	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	23
60	Jordan (****) A woman whose abusive lover leaves before her baby is born sets out to bring up the baby until a year later he returns to try to legally claim the child. The story is true, and the actress does a fine job of seeming troubled and a bit simple. As the story unfolds, I could understand her state of mind that led to her sad decisions. Note that this is a repeat for me, and I have it 5 stars in 2010.	Assembly Hall	2013	17
61	Robert Golding (***) Upon completion of her restaurant, a woman invites her husband and the architect to a quiet dinner there the night before it opens. As the architect firmly asserts his conspiracy theories his presentation subtly evinces his sureness of purpose. While most of his arguments for conspiracy were within the realm of possibility, the Paul McCartney is dead argument destroyed his credibility and hurt the play.	Assembly Roxy	2013	7
62	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (Menu 1) (***) Six actors perform five short, generally light, plays ranging from a 16th century married actors rehearsing and arguing about their life decisions to a woman and a talking elephant who discuss running off together. As usual, the acting is top notch, but most of the stories seemed weaker than Menu 2. The exception was the story of a circus high-wire wife who must overcome the falling death of her husband to start to walk the wire again.	Pleasance Dome	2013	9

63	Executed for Sodomy: the Life Story of Caterina Linck (***) This is the true story of the trial of an early 16th century who disguised herself as a man to become a soldier, prophet, and husband. The actress portrayed Caterina as a believable blend of anguish, strength, love, and piety. It is an intriguing historical example of a woman trying to overcome the gender stereotypical roles forced on her by her society.	C Nova	2013	17
64	The Bunker Trilogy: Agamemnon (***) In a World War I bunker, a badly injured Captain Agamemnon worries about his abandonment of his wife two years ago while we see how she dealt with his absence. This is a reasonable adaptation of the Greek myth, but it seemed to have a very slow pace. The fact that the play was performed in a room the size of a bunker with no ventilation made it quite hot for the audience, and many of us were anxious for the play to end.	C Nova	2013	26
65	The Extremists (***) On a TV political interview show, the author of a book on the dangers of extremism argues passionately for its defeat at all costs. This fast paced satire has the author arguing and gesticulating almost non-stop with a but a few momentary comments from the interviewer. This unrelenting pace proves monotonous and weakens the satire on blatant hypocrisy. When I suggested to a member of the company that the show would be better with an occasional commercial break, they said that the playwright specifically wanted the play to become mind numbing.	Assembly Roxy	2013	7
66.h	Cherry On Top (***) In South Africa, the wife of a dying man must deal with her suspicions that he had a mistress. By using wigs and costumes, the two actresses do a wonderful job of assuming the roles the wife, the mistress, their mothers, a hair dresser, a waitress, and even a drunk florist. The misguided note attached to a bouquet really hurt an otherwise fine play.	C Chamber Street	2013	8

67	Beyond Therapy (***) After taking the advice of her licentious therapist and his scattered therapist to place personal ads, lonely Prudence and conflicted, ever crying bisexual Bruce meet for dinner. Besides these four, Bruce's lover, and a handsome waiter round out a cast that keeps the comedy moving right along. Though these medical students could have played this as a broad slapstick farce, they wisely kept that impulse in check most of the time, and allowed the words provide most of the humor.	theSpace on the Mile	2013	7
68	Bedtime Solos (****) A man and wife have troubles making love because of his fear of premature ejaculation. That description sounds more clinical than the play's physical theater approach was. The actors were well suited to their roles, and the husband's soliloquy about thinking of other things during sex was quite humorous.	Assembly Roxy	2013	26
69	Nirbhaya (***) Five real victims, an actress, and an actor relive the abuse of six victims of horrible abuse of women in India, Pakistan, and Chicago. While the abuse these women suffered was certainly terrible, I had trouble seeing them reliving their experiences nightly. Somehow forcing them to perform every night seemed another form of abuse.	Assembly Hall	2013	20
70	Losing the Plot (***) After disappearing for three months, an art teacher returns to his family to find that his upset wife has written a best selling book based on his foibles. This is light stuff that seemed more a TV sitcom than a play.	New Town Theatre	2013	21
71	You're a Good Man Charlie Brown (***) This musical has the main characters of the Peanuts comic strip come alive and deal with the troubled Charlie Brown. The singers had good voices, and the choreography was well executed. There just were no show stopping highlights to make it particularly exceptional.	St. Augistines	2013	21

72	Sympathy Pains (***) A wife must deal with her husband thinking that he is going to have a baby. Her patience is admirable, but his denial in the face of an ultra sound pushed credulity. Instead of him waking up to discover that he has "reabsorbed" the baby, it would have helped the show if he had really acknowledged the underlying causes.	Pleasance Dome	2013	18
73	Family Tree (***) A woman asks her boyfriend to accept the delivery of a memorial tree for her dad's grave, but he repeatedly fails while dealing with her obnoxious cat. The cat was great as he tortured, and then spoke to the boyfriend. However, the boyfriend was not likeable, and the last scene confuses the tale as some supposedly invisible beings are suddenly visible, and vice versa.	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	18
74	Cadre (***) During apartheid, a young man joins the resistance after his brother is brutally killed by the security forces. The three actors portray a wide range of characters well, and the plot moves along at a reasonable pace. However, the last scene in an interrogation cell makes no sense.	Traverse Theatre	2013	22
75	Beeston Rifles (***) A young woman and her simpleton brother hold 19-year old brother and sister at gunpoint. The play kept my interest as a series of revelations changes how the woman understands her situation. All four actors played their parts well, with the drooling simpleton particularly impressive.	Underbelly	2013	22
76	Ulysses (***) The show adapts Joyce's book into a fairly straightforward play about a Jew, Leopold Bloom, in Dublin, his bawdy wife, Molly, and her lover. This version follows Bloom as he attempts to wind his way through life without angering the populace too much. Molly's lively exploits serve as a counterpoint to Bloom's depressing life.	Paterson's Land	2013	18

77	Substance (***) When the boss of a trio of drug dealers adds a new woman to the age old partnership things start to go awry. Though the boss does little productive work, his menace drives the whole operation and play. After her initial disaffection, I felt that female partner's aid to the new woman evolve naturally.	C nova	2013	10
78	London Road, Sea Point (***) In South Africa, a friendship develops between a dotty old white woman and her upstairs neighbor who is a Black female drug dealer. While the upstairs woman is initially reluctant, the relationship deepens as the generosity and dependence of the downstairs woman wins her over. The older woman was portrayed as a winning combination of quirky forgetfulness and love.	Assembly George Square	2013	19
79	Feral (***) First, three cast members create a miniature, peaceful town with cardboard and stick puppets, and then they add a casino. The little details in the shops and the use of mini-cams makes the town a wonder to explore. Though the degradation of the town continued apace, the novelty of the presentation wore off.	Summerhall	2013	16
80	Breakfast Plays: A Respectable Widow Takes To Vulgarity (***) After her CEO husband dies, his widow enlists a young worker to help her better understand her husband and herself. Her efforts at stilted efforts at vulgarity matched his reluctance to help her to learn his slang. Most telling was the moment she realized that her peers did not notice her use of swear words because they were not really listening to her.	Traverse	2013	13
81	The Radicalisation of Bradley Manning (***) This follows the life of the Wiki Leak whistle blower from childhood through his military trial. This is a big production with many instances of his abuse, and his own immodesty. Somehow its size, particularly a scene of guards keeping him awake, serves to obscure rather than inform the real issues involved.	Pleasance@St Thomas of Aquin's High School	2013	15

82	Have I No Mouth (***) One of those shows about a mother and son dealing with the death of the father that is well done, but leaves nothing memorable behind.	Traverse Theatre	2013	20
83	The Price of Everything (***) Starting with the price of a pint of milk, Daniel Bye explores how we assign values to things. Bye makes many interesting points, but the whole show feels thin. His fictionalized sale of an air guitar on eBay was a master stroke that sucked me in.	Hill Street Theatre	2013	21
84	La Merda (The Shit) (***) A naked woman on a pedestal portrays a dwarf who wants to make it as an actress. As would be expected from her state, she takes things to extremes with repeated bouts of screaming about her dream of success. This is a play to be experienced because it is so off beat, but not because it is particularly enjoyable.	Summerhall	2013	21
85	Conversations Not Fit for the American Dinner Table (***) By donning masks, an actor becomes different archetypes of American society. Though he tries to mimic the style of each type, his liberal bias is evident throughout. Even though I am a liberal, I found his use of such straw dogs boring.	Bedlam Theatre	2013	18
86	The Events (***) Backed by a different local chorus each day, the choir mistress tries a wide range of rituals with the choir to deal with a mass killing of some of the diverse singers. She almost tries to deal with the killer, her lesbian lover, and a right wing politician. The whole play jumps around too much, and even some members of the chorus seemed distracted at times.	Traverse	2013	15
87	Lauder! (***) Using puppetry and multimedia, this show tells of a young boy trying to understand that is his father died in the World Trade Center tragedy. Unhappily, I did not know the premise beforehand, and found the story confounding. Tim loved it though.	Summerhall	2013	16

88	The Three Little Pigs (***) In South Africa, the world is populated by talking animals with the police trying to solve the murder of two pigs. The mixing of different species, and their proclivities was cute, and the mystery genuine. Somehow the show just never grabbed me.	Assembly George Square	2013	13
89	Pendulums Bargain Emporium (***) This a satire on how things are marketed without real thought of their worth using an artisan cobbler as an example. While it seemed plausible that accepting mass produced shoes would lead to more profit, the story moves away from the loss of craft to the problem of unwise loans. The skill of the actors was fine, I just would have preferred a less one sided presentation.	Pleasance Dome	2013	11
90	Missing (***) This delves into the topic of missing people in Great Britain with emphasis on two real cases in the past. Though the events are harrowing, this was more expository than drama. I was surprised to find out that if a missing child is not found within 24 hours, the odds are that he/she will have been killed.	Underbelly	2013	13
91	Bath Time (***) This one man show explores the life and times of a petty thief who gets mixed up with a professional micro-chip stealing gang. His performance is appropriately gritty, and clear. It just seemed like another Fringe solo performance with nothing particularly thought provoking.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2013	11
92	Canary Gold (***) This show starts out with a musical number, and then traces the history of two con jobs involving wine from the Canary Islands. The voices are great, as are many of the songs, but the action is needlessly choppy as it jumps from 17th century to present and one con to another.	C Chambers Street	2013	25

93	Shakespeare for Breakfast (***) This year the company adapts the "Taming of the Shrew" to have Kate Mddleton as Kate and Prince William as Petruchio. Despite the mismatch of personalities, the cast has a lot of fun portraying the real people against type. As usual, the many pop culture references were lost on me, but enjoyed by the British audience.	C Chambers Street	2013	26
94	An Actor's Lament (***) Steven Berkoff wrote, directed, and stars in this tale of a meeting of a renowned actor, his playwright friend, and an actress. The story is fine, but Berkoff's acting is way over the top throughout. On the other hand, the actress takes the opportunity to exploring the range of her character without revealing herself.	Assembly Hall	2013	9
95	Titus Andronicus: An All-Female Production (***) Eight women perform Shakespeare's first, and bloodiest play that is about manipulation and revenge. The play was a bit confusing as the sons of the Queen also played the sons of Andronicus with only minor costume differences. The use of paint brushes for swords, and paint cans of "blood" allowed the blood to flow in the copious amounts that is to be expected.	Bedlam Theatre	2013	6
96	The Boy Who Kicked Pigs (***) This black comedy has an evil teenage brother who bedevils his nicer younger sister including kicking her pig toys. While the nastiness of the brother is the center of the play, the white-faced cast takes time to lampoon other subjects such as an oblivious newspaper. It just does not say much except that nasty people deserve to be punished.	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	9
97	Track 3 (***) This version of Chekov's "Three Sisters" covers most of the story of three sisters and brother stuck in a backwater town in Czarist Russia. The acting was good, and the story well told. It is just that nothing leaps to mind as particularly exceptional.	Bedlam Theatre	2013	6

98	Women Who Wank (***) Despite its title, this show had little to do with sex most of the time. Instead, the actress attempted to do improve based on the atmosphere of the venue and audience rather than the more typical audience suggestions. She tried to use acceptance to deal with two obnoxious hecklers, but they just thrived on the attention and got worse.	Cowgatehead	2013	8
99	Noodles (***) Four female gymnasts and a male clown interact with a variety of "noodles." Though they do one tightrope act, the bulk of the show is focused on rope work that could not sustain my interest. One novel trick had three women on one rope with two pulleys between them so that when the outside women rolled, the inside woman's loop would shrink or expand.	New Town Theatre	2013	5
100	I Need a Doctor: The Unauthorised Whosical Adventure (***) A young fellow and woman create a low budget homage to Dr. Who while avoiding copy right infringement. Their inexpensive rendition of the props of the series are fun. However, even that joke gets tired when it is the driving force of the show.	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	8
101	Storming the Barricade (***) Two women and two men perform a wide range of show tunes. All their voices were fine, and their selection was diverse. The choreography was minimal, and there were no introductions to place a song within its context.	inSpace@Symposium Hall	2013	24
102	Julien Cottereau: Imagine Toi (***) Julien is not silent, but a non-verbal mime who relies on highly amplified noises he makes to inform his actions. His early routine with a lassoed fly was well done, though not original. Much of the rest of the show has audience participants trying to follow his signed instructions which can be fun, but much of the fun is at the expense of the participant.	Assembly Roxy	2013	8

103	Dear Doctor Cullen (***) Three speakers review the letters of Doctor William Cullen, one of the foremost physicians of the 18th century. Both the unsolicited letters to the doctor asking for medical advice, as well as his courteous and now mostly bizarre prescriptions provided an excellent measure of the state of the medicine during his life. While no charlatan, his unshakeable faith in his diagnoses and prescriptions demonstrated that science, with its repeatable experiments, was still in its infancy.	Royal College of Physicians	2013	5
104	H to He (I'm Turning Into a Man) (***) A middle-aged woman wakes up to find that she is becoming a man. While some would say this a metaphor for menopause, I see it as a woman noting the stereotypical differences between the sexes. Though her dealing with her transformation from a plain, paunchy woman into a handsome, fit man is fun, it seemed shallow, particularly when it came to her sexual thoughts and persistent scratching.	Hill Street Theatre	2013	5
105	Annoying the Neighbors (***) While listening on an ipod as a prompter, Louise Wallinger plays the people she hears as they tell of their annoying neighbors. The stories range from a man who tapes alarm clocks on his celing to wake the upstairs at random times, to a man who argues that a building permit like his should not be granted to an adjacent neighbor. The stories are entertaining, there just was nothing exceptional here.	Hill Street Theatre	2013	5
106	Four Walls (***) A young girl creates a fantasy world of arguing slippers, a helpful grandmother clock, a jaded teapot, and a mirrored image. Though in hindsight the foreshadowing and symbolism of the first two-thirds of the play was clever, as I experienced it, it was unproductive. While the interactions of the animated objects were fun at times, the psychologist seemed too flat and clinical.	Bedlam Theatre	2013	6

107	Solpadeine is My Boyfriend (***) An overweight woman faces the challenges of relying on Solpadeine (an over the counter drug containing paracetamol, caffeine, and codeine) to make it through each day. She was likeable enough, and the seemingly autobiographical story was interesting, it just never wowed me. Her adventure in a runaway hot-wired car was the highpoint.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2013	26
108	**Breaker (***)** **A fellow comes to a small island where a group of children has recently drowned to learn of his family's past, and learns of life there from the lonely schoolteacher. I found the teacher the more interesting as she alternately felt a need for companionship and then a need to protect the privacy of the children and herself. With its title, and an early description of freak waves, it seemed clear that the children had been washed away, but the story casts doubt on that for no clear reason.**	Under belly	2013	22
109	**Big Bite Breakfast (Menu 3) (***)** **This is the weakest of the three menus, each with five short plays. From a self- centered man practicing before meeting his ex-girlfriend for coffee, to an interpreter dealing with two abusive clients, none of these has an interesting insight, or much cleverness.**	Pleasance Dome	2013	25
110	Genesis/Golgotha (***) One play has Eve complaining about Adam and God, and the other play has Jesus roaming 21st century Pittsburg. Mark Twain covered Eve's story with humor and wit, and Jesus' rant was incoherent much of the time.	Assembly George Square	2013	18
111	HeLa (***) In the 1950s, a poor Black woman suffering from cancer unknowingly supplied the cells that have been the basis of most cellular research. The one woman show uses a mixture of stories of Henrietta Lack's life, and a video about the HeLa cells use. The educational video is very informative, but detracts from the drama of her life.	Summerhall	2013	16

112	Morag and Keats (***) We have all the standard characters from film noir, like "The Maltese Falcon" with Sam being a police detective, played for laughs. The femme fatale had Lauren Bacall down pat, but the gay police chief has no place in the setting. There is some witty and evocative lines, but the underlying story is mundane.	C nova	2013	10
113	Forest Boy (***) Based on a true story, a young boy emerges from a German forest and claims that he has been living there for five years, when it has actually only been a few weeks. The central story about the boy's difficulties with becoming a man in his father's eyes was interesting, but the production was uninspiring. Though there were some good voices, both the lyrics and music were below average.	Assembly George Square	2013	19
114	The Waiting Room (***) A man, a wife, a kidnapper, and the man's mistress all find themselves in a room with no doors and windows, and try to figure out what to do next. Though initially the switches of allegiances were interesting and somewhat plausible, by the end the play had devolved into an incoherent farce.	Assembly George Square	2013	19
115	Brush (***) An artist who has not lived up to his promise must deal with his artist roommate who is advancing quickly. Throw in some unneeded homosexual pining, and you have the whole plodding plot. As is often the case, the acting was fine, but there was language and	C Nova	2013	17
116	Solomon and Marion (***) In South Africa, a young Black man begins helping an elderly white woman. This is similar to "London Road, Sea Point," but less interesting.	Assembly Hall	2013	15
117	Freak Show (***) This musical gives a little taste of a 19th century traveling freak show with the bulk of the time spent on their back stage lives. With less chorus work than in "Forest Boy," the weak voices become more apparent. The music and undecipherable lyrics again did little for me.	Assembly George Square	2013	12

118	Credible Likeable Superstar Role Model (***) The actress Bryony Kimmings pairs with her 9-year old niece to present a piece about the sexualization of female preteens. Instead of focusing on the topic, Bryony spends a lot of time on her own characteristics, particularly her self-centeredness, which is quite in evidence throughout. I thought it appropriate and clever that the niece would be asked to cover her ears (as did the mother next to me ask her daughter) when the text became too adult.	Pleasance Dome	2013	11
119	Pants On Fire's Pinocchio (***) This story of Pinocchio was just too disjoint for me to enjoy.	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	12
120	Ballad of the Burning Star (***) A cabaret about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is dominated by the compere, and is just too loud and abrasive for the whole time.	Pleasance Dome	2013	19
121	Kubrick3 (***) Based on the true story of Alan Conway, who fraudulently impersonated Stanley Kubrick, four actors play Conway as he recounts his life of failure and lies to his son. The use of four actors maybe a nod to his many personalities, but adds needless confusion since none represents a separate set of characteristics. We see the acts of the man, but not the underlying causes.	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	12
122	Breakfast Plays: Clean (***) Three women play expert criminals with different talents that are hired to make an international heist a la Mission Impossible. The play wants to show women filling the roles of action heroes with less violence. The three characters are appropriately over the top, but the plot and their interactions do not transfer well from video game to play.	Traverse	2013	14
123	The Break-up of Cause and Effect (***) Two fellows portray the bickering pair of associated concepts: cause and effect. This seems like a secondary school skit by teachers trying to clarify the two concepts. It just doesn't merit 50 minutes.	C Nova	2013	17

124	Working on a Special Day (***) On the day Hitler visits Rome, and homosexuals will start to be rounded up, a gay man comes to the aid of his downstairs neighbor as she tries to manage a household of six children. The developing friendship was sweet, but this slice of life was too thin for me. The use of chalk on the chalkboard walls to slowly decorate her apartment worked well.	Assembly George Square	2013	16
125	Cartwheels (***) An unmarried pregnant student, her lover, and her assertive flat-mate argue about abortion, and other issues of pregnancy. The expectant character has just the right mix of conflict, but her flat mate seems a little over the top. The picnic scene when they are surrounded by hundreds of miniature fetuses is too weird to fit with the rest of the play	C nova	2013	10
126	Overcoat (***) This is a Chinese interpretation of Gogol's story of the effects of a minor Czarist bureaucrat purchasing an impressive overcoat. Though the actress is talented, she seems too cute and lively to play the somber, inconsequential Russian.	C Chamber Street	2013	9
127	The Principle of Uncertainty (***) This is a lecture that attempts to explain Heisenberg's assertion that the act of observing a quanta will change it so that you can know either its original location, or its original momentum, but not both at the same time. The use of videos was useful, but in the end this a lecture that lacks much drama.	Summerhall	2013	25
128	Newton (***) Jack Klaff plays a seemingly endless set of contemporaries of Sir Isaac Newton to provide a biography of the scientist. Though Klaff is a fine actor, this method of exploration means that a good quarter of the hour is spent by Klaff introducing the characters.	Summerhall	2013	14
129	Next Door (***) A Dane and a Fin investigate how two neighbors could not know each other by looking at their lives. This is quiet Danish physical theater that relies on too much subtlety, and childish simplicity for me.	Underbelly	2013	24

130	The Seven Deadly Sins (***) This Brecht play has a young 1930s movie actress committing all of the sins as she aspires for stardom. The full orchestra provided an engaging score. However, the enactment of all but one of the sins was too obscure to identify them.	Paterson's Land	2013	21
131	Theatre Uncut: Dalgety and Fragile (***) "Fragile" has the audience read liberal responses to an actor who addresses the recent severe government spending cuts, and "Dalgety" has a young open minded constable and her rigid sergeant deal with a counter culture gathering in their little Scottish town. I found "Fragile" too manipulative and not clever at all. "Dalgety" was more fun as the constable attempts to understand the visitors while her sergeant keeps overreacting to the peaceful group.	Paterson's Land	2013	23
132	Hirsh (***) This homage to the influential Canadian theater director, John Hirsch, is told by one of his former actors, Alon Nashman. The Hungarian immigrant certainly seemed to have a dramatic life, but the story reveres the man without really explaining him. The actor states that he was Hirsh's abused scapegoat for years, but never explains why Nashman holds him in such high personal regard.	Pleasance Courtyard	2013	20
133	Chastity Butterworth & the Spanish Hamster (***) Full of winks, nods, and mugging, Gemma Wheeling's character has little to say that is that funny. The bulk of the show relies on audience participation both on and off the stage. What a letdown after her stellar performance in "Dark Vanilla Jungle."	Assembly Roxy	2013	24
134	Bridge to an Island (***) A young woman tries to deal with her social difficulties by writing stories that come alive but then, to her horror, always end badly. The stories are short, and the constant offstage wardrobe changes by the two story actors take too long and make the play too choppy. After the first couple of stories, the play becomes repetitive and boring.	C nova	2013	10

135	Rave Generaton (***) A young teacher who advocates the legalizing the drug ecstasy tries to convince the school officials of his view. While his teaching of the free dancing of raves to his young charges seemed innocent enough, his choice to secretly drug his superiors taints his efforts. The main problem is that the whole play is one sided with no effort to deal with the negative side effects of ecstasy use.	Paradise in Augustines	2013	25
136	Erik and Little Ern (***) Starting as Little Ern lies on his deathbed, the two men play the famous British TV comic duo, and re-enact some of their classic routines. Since I knew nothing of the pair, most of their 1950s humor seemed dated and did not resonate. On the other hand, the British audience had moist eyes from fond reminiscing, and would give it five stars.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2013	26
137	Journey to X (***) A group of secondary school friends form a singing group with the intent of going to London and becoming famous on "The X Factor," with a planned side trip to an abortionist. The kids are appropriately inept at their initial attempts at choreography, but they never achieve the professionalism that is expected in the final set piece for such stories. While I would have thought that abortion would be the thorniest issue, it's best section it dealt with morality of the pick pocketing a pensioner's money by a friend to help cover the expense of an abortion.	theSpace@Surgeons Hall	2013	24
138	Squally Showers (***) Set in the 1980s of Thatcher, we watch as a television station staff battles within itself for personal advancement. I rarely understood the lyrics, and so most of the play was just so much unintelligible bombast and dance moves.	Zoo Southside	2013	12
139	Somnambules and the Seven Deadly Sins (**) I'm guessing that two Russian dancers attempt to portray the seven deadly sins. Though they are both fine dancers, the choreography feels like an uninspired rehash of the Derevo works of the past few years. Worse still, their movements gave no clues to me as to which sin they were currently performing.	Summerhall	2013	14

140	Voices Made Night (**) This South African physical theater company creates a series of fables. Many made little sense to me. There was one that I understood where an old weak man decides to dig a grave for his ill wife with the expected finale.	Assembly Hall	2013	15
141	Anna (**) Based on the life of a journalist who risked her life to expose the abuses of the Russian military and government, this play took place in an unventilated corridor with audience standing against the two walls. The facts are dramatic, but the heat and constant yelling was overpowering for those of us in the audience. What made it worse is that most lines were repeated twice by each actor, even if they were suppose to be the reasonable victims.	Summerhall	2013	25
142	PussyFooting (**) The feet of three women take on a life of their own while their male friends try to help them. Despite the play starting with two feet speaking to each other, which could have provided an interesting commentary, the play restricted itself to how the humans deal with each other's ordeal. The act of drawing each set and its props on various sized chalkboards was fine the first time, but too time consuming for later scenes.	C nova	2013	10
143	The Ribbon Tied (**) A young woman returns to her hometown to share a pizza and a movie in the bedroom of her ex-boyfriend with the possibility of rekindling their relationship clearly on both their minds. This slice of life story seemed too thin as it crawled along at a slow, naturalistic pace. While I liked a thoughtful gift of two bottle caps, throughout the play, particularly at points of high emotion, I felt the actress was trying to act her part rather than be her character.	Cowgatehead	2013	3
144	Sentinels (**) This devised piece starts with fourteen statues stand on pedestals, and then we hear of some of their long forgotten histories. Though their singing was quite good, few of their tales held my interest.	Bedlam Theatre	2013	6

145	Caryatid Unplugged (**) Caryatid, a pedestal taken by the British from the Acropolis and placed in the British Museum in the early 19th century, complains of her plight, and that of the Greeks now. While there were a few cute parts, the bulk of the show held little for anyone but the Greeks in the audience.	Hill Street Theatre	2013	4
146	35MM : A Musical Exhibition (**) This devised show that displays a picture on a screen then provides stories and music that may or may not relate to the picture. Some of the vignettes were interesting, but the lack of cohesion left me tired.	Bedlam Theatre	2013	6
147	My Favourite Madman (**) This play starts has a professor, a nurse, and seven newspapermen in Azerbaijan all running around in mayhem. Though things settle down after a while, the main feature remains that all but one is crazy, and the constant insanity bored me after a while. I did find funny the running gag of one man constantly seeing lovers and friends from his past lives and then trying to prove that they were his reincarnated comrades.	Gryphon Venues at the Point Hotel	2013	8
148	Cut! (**) Ian Watt plays a fictional silent film director named Posteranz who is loosely based on the notoriously dictatorial Erich Von Stroheim. The play chooses to concentrate on Posteranz megalomaniac tendencies by having the man ordering people around and ranting in general most of the time. This one dimensionality combined with a German accent so thick as to be occasionally unintelligible created a show that quickly bored me.	Hill Street Theatre	2013	4
149	A Happy Side (As Well) (**) This devised played has friends and teachers try to get a silent student to speak. This secondary school production is a misguided mash-up of teenage recollections, audience participation, and treatises on life. The only saving grace was the sincerity and naivete of the young actresses.	Greenside	2013	7
150	Omega (**)	Assembly Hall	2013	21

151	The Secret Agent (**) This show starts out by inviting audience members on stage to surround a table, and then does nothing with them. That was a foreshadowing of what the show did with a plot following a minor spy – nothing, and it did it for 90 minutes!	Traverse Theatre	2013	22
152	Pigmalion Zoo (*) Pigmalion and his wife are trying to create the next god for a game show. There is little here but the continue mistreatment of their daughter.	C nova	2013	10
1	Educating Rita (*****) A besotted English Literature professor reluctantly takes on a hairdresser who wishes to change her life through open university. The play derives its power not from the expected blossoming of the student, but instead from his and our fear that such change will replace her honest insight with academic rote arguments. Both actors are superb as he think he sees a tragedy unfold, and she learns of the pitfalls of her academic success.	Assembly George Square	2012	6
2	Mephisto Waltz (*****) As best as I can guess, in this long dance, Mephisto is repeatedly reborn, controlled for a short time by four monks, and then breaks his bonds to revel in nature. The power of his performance is just amazing. Whether writhing in slop, recoiling from steel drums, or crushing his ice heart, there are images here that I will never forget.	Assembly Roxy	2012	25
3	Othello - The Remix (*****) Four male rapper/dancers and a DJ are surprisingly faithful to Shakespeare's plot when they update it to a famous rapper and his crew. The show had clever lyrics, diverse dance routines, and music that kept my foot tapping. Desdemona's recorded ethereal singing lent a sense of purity to the invisible wife.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	27

4	The Sewing Machine (*****) In post-apartheid South Africa, a retired woman tells of her life growing on a ranch, and dealing with a stubborn, conservative husband. Each anecdote is bittersweet, and touch upon everything from an adopted baby baboon to a ostracized son suffering from AIDs. This quiet performance had both of my companions in tears as we heard of the love between her and her favorite son, and the intransigence of her husband.	Assembly George Square	2012	26
5	Hand Over Fist (*****) A woman repeatedly remembers the first time she met a man with the scene morphing into other memories each time. This has a series of clever, powerful perversions of memories that are disjoint yet related. As we return to the opening scene it becomes it now is layered with heartbreaking poignancy.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	21
6	Casablanca: The Gin Joint Cut (*****) This is third time I saw this homage that is a remarkable mix of reverent recital and play-within-a-play antics. I've seen Casablanca countless times, and I was amazed how the cast of three would play every touching scene straight, but then add every sort of high jinx to the other scenes. I should warn the uninitiated that many of their funny touches, such as air freshener sprayed all over the set to simulate fog in the airport scene, will make little sense to you.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2012	26
7	And No More Shall We Part (*****) A husband begrudgingly agrees to help his ailing wife commit suicide. As the play progresses through her final day, we see flashbacks of their arguments about her decision, with his heartfelt disagreement often bringing tears to my eyes. I will never forget the simple scene of him lying exiled outside her bedroom door as she lays poisoned inside with his hand raised in toward that door in obedient agony.	Traverse	2012	14

8	Mies Julie (*****) Set in post-apartheid South Africa, this adaptation of Strindberg's play has Julie the daughter of the master of the ranch, and her lover a Black farm laborer with whom she has grown up. Race, physical power, economics, love, social status, and lust combine in a volatile mix that still cannot escape their plight. While he is frustrated but realistic, she suffers more because all of her dreams are dashed in one night.	Assembly Hall	2012	24
9	Wojtek the Bear (*****) Based on the true story of a bear cub that was adopted by a Polish regiment in World War II and later exhibited in Edinburgh Zoo, this two-man show focuses on the bond between the bear and the corporal who becomes his adopted mother. While often using the mannerisms of a bear, the actor has no bear costume or make-up, and speaks of love and loyalty with the purity of nature. A violinist provides the perfect soundtrack for the joys of their playing, the privations of war, and the sorrow of their parting.	Hill Street Theater	2012	17
10	Thin Ice (*****) On an expedition to Greenland in 1939, a geographer attempts to disprove global warming, while his anthropologist assistant researches the natives. Beside the two research topics, the play has a love triangle, a mysterious death, and World War II intelligence gathering integrated into a richly textured whole. The revelations at the end addressed the mysteries and secret motivations in a most satisfying way.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	11
11	A Soldier's Song (*****) Ken Lukowiak tells of his experiences as a soldier during the Falklands war with the full range of emotionally charged events that such a war can engender. Ken seemingly hides nothing as he speaks of his fears, dismay, stupidity, longings, admiration, and countless other complex feelings. Among the many memorable events is that of him dragging an annoyingly noisy injured Argentine soldier from a still mortared battlefield, and then kicking him to show his buddies that he was not going soft.	Assembly Roxy	2012	7

12	Love Letters to the Public Transport System by Molly Taylor (*****) Molly weaves three tales of how events on trains and buses change three people's lives. This is an assured performance, with every nuance and word perfect.	The Assembly Rooms	2012	24
13	Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act by Athol Fugard (*****) During apartheid, a single White librarian has an illegal affair with a married Black school principal. Though the racial implications are raison d'être for this play, the social complications of the affair really drive the story. Because the two lovers are nude from the beginning of the play, their cultural roles are obscured, and I was drawn to think of them as simply man and woman.	Assembly Hall	2012	27
14	Camille O'Sullivan: Changeling (*****) The Irish singer again provided me a wonderful night of entertainment. Her formula of consistent crescendos and "let's have a good time" feeling always rouses my spirits. Like Edith Piaf, she seems to be always singing from her soul. When I met her afterwards, she left little doubt that she does. I am sorry for those who missed it, but the show ended the 7th.	The Assembly Rooms	2012	7
15	"Letter of Last Resort" and "Good with People" (*****) In "Letter ...", on her first night in office the Prime Minister must determine what a submarine with nuclear missiles must do if the government of Britain has been eliminated in a surprise nuclear attack. As a bureaucrat made cogent arguments for each position, and she tried to put herself in the position of the sub captain, I was more intellectually engaged than for any other play at the Fringe. "Good ..." has the mother dealing with the return of a now nice fellow, who once unmercifully bullied her dead son. Their circumscribed verbal dance caught my ear, and the simple dropping of props behind their raised platform set contributed to the emotional pointedness of the situation.	Traverse Theatre	2012	23

16	The Idiot at the Wall (*****) In 1919, while a London researcher and his brother's girlfriend visit the woman's remote Hebridean island home , he becomes enamored with its people, particularly her sister. Like the folklorist I admired the clarity of the locals, and his own pure spirit warmed my heart. Combine these with Gaelic songs, fine acting, and a love story, and you have a most satisfying play.	Bedlam Theatre	2012	8
17	Sex Ed: The Musical (*****) Five girls and a guy cover all of the topics of a Sex Ed class in a bawdy, but surprisingly informative way. During the show, each of the four female teachers has her own sexual life evolve, interspersed with lecture/songs and excerpts from the courtship and sexual adventures of a pair of teens. I admire the non-judgmental thoroughness of the show, and how nicely it addressed the issue of lovers with different sexual desires.	theSpace@Surgeons Hall	2012	18
18	Bad Musical (*****) This play is ostensibly about a man who leaves a small town and somehow soon becomes the prime minister who then gives everybody everything they want until the country crashes to the ground. Of course, that horrible plot is just a flimsy excuse for a well-conceived display of incompetence in all spheres of stagecraft. Though the show is riddled with a lack of synchronicity, technical snafus, and missed lines, when the play has a strong song the cast and crew demonstrate their true excellence.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2012	18
19	A Clockwork Orange (*****) Based on Burgess' novel, in a dystopic future, a young man, Alex, treats his own violence and rape as performance art, but a series of betrayals leads him to accept an experimental treatment that will make him physically ill when he thinks violent thoughts. Though the show is populated with many characters from the movie, it is the great performance of the ripped and charismatic Alex that strengthens the story from grizzly beginning to sly end. I was pleasantly surprised how well they used dance to convey the gore of the movie.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	23

20	An Evening with Dementia (*****) An old man who sits in a convalescent chair knows he has dementia, and talks to the audience about his techniques for dealing with his visitors and the staff. The actor had all the proper mannerisms, and the script has a perfectly plausible blend of rational thought interspersed with lapses of memory. A good example is his conscious choice to use "Hello mate" when greeting any man, even when he thinks he knows their name, so he can avoid using the wrong name.	theSpace on the Mile	2012	22
21	Dugout Theater's Inheritance Blues (*****) As a blues trio plays in the background of a bar after the wake of their father, three disparate brothers recall their father's life differently. As the evening progresses, the band members join the brothers, and the dreams of all become entwined. The initial blues song starts the show off right, and the sure performances keep things moving along at a cool pace.	Bedlam Theatre	2012	8
22	Molly Wobbly's Tit Factory (*****) The lives three couples in the boring, moribund town of Little Happening, USA, suddenly change when a stranger buys the long vacant church. The show combines potions of desire, an arch green-haired makeover specialist, and a batch of fun songs that I could actually understand to create an only slightly rude good old time. They pulled off a nice plot trick to address the problem of a gay man married to a pining woman.	The Assembly Rooms	2012	13
23	The Lonely One (*****) In a small southern American town in the 1920's, two women venture to the movies while the strangler of two women is still on the loose. Whether it be a simple soda shop visit, watching a Charlie Chaplin film, or a supposedly reassuring encounter with a policeman the atmosphere of suspense is always building in some way. The initial use of four small Edwardian houses that opened to reveal shadow puppets playing baseball and sitting on their porches worked beautifully to establish the feel of the rural town.	Underbelly Cowgate	2012	13

24	The Trench (*****) In World War I, after a cave-in a miner digging a tunnel toward German trenches must perform three tasks to escape to satisfy a monster. This play makes great use of recorded shadow puppetry showing the tunneling by both sides as well as large stick puppet monsters, with the muffled song lyrics being its only drawback. Though this has a fantastical element that is a touchstone of Les Enfants Terribles, unlike their previous macabre music hall productions, this has a more realistic hero for whom I really cared.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	19
25	Leather (*****) The girlfriend of a small-time crook is upset with him because he and his brazen partner's recent heist of a truckload of leather sofas did not net any cash for her cocaine habit, while at the same time the crime boss who owned the sofas is having his right-hand man tracking the pair down. Whether it is the board game between the dysfunctional lovers, or the soliloquy on people's needs by the crime boss, every aspect of this violent tale has depth and is well acted. Nuances, such as the boss reluctantly surrendering his wallet to his tracker/aide, add a wonderful complexity to the story.	C Nova	2012	9
26	The Fantasist (*****) In her room in a mental care facility, an artist spends most of her time contending with her bipolar hallucinations that foster her creativity and self-doubt. Mania is beautifully portrayed as she succumbs to the huge stick puppet of her evil creative mentor/lover dressed in a grey coat from her closet, and, though shorter in duration, her depression finds it source in a stick puppet crone that warns her of manic side but debases her. A lively foot tall homunculus she had created serves the play well for lighter, comedic interlude. Only the very last 30 seconds of the play detracts from the authenticity of the show.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2012	10

27	Out of the Blue (*****) The large Oxford men's a cappella group is back again with their great arrangements and fun choreography. This show seemed to have better choreography and fewer new tunes than last year's show. As with last year, I think that this venue is a little too large for their volume, with the weaker solos becoming inaudible even with the addition of central microphone. (Aug 23)	Assembly George Square	2012	20
28	Adam Hills: Mess Around (*****) The Australian comedian again uses interviews with the audience as his source for his show. I continue to be amazed at how he can find humor without embarrassing or belittling the people. For this show, he discovered a man from a previous year that looked like a retired James Bond, but then later found a young man in a flashy vest that he thought suited the title, had him pose with a mother and daughter, and later read tweets for a proposed movie title of the picture.	Assembly Hall	2012	15
29	As of 1:52pm GMT on Friday, April 27, 2012, This Show Has No Title (*****) Daniel Kitson presents a play about writing this play with an American woman. While Kitson acknowledges that the task is egotistical and fraught with narcissist pitfalls, his interactions with his collaborator seem to keep him (and the play) in line. As a lecturer who teaches computer programming recursion (a subroutine that calls itself), I loved the recursive cleverness of this script such as the self-aware comment about having a running gag to please the simpler people in the audience and then continuing to have a running gag of saying "I've had a fall."	Traverse Theater	2012	12

30	The Rape of Lucrece (*****) Accompanied by her pianist Feargal Murray, Camille O'Sullivan adapted Shakespeare's poem to a combination of spoken word and song. His subtle playing provided a perfect soundtrack for the spoken sections, and complemented both her soulful ballads, and her emphatic musical interpretations of Tarquinius' lust and violent act. As with her musical concerts, Camille was a consummate entertainer, and seemed to give every emotional ounce to her performance, and the audience responded by giving her an extended standing ovation.	Royal Lyceum Theatre	2012	26
31	Peter Straker's Brel (*****) With a few short videos of the Jacque Brel as intermissions, Straker presents a wide variety of songs from the Belgian singer/songwriter. The show has the style of a classy entertainer with a fine trio behind him and the shedding of his three piece suit as the songs warrant. He clearly loves the songs, and uses his experience to craft each to best present its feelings.	Assembly Hall	2012	15
32	Proof (****) After her famous, but long demented mathematician father dies a 25-year old woman must contend with a visit from her overbearing sister, and mathematics graduate student interested in her father's papers. As a lecturer in Computer Science, the occasional arguments over proofs and numbers play certainly resonated with me, but it was the flashbacks to her conversations with her father that touched me deeply. Her complex interactions with her peer also worked well, with only the one-dimensional sister preventing this from being a top notch play.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	10
33	The Two Worlds of Charlie F (****) Led by a soldier with an amputated lower leg, more than a dozen disabled veterans injured in Afghanistan describe their experiences in the battlefield, during rehabilitating, and returning to their families. The musical numbers went surprisingly well, and whether in a wheelchair or wearing a prosthesis the leader was a charming guide.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	11

34	It's Not Easy Being Yellow (****) Ria Lina sings ditties and uses stand-up comedy that focuses on the effects of having a German father and a Filipino mother that make her look Asian but sound American. Whether talking about the problem of being seen as a kidnapper of her own blue-eyed blond daughter, or singing about recessive genes, all of her work is clever. Her voice is so good that I wish she would do a show where she sings the blues.	The Voodoo Rooms	2012	21
35	Richard Herring: Talking Cock – The Second Coming (****) Relying heavily on his own website survey of 8500 people, Herring answers most of the questions people have about men and women's experience with penises. Besides statistics on everything from women's opinion on the importance of length to the number of sexual partners each respondent had, Herring mixes in anecdotes, survey open ended answers, and his own open, loving opinions. As with previous shows, Herring has worked hard so that even though you are laughing much of the time, you come away knowing quite a bit more about a subject.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2012	13
36	The Two Most Perfect Things (****) A pair of couples and a pianist tell of the lives of Noel Coward and Ivar Novello, the stylish playwrights and entertainers of the '20s and '30s, through song and dance. While I knew Coward well, I had not heard of the more accomplished Novello. The show provided a great contrast between the two men as Coward's songs reflect both his wit and his bitterness while the much loved Novello's were also witty but had a tenderness and sincerity usually missing from Coward's.	Assembly Roxy	2012	7

37	Hal Cruttenden: Tough Luvvie (****) Hal is a happily married, campy comedian who mixed insightful observations about current affairs with amusing self-deprecating tales from his own life. Whether he is suggesting that each country reveres its time as an underdog, or recounting his false bravado dealing with a road rager the atmosphere was always warm and friendly. I was particularly impressed with how well he handled being upstaged by a witty comment from the audience—he noted that it earned a huge laugh, took a sip of water, and then continued.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	5
38	Maurice's Jubilee (****) Maurice is dying, but he is obsessing about lasting until the Queen visits him on his 90th birthday, the day before her 60th jubilee. Though there are a few too many clever lines by Maurice, his wife, and the hospice nurse, to secure the drama of the piece, the underlying sense of inevitable death remained. I did feel sorry for the second fiddle wife, and thought the "Queen's" remarks were particularly incisive.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	27
39	Mark Thomas: Bravo Figaro! (****) The comedian relates anecdotes about growing up with a hard driving contractor father who learned to love opera in spite of his working class roots. This was an unusual show for the Traverse because it' format was so similar to story shows presented by other comedians at the Fringe. Nonetheless, it is well designed with literally an operatic climax at the home of his father who suffered from Alzheimer's.	Traverse Theatre	2012	23
40	Pappy's: Last Show Ever! (****) Three fellows present well constructed sketches with clever running gags. Though their show is ostensibly about how the three came to the point of splitting up, that is just a handy framework for zany antics. My favorite sketch starts by dividing firemen into two categories, those who put out fires, and those who save cats from trees, and then applies this same absurd analysis to cats and trees.	Pleasance Dome	2012	5

41	A Guide to Second Date Sex (****) A young fellow invites a woman over to his flat with his flatmates gone with no real plan on what they are going to do. The charm of this play is how each person responds to the situation as it evolves from an unexpected stay in a bedroom to watch a movie to the discovery that they have very different views on a common friend. I must admit that I do like voiceovers, and here they are perfect for revealing the perplexed thoughts of the potential lovers.	Underbelly Cowgate	2012	6
42	Peep - "Meat" (****) A wife discovers that her husband has being visiting porn sites. I liked the honesty of their discussion as they admit that the videos do not always engender fantasies with their spouses. The wife's experiences have a wonderfully revealing aspect that raises the story to another level.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	25
43	Blink (****) A naïve, socially stunted young man finds contentment observing a woman who society rarely noticed. The play moves smoothly as the dysfunctional grow to fill each other's needs, first by a premeditated act, and later by an accident. The re-use of a baby/father monitor was inspired.	Traverse	2012	17
44	The Beast (****) Stuart Bowden tells the tale of an inoffensive monster who is curious about the lives of the people in small town near his cave. This is just a charming whimsical tale that he interlaces with looped falsetto songs accompanied by his ukulele. A gentleness pervades the experience that makes his final bicycle ride most touching.	Underbelly Cowgate	2012	16

45	The Boat Factory (****) This two-man tribute to the Belfast shipyard that built more than one thousand ships, including the Titanic, has a retired worker telling of his five-year apprenticeship as he learned of the workings and people of the gigantic facility. This is a wonderful mix of unique characters, lists of tools, construction lore, stories of accidents, expansive views from gantries, and very personal life events. As a handyman/general contractor, I suppose the building side may resonate with me more than for other audience members.	Hill Street Theater	2012	17
46	Miss Havisham's Expectations (****) Linda Marlowe portrays the betrayed spinster from Dickens' "Great Expectations" as Havisham provides her on view of the events of the novel as well as their relationship to the author's life. Marlowe achieves this mix of fiction and biography without ever leaving character. With Havisham as the focus, I gained a better understanding of her transformation from bitter trainer of Estella to a repenter for the pain she has caused Pip.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2012	13
47	Hangman (****) Five Russian physical theater artists present wildly different scenes of murders, efforts to avoid publicity of the crimes, and their inevitable punishment. From musical chairs while hangman is played in the background, to contortions at a table as a low chandelier swings narrowly above, to the final toast as sand ours on their bowlers the play is full of intriguing images. The spaghetti Western music that often accompanies the action contributes both catchy rhythms for the movements, and a sense of rough justice.	Assembly Roxy	2012	7
48	The Blues Brothers – Live (****) Jake and Elwood are here to provide '50s and '60s blues, with a horn section and back-up singers to provide a nice big sound. The players had a good time, and so did the audience. My only problem with the show is that the venue does not allow room for dancing by the audience that was one of wonderful parts of the experience in all of the venues in years past.	C eca	2012	10

49	One Hour Only (****) For her first prostitution trick, a forensic biology student has a hard working engineering student using a gift from his friends for his 21st birthday. This well crafted play makes good use of its opportunities to explore both of their fields of interest, job interviews, and, of course, prostitution. I appreciated the nuanced approach to prostitution, with a highlight being her attempt at a Polish accent because she had been told that customer preferred foreign girls.	Underbelly Cowgate	2012	16
50	The Table (****) Three men manipulate a meter tall stick puppet with an enormous cardboard head as he talks about his own world, and then attempts to present a story about the death of Moses while contending with the vagaries of a live show. His patter about the table, and how the three create the illusion of life had all of the audience constantly laughing. When I later learned that they had planned the accidents, I was all the more impressed with their crafty "improvised" performance, complete with the puppeteers acting like they are breaking up with their own laughter.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	11
51	The Death of Chatterton (****) A charming American PhD student pesters a British expert as he investigates the poisoning of the 18th century poet. The play has a "Da Vinci Code" feel as well as clever parallels between the student's charm and that of Chatterton. This is quite a big production for the Fringe, with lavish costumes and a huge cast.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	25
52	Modern Town (****) The main storekeeper in a moribund town agrees to take a loan that leads to dramatic changes in the community. The show does a fine job of demonstrating how the incremental changes dictated by economic necessity can break down the social ties that bind a community together. It did leave me with mixed feelings because the damaging changes could only be justified if the town was on the verge of dying	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	25

53	Female Gothic (****) On a darkly lit stage, dressed in a black Victorian dress, Rebecca Vaughn simply tells three Gothic horror tales set in the 19th century. The last was best as we hear of shadow in a house that seeps out of sight when the protagonist tries to look directly at it. The only problems are that with only one voice, and a dark stage I did have a little battle with sleep.	Assembly George Square	2012	26
54	Tam O'Shanter (****) A large cast presents the traditional Robert Burn's tale of the wastrel with many songs and other poems mixed in. Whether it be his many visits to a pub, or his scary journey home on his mare the production was top notch throughout. I only gave it four stars because I often could not understand the Scottish accents.	Assembly Hall	2012	12
55	The Girl with No Heart (****) Written as an allegory for the children of Hiroshima, this fairy tale uses full size puppets to tell the story of a young girl from a hand where all wishes come true who takes a one way trip to a wasteland where children live in their own paper city trying to protect themselves the adult war. The slow, quiet tale, with is paper brick city and children rescued with origami crane airplanes has a purity that brought tears to my eyes. On particularly touching idea was that the children of the wasteland protected their hearts by hiding them in their sleeves, and would only hand them to their closest friends.	Bedlam Theatre	2012	8
56	Montmorency (****) In 1875, while recovering in prison from an operation by a famous surgeon, a badly injured thief discusses a plan to use the newly constructed London sewers to burgle houses with his crippled mentor. The large cast and huge set succeed at recreating the feel of the sewers, prisons, gentlemen's clubs, and tenements of 19th century London. Though Montmorency is the protagonist, I was drawn to Freakshow, the cripple, as he deals with the possibility of leaving his secure prison environment for the vagaries and insults of city.	C Venue	2012	9

57	Time for Fun (****) Dressed in black, a large troupe of young performers uses only their exposed arms and hands to create words, images, and animations. The opening sequence is a tour de force with them spelling out a welcome message, creating such things as cars, and kaleidoscope effects. While the later sections are still fun to watch, they rarely use any techniques that had not been used in the first act, with the addition of sticks particularly highlighting their creative exhaustion.	Assembly Roxy	2012	16
58	Molly Naylor and the Middle Ones: My Robot Heart (****) With the two musicians providing short interludes, Molly tells the tales of an emotional robot, an 11-year old boy having his loyalty tested, a bride having doubts, and the bride's father. Molly is a good storyteller, but the low tech band was just a distraction. She did a great job of painting word pictures, and getting to the core lesson of each story.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	21
59	Bullet Catch (****) Rob Drummond, a mentalist/magician, reads the minds of audience members by asking them simple questions, and finishes by duplicating the trick that has killed many of previously by catching a bullet in his teeth from a gun fired at his face. Drummond's mentalist patter is the best I have ever heard. It was not until he started doing standard magic like the squashing bottle in bags and a floating table that I realized that this was just a glorified magic show.	Traverse	2012	15
60	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show - Menu 2 (****) This menu has two new plays and three plays from previous years. My favorite had a repressed couple at breakfast with the wife asking the husband to undress her verbally, and then repeatedly critiquing his valiant effort. As an annual visitor, I'm disappointed with the number of old works presented in this set.	Pleasance Dome	2012	25

61	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show - Menu 3 (****) This menu has five new plays, and unlike the other two menus, this one has no plays from the previous years. I had two favorites: 1) a cheery fellow and a depressed man coincidentally meet on a rooftop with the intents of committing suicide, and 2) after ten years without a Valentine's Day date, an unknown admirer asks her out, and she is very suspicious. Though the other plays were a little weaker, I do prefer seeing new plays to retreads.	Pleasance Dome	2012	26
62	Mr Braithwaite Has a New Boy (****) Much to the consternation of his friends and neighbors, a retired gay man asks a rough, young male prostitute to move into his flat. Despite being filled with stereotypical caricatures, the play manages to portray the relationship between the two men as real and caring. The third actor provides most of the comedy with his narcoleptic neighbor lady, and grindr addicted friend.	C Aquila	2012	27
63	Dirty Barbie (****) This autobiographical tale makes use of many shirts and tons of dolls to re-enact the life of a North Carolina girl with an alcoholic mother and supportive neighbors. There is nothing particularly unique in her experiences, but her honesty and vitality proved winning. At one point, she reads a paean to her from a classmate in her real eighth grade yearbook, but then goes on to describe how she coaxed her pals to moon that same girl when the girl hesitated to enter their playground.	Assembly Hall	2012	6
64	Confessions of a Grindr Addict (****) A campy fellow prepares for a date by drinking wine and talking about his encounters with men he met on the gay dating iPhone app. While his stories range from the pathetic to the tender to the comedic, all are amusing and have the ring of truth. As the show ended, I realized that such catty remarks would never be accepted if they had been made about heterosexual encounters.	Assembly Hall	2012	6

65	The Half (****) Guy Masterson portrays a has-been alcoholic actor in his dressing room just before trying to resurrect his career by playing all of the parts in Hamlet. As I expected, Masterson is superb as he works through acting exercises, self doubts, and rapid excerpts from Hamlet. Though his battle with alcohol allows Masterson to demonstrate his acting range, there was too little back story for his character, and the whole play becomes an acting demonstration rather than a story about a character for whom we care.	Assembly George Square	2012	15
66	Company (****) Despite seeing the dysfunctional marriages of his friends, the popular bachelor Bobby still trys to find a mate among three mismatched woman. Though the large cast has strong voices and acting, they do not represent the diversity of ages that Sondheim's musical needs at times. In particular, the grand dame and the "young" hippie girl appear to be about the same age.	C Venuen	2012	14
67	Call Me! (****) This comedy has three women friends repeatedly leave inappropriate voice mail messages for their love interests, while slowly learning how to break their emotional bonds to the men. Whether from drunken loneliness, anger from being spurned, or desperate adoration, each story had its comic touches and yet rang true. After leaving an initial message that that had a too desperate tone, the series of follow-up "corrections" were great fun as she could keep herself from making gaffes that revealed her consuming interest.	Sweet	2012	19
68	Angels (****) This one-man show has a security guard is hauled into a filthy interrogation room for the murder of a man that fell from a building. The writing is evocative to the point of being poetry, and the acting is superb. The play is just too dense, and exhausted me as well as many other audience members.	Traverse	2012	19

69	Mr. Carmen (****) This mix of physical theatre and art has two men in a silent competition to come up with different ways to create their names, Jose and Carmen. Starting with a conveyor belt made of bits of string and wooden pulleys, they use every manner of odd objects in their efforts. The show takes an odd turn as one artist ferociously attacks a wooden heart with a knife until he has pierced it repeatedly.	Assembly Roxy	2012	11
70	Dirty Paki Lingerie (***) Azzah Fatima portrays six Pakistani females in the USA, ranging from a 6-year old to two twentysomethings to much older mothers. The diversity of characters and nativity allow Fatima to contrast emigrant women's roles and views with those of the second generation. Though she tried to use the position of a scarf to indicate which character was speaking, there seemed to be only three positions so I often mistook a character until well into their monologue.	Assembly Hall	2012	19
71	Peep – Play 2 (***) As an audience of 12 watch from individual one-way mirrored cubicles, four actors in a four meter square box perform mini-plays dealing with sex that each last between twenty seconds and two minutes. I appreciated the cleverness of our restricted physical view having an analogous restricted temporal view.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	22
72	The Oxford Imps (***) Nine Oxford students used audience suggestions as starting points for stories, songs, and puns. Though the Imps are usually the best amateurs at the Fringe, it has been seven years since the group has had more than two great improvisers at one time. I always feel sorry for the American students, because there is always a competition that asks the group to use a specific British accent, and the Americans never have an ear for the differences.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2012	19

73	Alan Davies – Life is Pain (***) We did not know what to expect from Davies since we know him from the "Jonathan Creek" -series in America, and the rest of the people in the queue know him from the British TV show "QI". I was hoping to hear of anecdotes of an interesting life, and instead heard the typical stand-up comedy of a man with a new baby. .He made my disappointment worse when he veered into mundane sexual comedy	EICC	2012	14
74	All That is Wrong (***) An 18-year old uses the entire floor as a chalkboard to write and connect innumerable words describing her view of life. Like its two predecessors, this "chaotic" creation, is actually a carefully rehearsed performance piece that resulted from the collaboration of many teenagers in Belgian company. A particularly wry moment occurs when after listing multinational companies that she will boycott she decides to only put a question mark next to Apple.	Traverse Theatre	2012	12
75	Rubies in the Attic (***) Four women tell of an event in their grandparents' lives, and sing a variety of songs with a blend reminiscent of the Andrew Sisters of World War II (Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy). Each woman tells her story well as we hear of such disparate tales as that of Jewish immigration to South Africa, and a woman with a penchant for bald men. It surprises me that only two days later I am left with a good feeling about the show, but few strong memories from it other than I really enjoyed their singing.	Assembly Roxy	2012	7
76	Winston on the Run (***) This covers Winston Churchill's life from his failed effort to become a Conservative MP through his escape from a POW camp during the Boer War. I found his consistent portrayal of Churchill as an overly emphatic know-it-all too one-dimensional. There is also a very confusing scene that inexplicably blends his capture with the signals for his rescue from a coal mine.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	25

77	Educating Ronnie (***) This autobiographical story has an English college student providing financial support to a college student in Uganda without being sure it is not a scam. As we see the actual text messages from the Ugandan, the ambivalence of the Englishman drives the story. The contrast of their two lives is instructive, but loses much of its power because we do not know if the Ugandan is lying.	Assembly George Square	2012	25
78	The Curious Scrapbook of Josephine Bean (***) This children's play has a doctor of scrapology patiently turning the pages of a scrapbook to uncover a Victorian life that starts out mundane, and becomes fanatastical. Though the nod to scientific precision is laudable, the slow pace tried my own patience. I did like how she used later entries to solve mysteries earlier in the book.	Traverse & the Scottish Book Trust	2012	22
79	Virginia Ironside – Growing Old Disgracefully (***) Virginia Ironside, an "Agony Auntie", and makes wry observations on her life now that she is 68. While she did not ignore the drawbacks, she concentrated on the more subtle advantages of being older like realizing that she feels safer because hoodlums will now smile back at her. It did bother me that she was happy that sex and travel were behind her. I lowered my rating of this show because, despite a title change, this show contains almost the same material as her 2009 show.		2012	25
80	Belt Up Theatre's Outland (***) A dying Charles Dodgson (Lewis Carroll) alternates between his real friends and a fantasy world full of political intrigue called Outland. With its own wildly decorated room for a set, and lots of audience participation the fantastical world is easily imagined, but the real world suffers for it. I was impressed that even though the Outland populated with histrionic characters, Dodgson needed to make only subtle changes to function in either world.	C Nova	2012	17

81	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast Show (***) This show has three rotating sets of plays, with set all dealing with World War II. The best play was a reprise from last year that had a modern couple choosing to live their lives exactly as if it October 30, 1942. The other two plays were not as polished as one was a predictable seduction in an air raid shelter, and the other had Hedy Lamarr providing a fragmented life story.	Pleasance Dome	2012	20
82	Anthony Rapp – Without You (***) A member of the original cast of "Rent," Rapp uses words and song to describe the creation of that rock opera, and his extended efforts to support his dying mother. Rapp is certainly personable, and my companions loved this show, but I found his voice wanting at times, the band too loud, and the choice of high energy rock instead of ballads as he deals with his mother was repeatedly jarring. His stories of loss are touching, and the songs from Rent cannot help but lead to loud ovations, it is the remaining songs that brought this down.	Underbelly Bristo Square	2012	12
83	The Day the Sky Turned Black (***) Ali Scott, a radio journalist, recounts her own experience as well that of five survivors of the Australian 2009 bushfires. Her selection of people range from a six year old to a grandmother, and provide multi-faceted glimpse into the events. In particular, her choice to focus on the six-years old conveys boyhood adventure during his narrow escape, naïvete when dealing with is best friend's death, and recovery as he teaches a youngster to ride a BMX bike like his friend.	Assembly Roxy	2012	9
84	Peep - "SexLife" (***) To prove that their sex life has not ended with the birth of their baby, a husband dresses in women's lingerie, and then dances for his formerly sdvnterous wife. This has a fresh take on a common topic, and succeeds at both communicating his love as well as rekindling their sex life in a peep show manner. Though she is a striking woman when she completely disrobes, her lack of a mentioned post-pregnancy stomach roll belies the play.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	26

85	Bring the Happy (***) Three young researchers and a rock band present the results of asking more than 1000 for a description of a happy event, including its location in Leeds. The company would read answers and/or sing songs about categories based on the location or source of happiness. The grand finale party with the audience waltzing was fun, but the sound was too loud to hear many of the answers.	Northern Stage at St. Stephen's	2012	21
86	Excess (***) A gay man asks his bitter, estranged sister to visit and then reveals that he is changing his sex to her, and later his drag queen lover. The three characters offer stories on a wide range of topics ranging from airport security to overcoming stage fright with bad jokes. I found the use of hand puppets for her stories unnecessarily confusing.	C nova	2012	10
87	Juana in a Million (***) Vicky Casas portrays Juana, an undocumented Mexican immigrant to the UK who works hard at repetitive menial jobs, but because of that status she has no legal recourse when she is abused by her employers. Casas' flair for dancing runs throughout the play as she relives her well matched steps with her doomed Mexican lover, and she later transforms each repetitive job into a stylized routine. Because her dancing is so good, it detracts from the intended heartbreak we are suppose to feel for the plight of such women.	Pleasance Dome	2012	6
88	The Boy with Tape on His Face – More Tape (***) A young man with tape over his mouth gesticulates to guide selected audience members to do unusual tasks. These party-game tasks are fun to watch, but I found the sections where he worked alone to be unoriginal. I particularly liked the "gunfight" between him and a fellow that used staple guns and as guns with each person awkwardly holding three balloons as their bodies.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	13

89	Looby Loo: No Strings Attached (***) Fifty years after starring in a children's television show, the now stringless puppets try to deal with being unwanted and out of place in the human world by mounting a digital reprise of their show. The show they attempt to produce certainly harkens back to my 1950s childhood experience, but the theme of a well meaning last hurrah did not grab me. I did like their realization of a stuffed teddy bear unsuccessfully trying to dance with jointed puppets.	C Nova	2012	
90	Boom Boom Club (***) The one consistent thread of a cabaret is its compere while the quality of a given night depends on its acts for that night. Dusty Limits, the compere, is a charming, flamboyant gay fellow who used to add much to his cabarets by singing, but now has reduced his active participation to sly comments and introductions. The acts that night were mediocre in the main with the Hitler singer Frank Sanazi the most revolting, a stripper wrapping herself in cellophane (including across her mouth) the most disturbing, and none worth seeing again.	Underbelly Cowgate	2012	9
91	Everything Else Happened (***) This piece has four diverse monologues: a Jewish grandmother talking to her grandson, a man and his recorded wife making disjoint observations about their marriage, an aged children's clown speaking of his work, and a lecturer describing a system of punctuation used to symbolize the types of silences in his family. While all four were well written and performed, the two high concept pieces did not grab me like the two conventional slice of life pieces. The image that still stays with me is that of the unemployed clown searching his many-pocketed coat only to find that one "pocket" was only a rip caused by a mugger.	Assembly Roxy	2012	7

92	Grit (***) Slides, rod puppetry, cardboard cutouts, and actual Syrian children's artwork address the impact of war on children. Though each part is well done, later parts become just repetitious media essays. The most powerful section was the only one with extended verbal narrative, and described a former Khmer Rouge child soldier who founded an orphanage and personally removed thousands of mines.	Bedlam Theatre	2012	8
93	Hell's Bells by Lynne Truss (***) The writer, lead actress, and a hat expert gather to do a DVD commentary for a minor TV series from 20 years ago that is now in demand because one of its minor actresses is now a star. This blend of catty remarks, fond remembrances, and in depth discourses on hats unsuccessfully moves from a light dramedy suited to the characters to a madcap comedy exploiting each characters' weaknesses. I found the mutilation of the hats as inappropriate as the millinery historian did.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	25
94	Camille Claudel (***) A young woman portrays the sculptor who had a close relationship with August Rodin for fourteen years, and was committed to an insane asylum by her family eight years later. The story of art and love is occasionally beautiful, but her frequent dancing consistently detracts from the power of the piece. There is one nice scene where Rodin is touching her body that is a mix of a sculptor's investigation and perceived foreplay.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	22

95	Uninvited (***) A man of precision who lives alone must deal with an obstinate intruder while three bulging house beings also subtly disrupt up his world. Though in hindsight I think the story was well told, my experiences just prior to the start of the play dominate my thoughts about it. My play before this was "Picnic Apocalyptic" with its grotesquely bulging costumed characters including lust and gluttony, and just before "The Uninvited" began one house being with a similarly bulging midsection very slowly approached me and asked me to fiddle her. Since another house being had the rotund look of gluttony, I vainly tried to interpret all three of them as the man's vices through much of the play instead of their intended house gremlins roles.	Bedlam Theatre	2012	8
96	Born to Run (***) A woman jogs on a treadmill while explaining how she became a long distance runner as treatment for her epilepsy. Though the idea is novel, the play seems more expository than personal. I had read a magazine article about the woman upon which the character is loosely based, and found the real story provided a deeper understanding of epilepsy, running, and the woman's personal life.	Traverse Theatre	2012	21
97	The Three Faces of Doctor Crippen (***) Three actors play three aspects of the real life Doctor Crippen, who married a domineering unfaithful actress, and falls in love with his assistant in the early 1900s. There is some fun seeing the tongue-tied emotional side trying to woo the assistant, but it is too far a reach to make a comedy about a murderer. The portrayal of the wife as without any redeeming characteristics badly hurts the believability of the story.	C Venue	2012	22
98	Sam Simmons – About the Weather (***) Though there is an ongoing story of an encounter on a bus, this is more a scattershot of comic ideas. This is not improvisation, but rather well planned disjoint routines. I would have enjoyed this much more if he had not been yelling almost unintelligibly much of the time.	Gilded Balloon Teviot	2012	20

99	A Strange Wild Song (***) As his grandson tries to understand the contents of excavated World War II still camera film, we see the grandfather as a lost soldier in Normandy who comes upon a bombed out town that is only inhabited by three young brothers playing war. The interactions between the brothers and the soldier evolve nicely from tentative apprehension to a full scale romp, and the anthropologists are a clever way to provide context for the lost warrior. However, after two plays focused on the horrific impact of war on children earlier in the day, I could not join the audience in laughing at the brothers' antics, and left feeling that a big part of their reality was missing from the play.	Bedlam Theatre	2012	8
100	Mother to Mother (***) A South African mother tries to communicate her sorrow as well as the circumstances that led to her son killing the visiting daughter of an American woman. Though we see slides of her depressed neighborhood, and hear of her sons troubles, this seems like a tragedy that does not go anywhere. While it is clear that her sorrow for the daughter's death is real, there is also a subtle element of recrimination that the daughter should not have known better than being in the ghetto in the first place.	Assembly George Square	2012	20
101	Jubilate! by Rosalind Adler (***) Despite mounting evidence to the contrary, the haughty, overconfident wife of vicar continues to provide misguided help to the women of her parish. This play cannot decide whether it will be a black comedy or a drama. On the one hand, her continued sense of superiority obscures any real caring and the character becomes a caricature, but the dire consequences of her blunders are rooted so deeply in reality they cannot be funny.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	18

102	Six and a Tanner (***) David Hayman plays a man speaking to his father's coffin about his ordeals at the hands of the abusive man. As an American, I could understand Hayman's accent most of the time, but when he switched to his father's heavier brogue I was completely at a loss. The few stories I could understand were quite touching, and the rest of the audience loved the whole show.	The Assembly Rooms	2012	16
103	Morning (***) In just three days, a 19-year old sociopath starts by stealing her brother's iPod to give as a gift for her "passive" sociopathic girlfriend, and then the pair get their kicks in a much darker fashion. The play is very well done, but its focus on uncaring characters was just too unpleasant for me after just seeing the loving anguish of "And No More Shall We Part." I loved the subtlety of the girlfriend simply pocketing the iPod right after learning from the sociopath that her brother would really miss it.	12:30 – 13:50	2012	14
104	A Cry Too Far From Heaven (***) A modern executioner speaks of his trade, and then a woman from 1895 and a World War I deserter describe the events that led to their unjust execution. This is not a simple play about the injustice of execution, but more an essay on execution as a fact of life. While the two long stories told by the condemned appropriately provide exculpatory evidence, the executioner (or his surrogate) does an admirable job of appearing rigid and yet providing cogent rebuttals that try to quickly deflate their defenses.	theSpace at Surgeons Hall	2012	9
105	Once in a House on Fire (***) Two daughters must deal with their mother's repeated choice of abusive husbands. It was heartbreaking to see the mother repeatedly send her proud daughters to talk with her husband only to have them return rejected. My language skills again failed me as I could not understand many of their lines.	Northern Stage at St. Stephen's	2012	17

106	Soldiers' Wives (***) Catherine Shipton rotates through portraying five army wives whose husbands serve together in Afghanistan. The wives have diverse lives and husbands, but because Shipton makes only subtle changes when shifting among them, it is difficult to know who is speaking. Only the major's wife, with her rigid bearing and clipped speech came alive as she tried to fulfill her assigned role as morale manipulator.	Assembly Roxy	2012	15
107	The Silencer – David Calvitto (***) A fifty-year old man tries to recover from being jilted by the "one love of his life" by using other women.. Though the fellow initially seems charming, we soon find him to be a crass cad with virtually no redeeming qualities.. Nonetheless the final scene of violence seems completely out of character.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	23
108	Mess (***) Despite seeing a therapist and the misguided efforts of her close friend, and anorexic cannot overcome her illness. I had thought the disorder was solely based on body image, but this play taught me that it can arise from the need to control one's life. Despite having a better understanding of the disease and her background, I found that I had little patience for the rigid protagonist.	Traverse	2012	18
109	The Rat Pack – Live (***) This show normally has singers calling themselves Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, and Sammy Davis Jr., but that night a fellow calling himself Peter Lawford took over for the Sammy Davis Jr. character. Unlike the Blues Brothers act of this production company, this franchise has gone downhill over the past years. Instead of a well crafted homage with an energetic band, we now have singers that make only token efforts at emulating their namesakes (with a Frank Sinatra who did not even know the names of the people in the Rat Pack, let alone the famous phrasings of Old Blue Eyes), some of the songs unfamiliar to the original singers, and a back row of the band that had replaced joy with workmanlike scowls.	C eca	2012	10

110	Towards the Moon (***) This musical has a recently unemployed writer discover that his supportive girlfriend is having an affair with his best friend, and then is convinced by an angle to change his approach to life. Thought the singing was reasonable there was nothing here that really grabbed me. The metaphorical difference between a "path towards the moon" and a "path towards the sun" was suppose to drive much of the play, but had no clear meaning to me.	C Venue	2012	24
111	The Intervention (***) The father, mother, friend, lover, and an Alcoholics Anonymous counselor meet at drunken author's house to try to get him to stop drinking. The storyline is strong, but the comedic elements have no place here. In particular, the enabling friend certainly had contributed to the alcoholism, but his constant buffoonery eliminates the verisimilitude of the play.	Assembly Rooms	2012	26
112	Excuse Me, I'm Trying to Please You (***) With a keyboardist, Fiona Paul provides stories and songs about people's often misguided efforts to please others. Despite her best efforts to make this an upbeat experience, I could not help but feel the irony of a poorly attended show trying to please its audience in misguided ways. For example, rather than generate a festive atmosphere, having four tables of people blow party horns reminds everyone of how small the group is.	Zoo Southside	2012	18
113	Captain Ferguson's School for Balloon Warfare (***) Based on a true story from World War I, an U.S. Army captain tells of his efforts to train and then deploy more than 2000 men to move observation blimps along the front lines. The facts are interesting, but Ferguson's steadfast primness and stilted language make him a caricature. I am amazed that they lost only two aeronauts despite the fact that a simple bullet could explode the hydrogen-filled blimps.	Assembly Roxy	2012	21

114	Barely Legal: 18 Years of South African Comedy (***) Dave Levinsohn and Loyiso Gola each provide a half hour of standup comedy. Despite the show's title, Levinsohn rarely ventured into topics unique to his country, but Gola used many references including his imitation of Nelson Mandela throughout as he contrasted his ghetto past with the rich first world. Gola's routine about the proper way to kill an individual instead of innocent bystanders was chilling.	Assembly Roxy	2012	18
115	Love All (***) The true story of a ne'er-do-well Irish tennis star who marries a French in 1891 whose efforts address their debts become more and more desperate. Despite the depressing plot the story is presented in a whimsical, mugging vaudevillian manner. This airy approach obscures the possible emotional power of the events with a bunch of fluff.	Assembly Roxy	2012	7
116	People Show 121: The Detective Show (***) Three likeable actors use hats to differentiate a myriad of characters in an Agatha Christie type murder mystery. In the Christie fashion, the plot does twist as new evidence is revealed, but at some point it just becomes a send up of plot twists instead of a satisfying mystery. The repeated arguments about who should be allowed to stand on the narrator's table contribute nothing to the plot, nor the attempted comedy	Assembly George Square	2012	7
117	Bottleneck (***) A fifteen year old Liverpudlian tells of dealing with loyalty, a deserted father, action films, and his pursuit of a ticket to the ill-fated Liverpool FC game in November 1989 in which fans crushed themselves to death. Because the actor is unrelentingly energetic and intense throughout the show, it wore me out, and numbed me. I did like how he decided to stick up for his unpopular friend despite the physical and social cost.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	23

118	Dylan Thomas: Return Journey – Bob Kingdom (***) Since it was a returning show, I was hopeful that my second show of the day with Bob Kingdom would be better than his new show about the Duke of Windsor. Kingdom again portrayed a historic figure recounting his life, but this time he could rely on the beautiful phrases of the Welsh poets for much of the script. However, this show also lacked emotional vitality – here a man reads his life instead of reliving it.	Assembly Hall	2012	6
119	An Audience with the Duke of Windsor – Bob Kingdom (***) Bob Kingdom portrays the former King Edward VIII as he recounts his life after he abdicated the throne to marry the American socialite, Wallis Simpson. Though we hear of his sadistic nanny and his deep love for Simpson they have no life to them. There is no vitality here, just an old man trying to work hard to write his autobiography.	Assembly Hall	2012	6
120	The Imaginary Radio Programme: Drennon Davis (***) Davis and a keyboardist/singer scan through an imaginary radio and provide songs, ads, and patter from a variety of radio program formats. While it is the music that differentiates most radio stations, the most fun in this show is when we hear the announcers. Davis is a master of a looping machine, but he tends to lay down the same percussive beats so the music does not vary as much as it should.	Assembly Roxy	2012	
121	Picnic Apocalyptic (**) An apocalyptic cult presents a play of ten "undermen" who have been cast out of heaven telling the tale of the woman Belle's growing acknowledgement of faith and the Apocalypse. They had wonderfully grotesque costumes and sang well, but I could not understand many of their misdirected lines. The supposed real play becomes fantasy as characters start to jerk through words like a skipping record as the playwright/scroll reader/leader tries to find the right word for them, but the final plot twist belies this whole aura of magic and left me quite dissatisfied.	Bedlam Theatre	2012	8

122	Dead Man's Cell Phone (**) While eating at a café, the customer across from a woman dies, and she decides to answer his cell phone and make the callers' lives by lying to them. The beginning of the play works fairly well as she tries to fake her knowledge of the dead man, and decipher the needs of the callers. The balance of the show with its topics of organ transplants, familial discord, and heavenly waiting rooms consistently fails because of both poor acting, and an unrealistic script.	C Venue	2012	10
123	Monkey Bars (**) This is an experiment to see if when adults say the previously recorded answers of children, the children's answers would be taken more seriously by the audience. This seemed a re-hash of the old Art Linkletter TV show section "Children Say the Darndest Things." Though sort of cute at times, there really was much here.	Traverse	2012	16
124	The Election : A Silent Comedy (**) A politician and his two aides prepare for an election results party. From Three Stooges fights to repeatedly exchanged possessions, the silent trio work through most of the standard silent slapstick routines with few innovations. I did like a scene of repeated conflicting paths that evolved in to a pas de deux.	Bedlam Theatre	2012	8
125	In a Handbag, Darkly (**) This farce an attempt to extend the storyline of Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest" by adding a second brother found in a handbag in Victoria Station. The characters are here, but not the wit. The presentation of the second brother as a puppet in handbag who rules the servants of the world is bizarre, and is completely out of place in a drawing room comedy.	theSpace on North Bridge	2012	22

126	The Ugly Sisters (**) The two stepsisters of Cinderella re-interpret the tale as one in which they are ugly and rejected by their mother and s were society. The two sisters and the three-piece rock ban were certainly energetic and loud, but that also meant that they were often unintelligible. Their yelling and brashness overshadow their tender mutual love and charmingly inept efforts at winning the prince.	Northern Stage at St. Stephen's	2012	16
127	Fragment (**) Five young dancers explore social groupings. Though there were a few interesting movements and combinations, I was left with a sense of repetition and feeling of boredom. There was one good piece where an outsider surreptitiously gathers pillows from the sleeping crowd.	Greenside	2012	15
128	Death Boogie (**) Accompanied by a violin and a double bass a hip-hop singer utilizes a loop machine to produce well-constructed songs telling of a Caspar Milquetoast worker who dreams of being a revolutionary. While I appreciated their talent, these old ears often could not decipher his quick words, and so much of the show was lost on me. Though often repetitive, the background video of political drawings helps give a sense of urgency that any revolution must have.	Assembly Roxy	2012	7
129	This Way Up (**) During her first year after graduating with an Art degree, a young woman takes a job at a call center and deals with a jobless flat mate. This devised piece uses all sizes of corrugated boxes for all manner of props and sets that reflect the ramshackle life of graduates unable to find work in their chosen field. The problem with the play is that it too feels like something that was constructed of many disparate ideas that were thrown together with little forethought and depth.	C Venue	2012	5

130	Captain Ko and the Planet of Rice (**) This is composed of a three short pieces: two astronauts in space suits spending a million years almost silently looking for life on a planet, an Alzheimer woman miming to the sound effects of preparing breakfast twice, and Russian cosmonaut floating in the Soyuz space capsule while the Soviet Union disbands below him. While each play had something noticeably excellent, such as the space suits or the video camera images actually looking like he was in zero gravity, each was also deeply flawed. The search for life was tedious, the actress rarely matched her movements to the sound effects, and the video camera was mis-aimed so that it missed much of the action on the Soyuz.	Underbelly Cowgate	2012	11
131	The Company of Wolves (**) Though the show starts with the audience using children's crafts to create cards of their deepest desires, the Red Riding Hood story is fairly adult with some sexual content. This slow play has little to offer other than a feminist Red Riding Hood. The created cards are not utilized, the singer is weak, and most of the acting seemingly for children, though the content is not.	C eca	2012	10
132	Quick! Save the Pizza! (**) What is the world to do when countries are disappearing because of the global economic crisis and their cultural treasures and foods disappear with them. This satire mixes the current political leaders of major countries with Indian superheroes to create a childish mush. In particular, the ambivalent role of China as rapacious buyer of the world, and then savior of the super heroes made no sense.	theSpace at Surgeons Hall	2012	9
133	Vive la Cabaret (**) This below average Fringe cabaret had a compere who spoke in platitudes of praise about each of the many uninspiring acts. Only Ria Lina, a blues singer, displayed enough talent to interest me in seeing her show. I am glad that other Fringe audiences will not have to endure this disappointing show since it was only scheduled for the first three days of the Fringe.	Pleasance Courtyard	2012	5

134	Perle (**) After his familial loss a man retreats into silence and only interacts with his TV. This glacial play starts with us staring at simple geometric shapes on the TV, and then moves on to the actor using his cartoon hands to make a sandwich on the screen. Even the audience participation is static as they were asked to not move at all once he has positioned them on stage.	Assembly Roxy	2012	9
135	Dad Doesn't Dance (*) After a successful career, this senior dancer discovered that she had a different biological father, and tries to seek him out. From her swooping entrance from the back of the room, until her exit, she cannot keep herself from gesticulating in the manner of her art. All of the potential power of the play is lost in her narcissistic movements.	theSpace at Surgeons Hall	2012	9
1	Casablanca: The Gin Joint Cut (*****) This homage is a remarkable mix of reverent recital and play-within-a-play antics. I've seen Casablanca countless times, and I was amazed how the cast of three would play every touching scene straight, but then add every sort of high jinx to the other scenes. I should warn the uninitiated that many of their funny touches, such as air freshener sprayed all over the set to simulate fog in the airport scene, will make little sense to you. (Aug 13 & 25)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	13
2	Snap.Catch.Slam (*****) This show has three independent stories: a harried high school teacher must deal with an insubordinate student, a woman's scream breaks a fellow's Sunday routine, and a lonely mother spends an afternoon waiting for her five year old to come home. Though some stories have minor support, these are essentially three monologues that felt perfect. The second story had the woman next to me literally biting her knuckles. (Aug 13)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	13

3	A tribute to the Blues Brothers – Live (*****) A septet and three female singers join Jake, Elwood, and Cab Calloway, to provide spirited renditions of 1960's blues and soul. Almost every song had the audience clapping and/or dancing. I suggest that you sit on an aisle or in the front row you can easily join the good times. (Aug 3 & 29)	C Chambers Street	2011	3
4	Richard Herring : What is Love Anyway (*****) In his typical fashion, Herring mixes research with personal experiences to provide an amusing exploration of the meanings of "love". Maternal love, paternal love, love and lust, puppy love, teenage love, grandmother love, and even corporate love all receive well-conceived treatment. I laughed until I cried as he described the mathematical consequences of doubling the number of chocolates he gives his lover each Valentines Day—imagine the UK covered with Egyptian pyramids of bonbons! (Aug 4)	Udderbelly's Pasture	2011	4
5	The Monster in the Hall (*****) A 16-year old girl must prepare her blind, multiple sclerosis plagued father for a visit from a social worker that may remove her from her home. This well crafted comedy lays out all of the quirky characters, including Norwegian biker woman and a fashion conscious boy with a scheme to prove he is not gay, and then creates a wonderful, albeit predictable, jigsaw, with each piece fitting perfectly among the others. Only the scene with four people on a motorcycle strained my credulity beyond the breaking point. (Aug 12)	Traverse Theatre	2011	12
6	Futureproof (*****) When attendance withers the manager of a freak show decides that the performers should alter their acts to be more appealing to the customers. This play works at both the personal level where each performer must confront change, and as a commentary on society as we confront our own attitudes towards the disabled. Each character has a depth that allows their actions to be unpredictable and yet valid. (Aug 14)	Traverse Theatre	2011	14

7	Wasted Love (*****) Eight young men and women have a group counseling together to help deal with being dumped. I rarely like young musicals, but this had good lyrics, catchy melodies, strong voices that did not need microphones, good acting, properly amplified music, and diverse tales of rejection. The design wisely placed the pianist/counselor at the center of the stage for the play would not work nearly as well without his musical virtuosity and good-natured leadership. (Aug 16)	C Chamber St.	2011	16
8	The Golden Dragon (*****) Four stories involving everything from Aesop's grasshopper to stewardesses to illegal immigration to unwanted pregnancy intermingle with each other in surprising ways. When initially the cast verbalize most stage directions and descriptions it is disturbing, but as the play continues they add rhythm and clarify which character an actor is playing as we often shift from one story to another. This rich play provided material for the most interesting post performance discussion I've had this year. (Aug 25)	Traverse Theatre	2011	25
9	Translunar Paradise (*****) A husband slowly reconciles himself to the death of his wife by revisiting old memories. No play could be designed to elicit more tears than this one as it alternates between the joy of an occasion and then returns to their spiritual parting. The constant accordion accompaniment keeps our emotions shifting with the scenes while the seemingly magnetic masks of the old pair emphasize his withdrawal from each world. (Aug 29)	Pleasance Dome	2011	29
10	Dave Gorman's Power Point Presentation (*****) Like the title says, Gorman uses a huge video screen to present a Power Point Presentation that deals with observations of life. Topics range from him being mislabeled as a Jew in publications to the absurdity of digital clocks all being set to 10:08 in advertisements. This is a very cleverly crafted show that exploits Power Point to present cascading tweets, mosaics of photographs, and blow-ups of magazine page sections. (Aug 16)	Assembly George Square	2011	16

11	Shylock by Gareth Armstrong (*****) Guy Masterson assumes the character of Tubal, Shylock's only friend in the "Merchant of Venice," to mix a complete history of Jewish persecution with a retelling of Shakespeare's story from a Jew's perspective. The blend of historical facts with Shakespeare's prose is at once lively and informative. I particularly appreciated how he presented a clear and concise synopsis of each scene before moving on to dissecting it. (Aug 5)	Assembly Hall	2011	5
12	Swimming with My Mother (*****) Choreographer David Bolger pairs with his 77-year old mother to perform swimming inspired and ballroom duets. From the opening entrance, as she walks gently leading her prancing, agile son they establish the tone of love and embellishment. As they piece continues, they sometimes dance as a unit, but more often she dances as the melody, and he adds the arpeggios. (Aug 21)	Dance Base	2011	21
13	The Man Who Was Hamlet (*****) George Dillon starts as Hamlet, but quickly switches to the ghost of Edward De Vere telling of his life in Elizabethan court. The play implicitly argues that De Vere actually wrote Shakespeare's work by having De Vere meet an illiterate Shakespeare, and portraying other events in De Vere's life that end up in Shakespeare's plays. In both roles, Dillon presents a well-measured performance that enthralled me with Shakespeare's words and De Vere's privileged but volatile life. I should note that this is my review from last year because when I saw the play again this year I was a bit bored since none of the revelations were new to me. (Aug 22)	Assembly George Square	2011	22

14	Barry and Stuart: Show and Tell – The Tell (*****) This show follows the pair's magic show, "Barry and Stuart: Show and Tell – The Show," and reveals to the much smaller audience how all of the tricks for the magic show worked. Though I understood some of the tricks beforehand, their thorough approach and innovations, as well as their enthusiasm to teach the audience, made this a great experience. Note that you must see earlier, four-star show that I reviewed below, to be allowed into this one. (Aug 12)	Underbelly's Pasture	2011	12
15	Pip Utton is the Hunchback of Notre Dame (*****) Pip Utton assumes the character of the Hunchback to tell his life story. As usual, Utton demonstrates his mastery of character to create a real one-eyed, filthy, speech impaired hunchback standing in front of us. Though all of the story is heart wrenching, the pathos reaches its peak when he rejoices at for once becoming one of the crowd when he is elected "pope" for a parade. (Aug 17)	New Town Theatre	2011	17
16	An Instinct for Kindness (*****) Chris Larner describes his ex-wife's life battling with multiple sclerosis, and the complicated process of fulfilling her wish to be euthanized in Switzerland. While this could be a play with unrelenting sadness, Larner has included an occasional lighter note to relieve the pressure. The aching phone calls from her son pleading for her to change her mind are here, but so is his quip asking his neatnik ex-wife if Switzerland was tidy enough for her? (Aug 19)	Pleasance Dome	2011	19

17	Bellevile Rendez-vous (*****) Based on the animated film, “Les Triplettes de Belleville,” the show tells the tale of a grandmother who helps her orphan grandson prepare for the Tour de France, and saves him from the gangsters who kidnap him. The show combines a jazzy accordion-led trio, physical theater moves, three puppets, and minimal words to recreate the fantastic spirit of a cartoon. I had not seen the film, but I could still appreciate their wonderful interpretation of such scenes as a car chase with the cars leaning around curves. (Aug 9)	Bedlam Theatre	2011	9
18	The Girl with the Iron Claws (*****) After a princess becomes enthralled with a golden band in one dream, she agrees to go away with a bear that actually has the band. From the simple puppets to the sparse, evocative bear costume, this Nordic fairy tale is wonderful for both children (from age 6) and adults. I only wish that the few poorly sung songs would have been replaced with prose spoken by the outstanding narrator. (Aug 4)	Underbelly	2011	4
19	The Fitzrovia Radio Hour (*****) This a recreation of a 1930s radio program that contains commercials and four stories with a few added visual touches for the audience’s amusement. This perfectly designed show splits the two long stories across the show so that we can experience real cliffhangers. While the cast maintains the “suspense” of the on air show, they must scramble around the studio producing the manifold sound effects, as well as quickly changing hats. (Aug 20)	Gilded Balloon	2011	20
20	Out of the Blue (*****) The large Oxford men’s a cappella group is back again with their great arrangements and fun choreography. This show seemed to have better choreography and a lot more new tunes than the shows from the last couple of years. I think that their new venue is a little too large for their volume, with the weaker solos becoming inaudible. (Aug 23)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	23

21	Pinocchio: A Fantasy of Pleasure (*****) The tale of Pinocchio is told with modern dance, and music that runs from opera to rock. This is a feast for the eyes and ears with imaginative dance movements and a strong operatic soprano. The Pinocchio dancer uses a loose limb gate and his marvelous gymnastic skills to create the marionette star. (Aug 26)	New Town Theatre	2011	26
22	From the Fire (*****) A large cast portrays the lives and working conditions of 146 immigrant girls who died jumping from the ninth floor of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory when it caught fire in 1911. I usually do not like what I call Sondheim musicals with their lack of rhyming lyrics, but the beautiful voices of the women combined with their evocative lyrics won me over. The occasional projection of photos and videos of the times reinforced the state of their working conditions as well as providing historical context for newly emerging women's unions. (Aug 20)	Zoo Roxy	2011	20
23	Street Dreams (*****) A puppet who lives in a garbage dump tires of dealing with animated banana peels, rubber gloves, and plastic bags. The tale of seeking greener pastures extends the garbage motif to a corrugated paper ramshackle set, and a large holey umbrella that serves as a boat on a bellowing plastic sheet sea. Except for a harshly strummed mandolin, the flute and harmonica provide a nice lilting soundtrack. (Aug 19)	Underbelly	2011	19
24	Ibsen's Hedda Gabler (*****) A bored wife selfishly manipulates almost everyone around her to entertain herself. I had not seen the play for many years, but it seems that this abridged version has all the power of the original. Hedda, with her probing questions and sly rejoinders hurting people but often thwarted in her aims, and her husband, with his naïve honesty providing a clear contrast, are a core duo that form a strong base for the play. (Aug 7)	Hill Street Theater	2011	7

25	A Slow Air (*****) This two hander has a steady tile contractor and his estranged volatile barhopping housecleaner sister dealing with her 21-year old son's disturbing fascination with the Glasgow bombers. This well honed script eschews rhetorical flourishes in favor of solid monologues from clear characters presented by skilled actors. I loved the idea of an album of family photos with everyone caught in midair while jumping together. (Aug 6)	Traverse Theatre	2011	6
26	Sold (*****) From the cocoa farms of Ivory Coast to the nightclubs of the UK, this show reveals how varied and widespread human trafficking is in the world. Unlike many shows on this topic, this one accuses governments of providing little more than rhetoric, and then suggests actions for the audience to take. The facts projected on monitors combined with appropriately disparate stories combine well, though I do grow tired of the prominence of the sex trade aspect when it is just a small part of the problem. (Aug 8)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	8
27	Fantasmagoriana (*****) Based on a real event, Lord Byron, Percy Shelley, Mary Shelley, and Dr. John Polidori agree to compete to write the best ghost story while Mary's stepsister competes with Polidori for Byron's affections. The play brings all five participants alive with dialog that matches their historical backgrounds. Though Byron was clearly the leader, and his verse is sprinkled throughout, the play provides each character time to develop so that we can witness a rich mix of romance and literary creation. (Aug 21)	C Aquila	2011	21
28	Remember This (*****) A working man and his posh wife review their life together as they watch a slide show he has painstakingly created. As they view each slide, they reveal secret aspects of the situations which are quite touching. The best was him revealing that he was pretending to be still dating her close friend while dating his future wife because he thought it kept her interested in him. (Aug 9)	Bedlam Theatre	2011	9

29	Breathing Water (*****) A young man troubled by a traumatic experience has a jock buddy and concerned girlfriend try to support him while her sexual predator girlfriend does not understand him. I loved the way the protagonist spoke in extended alliterative phrases that were also quite evocative. All of the acting and script suited me perfectly. (Aug 23)	theSpace on the Mile	2011	23
30	Medea (*****) Medea plans revenge on her husband, Jason of the Argonauts, when he weds the daughter of the king of Corinth. Three strong performances by the leads make this tragedy compelling. Nadira Janikova's Medea has an intensity that I've rarely seen on the stage, and her Uzbekistani accented English gives just the right touch of a Medea's foreignness. (Aug 14)	Assembly George Square	2011	14
31	Llwyth (Tribe) (*****) A gay Welshman who now lives in London returns to go clubbing with his three longtime gay friends. Though the men speak in Welsh with English supertitles, and there were many British proper nouns unknown to me, I still found the events quite affecting. I cannot remember another show that portrayed gay men gently touching each other when it conveyed genuine friendship with no sexual undercurrents. (Aug 24)	St. Georges West	2011	24
32	Sunday in the Park with George (*****) The large young cast takes on Stephen Sondheim's musical about George Serat and the people in his painting "A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte." With consistently strong voices, good acting, and clear accompaniment from a small band, everything works in this well proven play. It was nice touch to have parts of a replica of the painting as an occasional backdrop to provide a reference for the characters. (Aug 26)	C Chamber Street	2011	26

33	Go to Your God Like a Soldier (****) While four British soldiers are penned down in an Afghan school, we see flashbacks and sometimes confusing flash forwards of the individuals. Not surprisingly for a play, each soldier has different issues in his/her life, with the most touching being a divorced father who is not granted joint custody solely because he is away fulfilling his duty. I liked how a large monitor in the background introduced each scene by first drawing an outline of a room's furnishings and then filling in the details. (Aug 19)	Underbelly	2011	19
34	I, Malvolio (****) Malvolio, the officious butler in Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice," complains of mistreatment in this treatise on bullying by Tim Crouch. In the first half of the story, Malvolio garners sympathy by as the love struck conservative who is ridiculed and imprisoned simply for doing the bidding of his supposed lover, but as the story continues Malvolio reveals his own bullying side as he tells audience members what to do without so much as a please or thank you. The play starts with some very clever incremental absurdities matched by a slow increase in volumes, but Malvolio's complaints become repetitive as the play continues. (Aug 16)	Traverse	2011	16
35	Fresher the Musical (****) In their first week at a university, two girls and three boys share a suite, and learn to get along as they party and quietly talk about their needs. The music is very good, the lyrics clear and well written, the situations straight out of first week, and the characters are close enough to real to allow me to care for them. I just could not believe that the "good" girl would fall in love with the mostly unrepentant mean prankster until he demonstrated that he had changed. (Aug 12)	Pleasance Dome	2011	12

36	Broadway Swings (****) A fifteen-piece band and thirty-five singers perform pop tunes as well as Broadway hits. I loved "All That Jazz," "Mack the Knife," and a Judy Garland medley bookended by "Over the Rainbow." During an instrumental, the drummer had the traditional, but uninteresting solo, and the brass section drowned out the five saxophones. (Aug 18)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	18
37	The Caroline Carter Show (****) Accompanied by good guitarist, Caroline playfully sings her own country songs. The lyrics are fun, and her warm personality won over the whole crowd. I even got to be bartender for the audience as she offered libations for us all! (Aug 28)	Zoo	2011	28
38	Youth and Will: a Portrait of Shakespeare's Young Characters… and us (****) Two actresses and an actor describe how Shakespeare influenced their lives. During difficult emotional times the two women found solace in characters sharing their plight, while the actor identifies with Hamlet's intellectual challenges. The ordering of the stories weakens the play because it misled my expectations of its trajectory, but the story of one actress' loss of trust caused by the constant betrayal of her director/lover had tremendous impact. I must note that the actress is a friend of mine, but a disinterested stranger in the audience volunteered the same opinion when I asked his thoughts on the play. (Aug 6)	C soco	2011	6
39	Camille O'Sullivan: Feel (****) This is the third time I have seen the Irish singer accompanied by a keyboardist, drummer, and lead guitarist. Whether using a mechanical caged bird hanging from her microphone stand to accompany her, or urging her players to ramp up to another crescendo, she always brings a mischievous presence to her often dark music. She made it a truly spontaneous show as she good naturedly selected songs on the spot to accommodate the tardy starting time of opening night. (Aug 3)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	3

40	Ed Byrne: Crowd Pleaser (****) The nerdy Byrne follows the standard stand-up comedian formula of exploring a few topics, and occasionally querying the front row. As a new father, domestic life figures prominently, though politics and a few random jokes made their appearance. I laughed often, and found his piece about what his cat brought into the house, including a live pheasant, hilarious. (Aug 17)	Venue150 at EICC	2011	17
41	52 Man Pickup (****) With some help from the audience, a woman describes her sex life by randomly going through a deck of cards, each with notes on a man with whom she has had sex. Her energy, vulnerability, and bawdiness combine to give her show an unimagined power. While I have seen many one-woman shows, this is unlike anything I have seen before. (Aug 6)	Hill Street Theater	2011	6
42	An Imaginary History of Tango (****) Anna Cetti tells of her discovery of the tango, the nuances of the culture of tango clubs, called milongas, and the world of non-verbal communication found there. Cetti combines dance, puppets, storytelling, and audience participation to create a lovely atmosphere of discovery for us. I particularly liked how in the initial scene where she is dancing to quick pop music, she first ever so minutely misses a beat and then progressively finds that the music does not resonate with her. (Aug 21)	C Aquila	2011	21
43	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast – Menu 1 (****) The four-person troupe present five short plays along with coffee, croissants, and strawberries. The consistently satisfying plays range from a man preparing to see an ex-girlfriend to a pair of pro tennis players saying what they are thinking as they battle for the match point. My favorite was a tale of a wild horse ride by a Special Forces soldier in Afghanistan. (Aug 26)	Pleasance Dome	2011	26

44	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast – Menu 3 (****) The four-person troupe present five short plays along with coffee, croissants, and strawberries. These plays range a groom dealing with a sleepy bride to a widower discussing with his wife her eulogy. The highlights were a story of woman preparing to return to the high wire after a fall, and another that had a foreman help his laborer prepare for an acting audition by playing famous scenes in a blue-collar style. (Aug 28)	Pleasance Dome	2011	28
45	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast – Menu 2 (****) The four-person troupe present five short plays along with coffee, croissants, and strawberries. The consistently satisfying plays range from a modern couple choosing to live their lives exactly as if it was October 30, 1942 to how two men's video game obsession have different effects because one is single and the other married. My favorite of this batch had a workman's repeatedly hiring a prostitute not for sex, but to fulfill his rigid fantasy of having a long happy marriage, and then she rebels. (Aug 27)	Pleasance Dome	2011	27
46	Foursome (****) This light comedy has a pharmacist, a sex obsessed buffoon, a hung over fellow, and his concerned girlfriend, preparing for lunch with her mother. There is no new territory explored here, nor great cleverness, but the show has a comfortable TV sitcom feel to it. Though after 50 minutes, I started to grow tired of hearing of the buffoon's sexual missteps, I could appreciate his reasoning when he told a woman that she was a better lover than her non-existent sister was. (Aug 12)	theSpaces at Surgeons Hall	2011	12

47	The Overcoat (****) The cast of five transpose Gogol's short story of a socially inept clerk, Akaky, who becomes obsessed with purchasing an overcoat to the modern banking world with its technological advancements and dubious financial innovations. His continual mastery of each new computer improvement is a nice interpretation of the original protagonist's mastery of copying documents. His ensnarement in the financial crisis is also a creative parallel to the original Akaky's trouble with an insecure general. (Aug 28)	Pleasance Dome	2011	28
48	The Butterfly Effect (****) Three middle aged Swedish gentlemen present a wonderful array of tunes played instruments created from everyday objects as well as a piano and an accordion. With one man providing percussion and innumerable sound effects with his mouth, another singing and playing a radio-ski slide guitar and bicycle harp, and the third hippy providing comic relief as well as playing almost anything, this playful trio kept us smiling throughout. The purity of sound produced when one fellow rubbed more than 20 partially filled tumblers made one Telemann piece surprisingly affecting. (Aug 7)	Hill Street Theater	2011	7
49	Dust (****) As he is writing a book about the 1984 miners' strike under Margaret Thatcher, Arthur Scargill, the union's leader, is confronted by a fellow leader who personally suffered from the repercussions of the strike. This show endeavors to both teach political history as well as conveys the individual suffering of the miners. I was a bit confused about a key mine accident. I spoke with a miner in the audience who had been with Scargill when the famous strike photo was taken, and he said he did not like the play because he rejected the portrayal of Scargill. (Aug 18)	New Town Theatre	2011	18

50	Two by Jim Cartwright (****) A man and woman play the estranged owners of a pub, as well as their many patrons. The vignettes range from domestic abuse to a loving couple sharing a Western on the TV to and unfaithful rake trying to wheedle money from soft touch girlfriend. The explanation behind the couple's constant bickering was troubling because it takes them seven years to finally talk about it. (Aug 15)	theSpaces at Surgeons Hall	2011	15
51	The Adventures of Alvin Sputnik (****) The Earth is covered with water, and a widower signs up to find an air pocket of vegetated land at the bottom of the ocean. The one-man show has the aquanaut puppet passing in and out of a projected screen that sometimes displays the whole story as a cartoon, and sometimes just provides the seascape for the real puppet. The show has an extra dimension of tenderness because he chases the light of the soul of his wife, which ends up guiding him on his quest. (Aug 12)	Underbelly	2011	12
52	Ruby Wax: Losing It (****) With the help of her piano accompanist, the comedienne explores her battle with depression throughout her life. She has written a show that maintains its good humor throughout her journey as we learn of her voice of belittlement in her ever-busy life and her experiences in treatment centers. She argues persuasively that mental disease should not be shameful, and that, with one in four suffering from it, sufferers should seek out other depressed people as well as therapy to help them realize that they are not bad. (Aug 11)	Udderbelly	2011	11

53	One Night Stan (****) In 1954, after hearing that Oliver Hardy is seriously ill, Stan Laurel sits in his dressing room and describes his professional life. Though most of the names of the performers are unfamiliar, it does not detract from his thesis that Laurel needed a partner to help him create an enduring character for film based on the low comedy of the 1910's English music halls owned by his father. I learned that Laurel did much of the early production work while Hardy golfed, and that Laurel thought the later orders to eliminate his pancake make-up made the gags less funny because he looked less childlike. (Aug 3)	Assembly George Square	2011	3
54	Confessions of a Mormon Boy (****) Steven Fales tells of his life as a gay boy battling his sexuality within the Church of Latter Day Saints, and his life as a prostitute afterwards. Fales is a gifted singer, and this is a clear, forthright tale of man who worked hard to mold himself to a unaccepting system, and then using that same industry to provide for his family in a most antithetical way. Fales still embodies the traditional Mormon value for his family, but he readily admits that the ever present Mormon smile has left him at times. (Aug 26)	Hill Street Theater	2011	26
55	The Trials of Galileo (****) Galileo describes his Inquisition trial for violating an edict that proscribed advocating Copernicus' theory that the Earth revolved around the sun. During his thorough discourse he covers the effects of the rack, his own astronomical studies, his friendly meetings with Pope Urban, and the legal maneuvering during the trial. All the pieces fit nicely together to explain the verdict and his ingenious recanting. (Aug 27)	C Aquila	2011	27
56	Rose (****) As she attending her immigrant father in the hospital, a woman relives their life together in a bedsit. His portrayal as a troubled father trying to sternly guide his daughter in a new culture drives the play. Her development, in two-year installments, works well except that her religious conversion shows up only intermittently (Aug 29).	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	29

57	Paul Daniels: Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow (****) Daniels presents age-old tricks almost identical to the other five magic acts I've seen this year, except for Barry and Stuart who create new tricks. With such a range of tricks available, why does every act have an audience member sign a card, then have the card show up in some impossible place? What separates Daniels from the others is his smooth, friendly veteran patter that allows him to be both clever, and interact with the audience in more than a superficial way. (Aug 16)	Assembly George Square	2011	16
58	Oedipus by Steven Berkoff (****) The Oedipus, the king of Thebes, must lift the curse on his city by finding the murderer of his predecessor, who is himself. Berkoff's translation/interpretation and the fine acting makes the ancient Greek tragedy accessible and powerful. I loved how the messenger pranced around the table to indicate his journey, but I hated how Jocasta constantly held her arms out as if she was a spirit and not part of the rest of the characters. (Aug 29)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	29
59	Great Expectations (****) This abridged version of the Dickens' novel focuses on the interactions between the protagonist Pip and the beautiful but remote Estella. The playwright does a fine job of minimizing the outside scenes to only those that bear on Pip's and Estella's romance so that there is enough time to fully render their dysfunctional relationship over the first twenty years of the novel. We can feel how the both are hurt by her upbringing. (Aug 17)	Princes Mall	2011	17
60	The Table (****) This three (or is it four?) part puppetry show starts with a great first act, and then tails off a little. The first act has three men controlling a puppet who describes himself and his table as well trying to interact with a woman reading at the table. The later white heads controlled by invisible hands act, and rolling credits are fun, but not up to the originality of the table puppet. (Aug 19)	Pleasance Dome	2011	19

61	Dances for Wolves (****) While five diverse strippers compete for the attention of sheik, they describe their lives and say what is going through their minds. They often tell of their thoughts by providing clever alternative lyrics to famous stripping songs. Most men in the audience are singled out and described as the repulsive wolves the women encounter in their club. (Aug 20)	C Aquila	2011	20
62	Your Last Breath (****) This devised piece cycles through four stories set at different times in Norway based on the medical and frigid characteristics of a real 1999 skiing accident that involved suspended animation. My favorite story at times utilized two sets of clothes lines to form a huge grid while an English cartographer maps the minimally hospitable north of the country in 1876. Surprisingly, I found the story about the accident itself, the least appealing because of its reliance on repetitive physical theater. (Aug 13)	Pleasance Dome	2011	13
63	Barry and Stuart – Show and Tell: The Show (****) The young magicians provide a good show with a variety of tricks ranging from mentalism to sleight of hand to escaping bonds. They are excellent entertainers that know how to dress up a trick to make it even more appealing to the audience. As someone who has studied magic, I could figure out almost of them, except when they poured previously tasted bottled water into a glass, and it became real red wine. You must see this show to see their five star show "Barry and Stuart – Show and Tell: The Tell" that is reviewed above. (Aug 12)	Udderbelly's Pasture	2011	12
64	Bespoke Magic – On the Fringe of Reality (****) Bruce Glen, the self-ascribed Gentleman Magician, performs a nice range of magic tricks while using a quiet, gentle patter. Though most of his tricks are from the traditional bag, he deserves high marks for avoiding almost all of the tricks that the other magicians at the Fringe are doing. I still don't know how he touched one audience member, and had another feel it. (Aug 18)	C Aquila	2011	18

65	Bashir Lazhar (****) Bashir is an Algerian immigrant who takes over teaching a 6th grade class when their teacher commits suicide. As he tries to help the students deal with violence in their world, he must deal with the physical violence of his homeland, and the political violence of his new school. As a lecturer, I found his enthusiastic lesson plans appealing, but his writing on his clothes with chalk a distracting artifice. (Aug 21)	Assembly George Square	2011	21
66	Free Run (****) Seven fellows and one weak woman run, jump, and flip around a set of four large boxes of varying heights while videos play on the huge back screen. After the first five minutes, I realized that while quite athletic, the range of tricks was surprisingly narrow. The best scene was having four runners chased around the whole auditorium by two hunters, but it ended badly when the runners are cornered, tension mounts as we wonder how they will escape, and then the lights just go out. (Aug 3)	Udderbelly	2011	3
67	Dusk Rings a Bell (****) A 39-year old woman returns to a beach house to retrieve a hidden piece of memorabilia, and meets an old flame who is an ex-con who is still dealing with his crime. The whole play gets off on the wrong foot with the woman giving a long, elaborate soliloquy describing her life, but lacking any emotional content. The fellow's lines are much better written, and delivered with a sincerity that gives power to the later scenes when the pair interacts. (Aug 3)	Assembly George Square	2011	3
68	Phys Ed (****) Neville, the twin brother of a world famous rugby player, coaches his young team toward the English School Rugby Invitational Cup while describing his own childhood. This lighthearted tale finds a rich source of material in the brothers' problem of bed wetting that well serves the story's well-designed ending. As a Sean Connery fan, I particularly liked his send up of Connery as King Arthur in "First Knight" when describing Neville's pursuit of his own holy grail. (Aug 4)	Assembly Hall	2011	4

69	Vertigo (****) This has the premise that two plays were scheduled for the same time in the Bedlam so the two actors alternate presenting one shallow play about the man's fears based on questionnaires and his experiences, and another about a woman's search to re-capture a once experienced emotion. This is a slight play, but the sincerity of her search, and a plot twist at the end, really warmed my heart. Her constantly backpacked stepladder provided a prop metaphor for her efforts to reach a higher plane. (Aug 8)	Bedlam Theatre	2011	8
70	The Return of the Pink Sinatra (****) Scott Free dons a pink suit, and backed with a quartet sings a wide range of pop songs that Frank Sinatra might have chosen. While last year he was a fine Sinatra imitator, this year he eschewed Frank's mannerisms for my references to his own homosexuality, and expanded the set to include songs from the likes of Sting and the Beatles. The band is tight, and Free's voice has a Boy George clarity that saunters through all of the songs with ease. (Aug 6)	St George's West	2011	6
71	Matilda and the Tales She Told (****) While their uncle and auntie are away for the evening, little Matilda and her "perfect" brother explore Matilda's imaginary world with the help of her doll. The performers wear colorful music hall face make-up, often speak in rhyme, and occasionally break into short songs. Though the children in the audience were generally attentive, I thought the vocabulary is a little advanced, and the rhyming words not accentuated enough. (Aug 4)	Udderbelly's Pasture	2011	4
72	Dead Cat Bounce: Caged Heat (****) Four fellows perform songs with odd lyrics in classic rock style. This is the third time I've seen this humorous act, but it seemed curiously formulaic this time. While they had me smiling throughout, this time songs like one about a man denying his sea kayak expertise seemed high on concept and music, but lacked truly witty rhyming lyrics. (Aug 4)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	4

73	Jus' Like That! (****) This play begins with the magician/comedian of the 1940's-1980's drinking heavily backstage while complaining about his wife in one-liners, and then moves on to his stage act. Because of the original backstage scene, I thought that the play would be more about his life, or at least bookended with some biographical notes, but it was not. Nonetheless, from Clive Mantle's portrayal I can see how the Brits came to enjoy the wisecracking, bumbling, but adept magician. (Aug 5)	Assembly Hall	2011	5
74	Scary Gorgeous (****) This tells the stories of a woman asking another female bartender to join her new band as a back-up vocalist, while a pair of 19-year old lovers explore sex. The acting throughout as well as the early modern dances and rock songs are all great, but their later, louder songs have unintelligible lyrics and less melody, and a later sailor dance piece often reprises moves seen earlier. The story of the sexualization of music and its impact on its listeners and its performers is quite powerful. If I had thought that the degraded later performances were intentional, then I would say this is the best play at the Fringe, but the actual selling of CDs of the score argues against it. (Aug 10)	Bedlam Theatre	2011	10
75	Transformer (****) Three young fellows provide sketch comedy on a wide range of topics. I was quite pleasantly surprised that they avoided sex and drugs as topics, while producing countless consistently funny short routines. Two days later, none is memorable, which is the price paid for short sketches, but I still remember that one actor had perfected his use of an arched eyebrow to great effect. (Aug 8)	Bedlam Theatre	2011	8

76	The Prodigals (****) The older son of a colonel follows the family tradition of military service, but the younger rejects it and becomes a pop sensation in the drug infested world of rock and roll. Unfortunately, the musical suffers from raised expectations as the enthusiastic, upbeat opening pop show songs and dances are unmatched by the remaining slow ballads that focus on regrets and despair. The show sinks as it has a reprised ballad that tries to use the prosaic word "invisible" in its key phrase, and turns what could be rousing military anthems into somber dirges. (Aug 15)	Gilded Balloon	2011	15
77	Show Me the World (****) The Glastonbury Festival is the final destination for three rotating, independent stories: a closeted gay high school student trying to come out, a bartender's son whose longtime girlfriend is leaving for South America, and a reserved young woman who has forgotten how to live outside of work. All of the stories have Facebook revelations that have devastating consequences. The opening crowd scene was too loud for me to understand their words in the reverberating Iron Belly, but, thankfully, later scenes involved few people who only rarely raised their voices too far. (Aug 17)	Underbelly	2011	17
78	The Oxford Imps (****) Six men and two women improvise skits based on audience suggestions. In most cases, the team created funny pieces, though their disparate skill was plainly evident as some excelled, and others often faltered. One fellow in particular could create germane rhyming verse with seeming ease. (Aug 9)	Gilded Balloon	2011	9

79	Tomboy Blues : The Theory of Disappointment (****) Use clothes as a touchstone, two women of radically different heights explore the difficulties they had growing up as tomboys. From the opening scene of a clothesline of panties ranging from pedestrian cotton to G-String, the actresses maintain a light touch as they relate their challenges to proclaim their identities. I felt that they had focused only on lesbian tomboys for which there is a social model while ignoring the more ambiguous position of a heterosexual tomboy. (Aug 15)	Zoo Southside	2011	15
80	Free Time Radical (****) Ali takes in his surfer buddy Justin becomes homeless when a tsunami hits London, and most of the city remains underwater. This odd mix of scheduling the remaining food, surfing among the dead, monopoly, and slowly emerging regrets is a little too surreal to be as touching as it could be. The opening twin montages of the men's lives in picture-framed monitors are cleverly artistic and prophetic. (Aug 15)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	15
81	The Animals and Children Took o the Streets (****) A young woman and her daughter move into a tenement in the slums of a city with the goal of helping the children who run amok each night. The three actresses interact with the full backdrop video screen cartoon in many creative ways, including pushing a real broom that creates animated dust. The style is fantastic, but the story is depressing, and a bit thin. (Aug 27)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	27

82	A Dish of Tea with Dr. Johnson (****) Dr. Johnson, the English genius of the mid 18th century fills his conversation with aphorisms as he chats with his biographer James Boswell, the object of his affections Mrs. Thrale, and a few luminaries of his time. Johnson's wit permeates the play as we also see his mixture of rough criticism and tenderness with the one drawback being two substitute actors reading from scripts. I was singled out and offered a real cup of tea, and so I actually had a dish of tea with Dr. Johnson! (Aug 27)	Traverse Theatre	2011	27
83	Swamp Juice (****) Jeff Achtem returns with a shadow puppet show quite similar to his wonderfully creative "Sticks, Stones, Broken Bones" of last year. While the show on the screen can be fun at times, it seems that, even with 3-D, he has exhausted his creativity. The actual puppets are no longer whimsical amalgams of objects used to create surprising shadows, and most of the acts, particularly the 3-D and audience participation scenes, lose their novelty well before they end. (Aug 17)	Underbelly	2011	17
84	The Sexual Awakening of Peter Mayo (****) Peter, a 23-year old almost virgins nerd, by accident follows a text message and befriends Dan who introduces him to the world of online no strings attached one-night stands. Dan provides Peter and us with a thorough description of the mechanics of this subculture, while Peter demonstrates the loveless nature of the arranged sex. While Peter's initial lack of confidence and ineptness is understandable, his later awkward kissing with a repeated sex partner did not jibe with his purported social overconfidence. (Aug 20)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	20

85	Somewhere Beneath It All, A Small Fire Burns Still (****) The comedian Phil Nichol begins this dynamic and touching story playing a man who imagines fantastical sexual experiences with a waitress when all she is really doing is serving him. His high energy quick delivery is almost overwhelming, but a mid-show interlude provides a twist that adds tremendous poignancy to the whole show. I would have enjoyed this more had he not decided to stop the show and pick on me after I had surreptitiously turned off the ringer of my cell phone. (Afterwards, the people around me had said they had thought he was joking because they had not noticed me doing anything.) Of course, he was thinking I was texting, but I still think it was unprofessional of him in a non-stand-up comedy setting. (Aug 23)	Gilded Balloon	2011	23
86	Encounters: Theater Uncut (****) Actors read the scripts of eight short plays ranging from allegory to polemic that all address the recent large budget cuts by the UK government. The presence of the scripts was a minimal distraction because all of the actors provided pitch perfect readings. While the allegory of a healthy man having heart surgery was the most touching, the most amusing was a black comedy of a hard hearted couple dealing with their arthritic cat by "helping" her by placing her food at the top of some stairs. (Aug 22)	Traverse	2011	22
87	Anton's Uncles (****) Though this has men based on characters from Chekhov's "Uncle Vanya," since I have not seen that play for a long time, this show had to stand on its own. From the beginning, the cast established that clever music and dance would be an integral part of the play. Their interactions with unseen characters allowed the play to draw in the drama of Chekhov's play. Those people in the audience who remembered "Uncle Vanya" well, consistently said they would give the play five stars. (Aug 8)	Bedlam Theatre	2011	8

88	The American Family (***) A huge cast from two universities on different coasts presents a pastiche of vignettes from all aspects of American family life. This derived piece has the concomitant strength of imaginative staging and vignettes, but attending lack of structure and plot. The bookends of the play are a perfect example with their metaphor of fabric sacs containing American family gametes that emerge at the end as (needlessly topless) young American families without any pattern of growth in the intervening time. (Aug 9)	theSpace at North Bridge	2011	9
89	The Wright Brothers (***) The two brothers lecture on their four year effort to create a heavy-than-air aircraft. While the interesting facts of their work are here, the drama of the two different men and their efforts is not. Particularly troubling is the too small video screen that made significant images quite difficult to see. (Aug 26)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	26
90	Darkness (***) A Croatian fellow applies to work as a lumberjack for his English girlfriend's fundamentalist Christian family. The play tries to treat the mini-sect with an even hand as we hear of their strong beliefs, and see that they are sincere, and not hypocrites. However, the unnecessary introduction of a top hat and Cliff Richard's white shoes undermines these efforts and the play's potential drama. (Aug 16)	Zoo Roxy	2011	16
91	Timothy (***) This comedy has a wife summon her two close friends to help her figure how to deal with a situation that she perceives will threaten her marriage. The bulk of the humor derives from the women repeatedly jumping to conclusions based on the flimsiest evidence. Though the final scene invites the audience to make a similar leap, I was unwilling to take it. (Aug 9)	Bedlam Theatre	2011	9

92	Cry of the Mountain (***) After interviewing thirteen people, Adelind Horan recreates them using their own words to describe the devastation and remediation efforts of coal mining in Appalachia. The banjo accompanist and her attempts at rendering the Appalachian accents help to set the Kentucky settings. Though the play definitely has an anti-coal tilt, she does provide a couple pro-coal responses. (Aug 28)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	28
93	Death Song (***) As an illegal Mexican immigrant waits on death row in Nevada we also see his last free year recounted. This protective father, his British advocate, his secluded but curious daughter, his new Southern girlfriend, and the slightly slimy Mexican repairman all interact beautifully. However, the wandering through the audience makes the actors difficult to see, and the final plot twisting criminal act makes the advocate's actions unreasonable in retrospect. (Aug 19)	Underbelly	2011	19
94	Liberace: Live From Heaven (***) Bobby Crush dons the trademark sequin and fur costumes of Liberace, in this tribute to the closeted gay TV pianist who was the highest paid entertainer in the world in the 1950s. Crush does a good, but not great, job of playing the piano and assuming Liberace's flamboyant persona. The overload accompanying music and his overuse of the sustain pedal muddied much of the performance, with only his final, unaccompanied, medley of ten songs suggested by the audience impressing me. (Aug 11)	Assembly George Square	2011	11

95	What Remains (***) This site specific show has each member of the audience apply for acceptance into The Conservatoire of the Anatomy of Music, while we trace the horrific experience of one of the students. While the macabre ambience was maintained throughout the production, the piece felt disjoint and unfocused—more into atmospherics than a more engaging murder mystery at which it hinted. The final scene is quite memorable because it is set in a museum room with huge iron gates and two elephant skeletons flanking the protagonist's strange piano. (Aug 16)	Travers at University of Edinburgh Medical	2011	16
96	Blues! (***) An eleven piece band presents a history the blues from the 1930's to the 1990's. The show is informative, and the band is good, though a bit too reserved at times, with one female singer and a lead guitarist clearly standing out. I do wish they had stuck to strict chronological order rather than postponing Muddy Waters and the topic of women. (Aug 5)	theSpace on Niddry St	2011	5
97	Debbie Does Dad (***) The Bobby Gordon, the 25-year old of .a famous porn star of 1970s, describes how his father's profession affected him and his family. Though Bobby made it abundantly clear that his father was a loving husband and father, his fame and profession did have some unusual consequences for the son. Gordon does a fine job of mining the humor of the fatherly advice of "Grab your dick" in times of trouble, and Bobby's own sexual performance anxiety, but the final politically correct manifesto for male sensitivity deflates the show. (Aug 8)	Bedlam Theatre	2011	8

98	Mr Kolpert (***) An effete couple invites another couple to dinner so they can watch the guests come to terms with the hosts' hint that there is a dead body in a steamer trunk/table. This black comedy has the intial scene with the hosts demonstrating just the right air of superiority and lust to give this retelling of Hitchcock's "Rope" a good start, but the guests seem a mismatched couple from the moment they entered. As the show continues, this becomes a dark farce that unsuccessfully mixes murder with self-realization. (Aug 20)	C soco	2011	20
99	Pete Firman: Jiggery Pokery (***) Firman mixes some time worn tricks with a couple of new ones. I must admit that this is my fifth magic show, and I am getting tired of seeing a selected card palmed. and then reappear some "impossible" place. However, I am still impressed with the mentalist routine of knowing a book so well that he can recall words from a specific page. (Aug 15)	Pleasance Dome	2011	15
100	Now That She's Gone (***) This autobiographic tale has Ellen Snortland describing her life in terms of her interactions with her emotionally remote Norwegian mother. From discovering the sexual joys of her father's vibrating recliner to directing TV shows to her participation in est, Ellen has lived a varied and interesting life, but she seems more a braggart than an entertainer. At one point, she performs a long medley of mostly obscure show tunes that are not so much for our benefit, but to "prove" the range of her talents. (Aug 4)	Assembly Hall	2011	4

101	Devil in the Detail (***) All of the characters wear huge, expressive masks and did not speak in this story of a devious landlady has a Mafia accountant, and a night watchman pay rent for the same room. The idea of taking a picture of the room of the just departed occupant and then recreating the room of the arriving tenant is wonderful to see once, but by the fourth time I cringed. The surreal masks, particularly that of the landlady and night watchman, are a marvel because though they never change, they seem to perfectly reflect the emotional state of their characters throughout the play. (Aug 13)	Zoo Roxy	2011	13
102	Tonight Sandy Grierson Will Lecture, Dance, and Box (***) Grierson follows the adventures of Arthur Craven, his great grandfather, as he takes on varied professions as varied as boxer to painter while seducing everything in sight. Grierson gets the audience involved by asking them to both take on undaunting roles of people in Arthur's life as well as each fold an origami shape from a sheet of facts on Craven. The show works pretty well, with even a real 1916 film clip of the short Craven ineffectively boxing with a giant, but Grierson's repeated assertion that he met Craven in 2010 continually discredits the story. (Aug 9)	Assembly George Square	2011	9
103	To Avoid Precipice Cling to Rock (***) Eight young women form an expedition to reach a high precipice into which their friend had fallen the previous year. Entertaining, upbeat songs and dances intersperse their monologues and interactions with spirits of the mountains. I liked their twinned takes on their lost friend, but found some of the spirit scenes underwhelming. (Aug 8)	Bedlam Theatre	2011	8

104	Translator's Dilemma (***) A woman gives a lecture on legal translation for a friend, and finds that she has a personal interest in the case discussed in her friend's notes. The setting is perfect for presenting the facts of this real case of corporate asbestos poisoning, and the lecturer's initial fumbling with the lighting matched my own experiences. However, the script loses legal and emotional focus when the lecturer starts to abuse a student volunteer. (Aug 19)	Princes Mall	2011	19
105	Diamond Dick (***) On a hot set, it's been a long day in pancake makeup as a disgruntled cast makes a 1930s movie revolving around a pair of rich siblings and the aftermath of World War I. The script and cast of characters of the movie fell nicely in line with the films of that time, but the off screen scenes added little, and made the whole show seem long. I had a particular problem with Miss Lane because she seemed like an old veteran off screen, but played a 19 year old in the movie. (Aug 13)	C soco	2011	13
106	Penny Dreadful's Etherdome (***) Based on true stories, in the middle of the nineteenth century, a professor, an inventor, and a sly businessman all vie to introduce the first anesthetic suitable for general surgery. In typical Penny Dreadful fashion, they use comedic melodrama to milk every possible horrific event for all its worth. When I researched the topic after the play, I was surprised to find that almost all of the events depicted had happened, including petitions to Congress, misapplied ether, and chloroform induced crimes by a gentle dentist. (Aug 9)	Assembly George Square	2011	9
107	The Oh F**k Moment (***) This site specific play takes place in a meeting room with everyone sitting around a large table while the two leaders guide us through exercises exploring the causes and effects of our regrettable mistakes. The two leaders were masterful in telling tales of both their own mistakes and that of others as well as coaxing audience participation. However, their poems and efforts at relieving guilt fell flat. (Aug 6)	New Town Theater	2011	6

108	Kitty Litter (***) After a druggy fight, Don kidnaps a sexual assaulter, and then his four friends must deal with a manic Don. The playwrights choice to constantly jump around both temporally and physically throughout the play adds unnecessary confusion to the play. However, a similar technique where the cast trade earlier lines works well to convey Don losing his sanity. (Aug 5)	theSpaces on the Mile	2011	5
109	Hex (***) Against her doubtful husband's advice, a new age wife invites a pair of healers to their house to help them with their problem. The first half of the play is pretty mundane, but a sudden plot twist changes everything and it becomes a joy to watch. The opening act weakens the play when the otherwise considerate husband intentionally terminates his wife's meditation for a less than urgent question, and then seemingly accuses her of insanity when he finds cabbage inside the sofa. (Aug 7)	Hill Street Theater	2011	7
110	Spielpalast Cabaret (***) This is a classic softcore cabaret with a lewd emcee, a wide range of scantily clad young women, and a small band. From fan dances to double entendre songs, this is good amateur fun from the early part of the last century. The variety of body types of the women provided a nice change from the uniform tall, slender showgirls of today's Las Vegas. (Aug 7)	Hill Street Theater	2011	7
111	Recursion (***) An amnesiac in a hospital for the insane is aided by an obsessive-compulsive woman, as he writes a play about a couple in a strained marriage. I chose this play because "recursion", a function that calls itself, is an important concept in computer science, my field. While the play does a good job of translating the concept to a life, it also suffers from the necessary simplicity of such functions, which in this case are life events. (Aug 10)	C soco	2011	10

112	One Million Tiny Plays about Britain (***) This site-specific show could have taken place on any stage and present very short slices of current British life. Most of the vignettes were entertaining, but there a few that fell flat. Most memorable was where a fellow was reading a book in a park and mother accuses him of being a pedophile. (Aug 27)	Hill Street Theatre	2011	27
113	The Historians (***) Two daughters of petty criminals, nicknamed Mucker and Chucker, tell of the history of Halifax and their lives growing up essentially fatherless there. Like the home town they describe, there seems to be nothing special in the events in their lives. This is just an unremarkable story of two girls sharing life and loves until they part company when they reach adulthood. (Aug 18)	Underbelly	2011	18
114	The Seagull Effect (***) The unexpected hurricane of 1987 that wrecked havoc on the Southeast of England serves as the backdrop for a treatise on the unpredictability of life. The ongoing story of an unexpected reunion of ex-lovers seemed mundane and predictable. They did make good use of umbrellas throughout the show, and I did like the historical videos, though I think images of the devastation would have helped. (Aug 24)	Zoo Roxy	2011	24
115	The World According to Bertie (***) A young boy must deal with an overprotective politically correct mother while other unrelated love stories abound. The ever honest Bertie character was adorable and fun whenever he had a scene, but the rest of the characters seemed two-dimensional. Though having the audience bunched in a circle with the play happening around them is a novel idea, it made for difficult hearing at times in the reverberating room. (Aug 29)	C soco	2011	29

116	Rain (***) A collector of rain from around the world and his daughter offer samples and folk tales involving rain. The pair's expertise in identifying rain sets a wonderful tone, but the explanation of how the mother's absence is justified to the daughter left me wishing they had explored that back story more. Part of the charm of this piece is that is performed outside under a roof of umbrellas, and with walls covered with little jars of water each labeled with location, type of rain, and time. (Aug 20)	C Chambers St.	2011	20
117	Unnatural Selection (***) A couple try to find the vampires that bit them so that they can get revenge, and maybe change their plight. As the director notes, this has some cinematic quality, complete with strobe lit fight scenes, but there are too many inconsistencies in the story. For example, we see an important archivist escape from the vampires' clutches, and yet we hear nothing of this later when they are speaking of him. (Aug 12)	theSpaces at Surgeons Hall	2011	12
118	7 Day Drunk (***) Bryony Kimmings describes a scientific experiment in which she was given progressively more alcohol over a seven day period to see how it affected her creativity and moods. The idea was great, and some of the videos of the week provide insight into her experience, but the balance of the show seems a mish mash of ideas. I think that people who have seen Kimmings before appreciated the very personable performer much more than did I. (Aug 20)	Assembly George Square	2011	20
119	The Wheel (***) In this large production, a woman takes a young girl through war ravaged areas to find her father. The play uses the slow appearance the girl's mystical qualities to explore diverse aspects of desperation found in war including profiteering, torture, and famine. The big problem for this overlong play is that its meaning eludes me still. (Aug 11)	Traverse Theatre	2011	11

120	I Hope My Heart Goes First (***) A huge cast of high school students dance and sing about the heart and love. Though there is a purity here, this still feels like a show where anyone who applied had to be included. The initial group jumping to symbolize the heart racing of new love was a nice idea, but by the third go around it had no power except to make me look at my watch. Again, my companion loved the show, and would give it five stars. (Aug 16)	St. George's West	2011	16
121	The Carroll Myth (***) A manic Charles Dodgson (Lewis Carroll) battles to keep a large cast of characters from "Alice in Wonderland" from intruding on his real life efforts to continue to see the eleven-year old Alice Liddell despite her parents concern. Though we do hear renditions of some of his work, the play concentrates on his seemingly constant efforts to control the appearance of his characters. The show suffers from such a simple plot, and the cast's inability to adjust their volume to the small space. (Aug 10)	Sweet Grassmarket	2011	10
122	The Perils of Love and Gravity (***) A naïve young woman who grows up in a remote upside down pyramid shaped house discovers love. Her innocence, the quirky physical properties of her house, and the sincerity of her tinker lover combine to create a charming first act. From there, the play confronts us with mundane repetition, a poor song, and a villainous twist that add little. (Aug 8)	Bedlam Theatre	2011	8
123	Now is the Winter (***) Bess, a loyal cook of Richard III, gives her view of the events portrayed in Shakespeare's play. This is a nice blend of imagined "downstairs" gossip that seems fitting for a woman in her position, and some of Shakespeare's best prose. I wish I had had the program of the play in the queue, so that I could have read the synopsis of Richard III beforehand because it was hard to both keep track of all the characters while at the same time dealing with the Shakespearean manner of speech. (Aug 5)	Assembly Hall	2011	5

124	Lullabies of Broadmoor (***) In 1872, in the Broadmoor Hospital for the criminally insane, a guard tries to learn the reason the great artist Richard Dadd murdered his father by introducing him to another inmate who shares his interests in painting and Egyptology. Though each of the four players did a superb job, the withdrawn schizophrenic personality of Dadd seems to permeate the play, and I found my mind often wandered. Because this was based on real people, I asked the playwright how much was fact, and found out that some of the more intriguing details were his own invention. (Aug 5)	C Chamber St	2011	5
125	Ethometric Museum (***) This site-specific play/installation has the head of the museum give a short talk about "Ethos", and allows the audience into a museum of fabricate electrical instruments designed to create, detect, and analyze its physical properties. Though the order of presentation of the working instruments worked nicely as it went from mundane to extraordinary, I felt that short lectures on each would added much to the show. Though each instrument had its label dutifully inscribed in its Bakelite with its wonderfully scientific sounding name, the dates in the 1700s made no sense for electrical instruments that clearly were designed in the 1930s style. (Aug 26)	Hill Street Theatre	2011	26
126	Magicians Do Exist (***) Chris Cresswell gives examples and instructions on the style of the clown/filmmaker Jacques Tati. Cresswell demonstrates how Tati relied on silence and sound effects to find the humor in the small events of life. Both my wife and I were invited on stage to participate in scenes that conveyed everything without the need for words. (Aug 26)	Pleasance Dome	2011	26
127	Silken Veils (***) A bride postpones her vows while reliving her life in Iran. The tale of the effects of revolutionary Iran's on her passionate parents gets muddled when a second family appears. The use of marionettes and shadow screens also reduce the power of the story. (Aug 28)	Assembly George Square	2011	28

128	Leo (***) With a suitcase, a two-walled room, a horizontal "dangling" light, a video camera shooting from above instead of horizontally, and a matching adjacent video screen, a man explores the possibilities of the changed perspective of the camera. The first ten minutes are wonderful as he learns to deal with a situation where gravity is not "down," but to the right on the video screen. However, the remaining fifty minutes are filled with pale elaborations on the concept. (Aug 6)	St George's West	2011	6
129	Manipulators (***) Two Australians perform mostly sleight of hand tricks. These fellows are pretty good, but I had seen almost all of their tricks many times before, and could sometimes see the palmed objects. I must admit that I was a bit put off when I walked in and discovered that one of the performers, Vyom Sharma, was the annoying fellow in a queue and another show the night before. (Aug 13)	theSpaces at Surgeons Hall	2011	13
130	Simon Callow in Tuesdays at Tescoes (***) An older transgender man cares for his father on Tuesdays despite his father's adamant refusal to acknowledge the son's gender choice. It took me a while to become accustom to an obviously old man in drag, but that was the point of this slow story of his travails. Because the character of the son often spoke in quiet, short, severely clipped phrases with the last word unintelligible, the whole play became a lot more work than it should have been. (Aug 5)	Assembly Hall	2011	5
131	Mary Blandy's Gallows Tree (***) In 1752, on the day of her hanging for poisoning her father, Mary Blandy still hopes that her lover will arrive to exonerate her. This one-woman show is a mix of the details of life in a 16th century prison, and the particulars of Blandy's own case. While I found the description of dreadful prison fascinating, the mania of the desperately innocent Mary made the disjoint tale both real and confusing. (Aug 4)	Sweet Grassmarket	2011	4

132	Spent (***) The bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers triggered the economic collapse, and serves as the starting point for this series of chronological sketches. The early sketches lampooning foreign correspondents and the president of Lehman Brothers worked well, but the extended story of two traders that survive their attempted suicides proved tedious to me. In particular, one scene where one of the pair eats and defecates paper money seemed a sophomoric way to convey avarice. (Aug 15)	Pleasance Dome	2011	15
133	Meryl O'Rourke – Bad Mother … (***) O'Rourke provides standup detailing her life as the child of an old Irishman and, more importantly a Jewish refugee from Hitler's Germany. Meryl wastes time trying to get the afternoon audience prepared for her swearing laced routine, when she would have been better served to get started with eccentric family. The stories of her mother's obsession with TV stars, including writing letters using Meryl's name, are quite humorous, and I am surprised to see that she has not learned that all the "f**king" actually detracts from her stories. (Aug 10)	Underbelly	2011	10
134	Sailing On (***) This site-specific play takes place in the ladies loos in the New Town Theater where the ghosts of Shakespeare's Ophelia and Virginia Wolfe try to help a woman deal with a tragic event in her past. It surprised me how much could be done in a three stall bathroom despite a crowd of six people. Though both the story and props were minimalist, the three of us audience members had a good time drawing each other's attention to some muted aspect of the play. (Aug 6)	New Town Theater	2011	6

135	I, the Dictator (***) In 1939, a Polish tap dancer who is making a movie using swastikas and Hitler's toothbrush moustache is approached by a German producer offers to buy the movie and put the dancer under contract. Though the insidious efforts at Nazi hegemony permeate the one-man show, the personal conflict of the dancer seems mild by comparison. While I never understood why he spread body lotion on his arms and face, worse yet was the fact that I was distracted by a dab of lotion by his right eye that he unknowingly never removed. (Aug 18)	New Town Theater	2011	18
136	The Dark Philosophers (***) In the early 20th century, Welsh coal miners must deal with a difficult life exacerbated by a harsh mine manager. For me, the mix of a huge puppet, masked Death/???, an occasional TV interview, and three primary story lines was just too chaotic. I did find the scenes with a miner's wife the most compelling. Again, my companion found the show wonderful. (Aug 14)	Traverse Theatre	2011	14
137	Man of Valour (***) On an empty stage, a mime portrays a shy white collar man who deals with his own demons as he decides whether to bury his estranged father's ashes in his mother's grave. When the settings conventional, like an office, kitchen, or train, I could usually understand and enjoy this performance, but other times, particularly when he enters his video game world, I became lost and tired of trying to understand his movements. The three other men of my generation with me had the same problem, but younger, more video game savvy loved it throughout. (Aug 11)	Traverse Theatre	2011	11
138	Some Small Love Story (***) This is somewhat embarrassing, but after two days and a foggy mind from a cold, I remember nothing of this play except that I thought it earned a low three stars, and the lyrics were poor. (Aug 8)	C eca	2011	8

139	Paper Tom (***) A soldier in World War I, and another in Afghanistan lose comrades in their wars, and cannot integrate back into society upon their return. While stories of Post Traumatic Stress Diagnosis are always touching, this somber show covers little new territory. The scenes of folding origami swans at the beginning, middle, and end, do work well in their contexts of loss, estrangement, and the start of healing. (Aug 7)	Hill Street Theater	2011	7
140	Viewless (***) We watch as two bureaucratic policemen of a bizarre witness protection agency create identities, and then walk a witness through the entire weird process. Their surrealistic world begins with one bureaucrat peering out of a satchel and continues with countless inexplicable events including them breaking into dance on an elevator, and a window into a world of white noise. The play does have the witness processing as a plot, but no sense of purpose. (Aug 7)	Hill Street Theater	2011	7
141	Bette and Joan – The Final Curtain (***) Hedda Hopper and Louella Perkins order the ghost of Joan Crawford to guide the ever irascible, but dying, Bette Davis to the afterlife. All too often this premise interrupted the interesting comparison of the “actress,” and the ”movie star.” When the overload video of the gossips columnist appeared the show would drag, but the pace would quicken when the rivals would simultaneously describe the parallel events in their lives with just a few critical words different. (Aug 3)	Assembly George Square	2011	3
142	What Goes Up (***) A woman, her new male friend, and her son go camping, and deal with the logistics of camping and introducing the son to the man. The character of the mother seemed a fine mix of caring and competence, but the play provides no explanation of why the man had become so incompetent and mentally troubled. I admire the cast for managing scenes while erecting and collapsing the unwieldy tent right on the stage. (Aug 14)	C soco	2011	14

143	Mr. Darwin's Tree (***) Murray Watts presents Charles Darwin's life including his voyage on the HMS Beagle, marriage to his devout wife, Emma, long delayed publication of "On the Origin of Species," and his final internment in Westminster Abbey. While this is a fairly thorough biography it is too dry as we learn of his deeds, but not the human being. For example, Watts tells us Darwin hesitated publishing his theory for fear it would strengthen the arguments of atheist, but Watts takes little time to explore Darwin's turmoil. (Aug 20)	The Playhouse at Hawke and Hunter	2011	20
144	Criminy (***) After a series of tussles over bank plans and maps, three strangers agree to join forces to rob a bank. This show follows the form of slapstick silent films with no words used, but some great music. Unfortunately, the plot and physical theater rarely rise above the mundane, with some snaking through a laser beam field made of two red sticks being an exception. (Aug 16)	theSpaces at Surgeons Hall	2011	16
145	Enclosure 99 – Humans (***) This site-specific show takes over an empty exhibit at the Zoo to present a collection of fifteen people standing, laying, and moving in a glass fenced area. This is not so much a dance as it is spontaneous combinations of previously discussed movements by individuals and/or groups. While I was there, the choreographer sat in the stands and never stopped talking on her cell phone, which both removed the idea of it being just another zoo exhibit, but also provided an interesting counterpoint to the mute humans. (Aug 18)	Edinburgh Zoo	2011	18
146	Beowulf – A Thousand Years of Baggage (***) A septet, two back-up singers, aid four people presenting the English epic pose of a Norse warrior Beowulf battling the monster Grendel and his mother. This zany interpretation combines bass trombone led music with actors cast against body type and modern phrasing to create a whirl of action. I found many of the lyrics unintelligible and the music generally lacking. On the hand, my wife loved the whole show. (Aug 23)	George Square	2011	23

147	Julian Sands in a Celebration of Harold Pinter (***) Sands tells a few stories of the writer's life, but spends the bulk of his time reading Pinter's poetry. Though initially I enjoyed hearing the poetry, after a while I grew tired of it. On the other hand, my companion, who chose this play, loved it, so I think it comes down to whether you would enjoy listening to fine, complex poetry for an hour. (Aug 13)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	13
148	My Best Friend Drowned in a Swimming (***) A few days after the funeral of a young fellow who takes too many drugs at a party, his four friends must deal with his death and each other. Each player, including the seemingly perfect deceased, delivers a monologue that is often mundane. At their final cocaine party, when the deceased returns from the grave, we are left wondering why he would care that his best friend had had sex with a woman who is not the drowned man's girlfriend. (Aug 3)	C soco	2011	3
149	Bepo & Co (***) Starting in 1892, a traveling circus keeps finding itself at the site of either personal or global tragedies. The play starts out so frenetic that many of the actors' words are lost amongst the mayhem. As the pace quiets, each performer's story becomes more touching until the final candle lit moral is quite poignant. (Aug 3)	C /soco	2011	3
150	May I Have the Pleasure…? (***) This site specific piece has the audience as guests at a wedding reception with Adrian Howells leading a discussion of such events as well reviewing his role as best man in six weddings. This is not about entertaining us, but instead is a sometimes humorous, but always self-centered show. While the video of his first toast as a best man in 1984 was fun, his reading of a list the 60 weddings he has attended was just one of many boring events. (Aug 24)	Traverse at the Point Hotel	2011	24

151	The Infant (***) Two interrogators repeatedly twist their victims' answers to fit their preconceived notions. Once the play establishes the unreliability of torture, it has little more to say. With the near constant verbal abuse from the interrogators, the play was virtually flogging a dead horse. (Aug 14)	Pleasance Courtyard	2011	14
152	Murder at Warrabah House (***) In 1930s Australia, an old man and his sister are asked to visit a wealthy family's house to solve a jewel robbery. I saw this play twice because I continually nodded off the first time, and thought I was at fault. I realize now that the actress' monotonous delivery, as well as the quick and dull solution to the mystery were more to blame. (Aug 15 & 16)	theSpaces at Surgeons Hall	2011	16
153	The Old Woman Who Lived in a … (***) Twenty years after escaping the abuse of the old woman in the shoe, two of her twenty children return to seek revenge. While the underlying concept of using the nursery rhyme as the springboard for a atale about desperation and tough choices is inventive, its execution is muddled. The opening scene has inconsistent rhyming that is disconcerting, and a later fairy tale touts fearlessness as an essential virtue but that virtue is never mentioned in the final moral to the play. (Aug 15)	theSpaces at Surgeons Hall	2011	15
154	Rockertinkler (***) After writing an insulting letter to a billionaire, an unemployed roommate inherits his wealth. The intial wordplay between the two roommates has some strong polemics, but the play touches the plot points too softly to work well. The men kissing makes as little sense to us, and it does to the characters. (Aug 14)	Zoo Roxy	2011	14

155	In for a Pound (**) In desperate need of buying a pack of cigarettes, a fellow follows the trail of a pound he lent a friend until it leads to a Mafia boss. The wooden actors cannot carry off trying to bring a "Pulp Fiction" style to a screwball comedy story. At one point, for no reason at all, after having sex with a woman all night, the fellow discovers the woman is actually a grizzled man. (Aug 21)	Sweet Grassmarket	2011	21
156	Dirt (**) This black comedy has a woman who is trying to camp with an inept scientist starts to hear her mother's voice speaking from animals. Despite their best efforts, none of the characters engaged me. Half of the play takes place in a worm kingdom that feels dull, even when the king tastes corpse brains. (Aug 17)	C eca	2011	17
157	Mission Drift (**) An unemployed Las Vegas worker watches a re-enactment of the progress-obsessed lives of the ancestors of her two former employers starting with their impending departure for America in the early 1600's. The show has a trio that provides music as the same couple repeatedly overcome the frontier with little thought to the physical and social damage they have wrought. While the lead singer has an amazing voice and the music is very good, the super-titled, but still incomprehensible, lyrics completely wreck the show. (Aug 6)	Traverse Theatre	2011	6
158	Jawbone Of An Ass (**) After a devout woman's husband disappears, her best friend invites a crass evangelist to come to their small Minnesota town to help find him. This lampoon of extreme evangelicals takes so many potshots at so many different targets that its denouement is an indictment of its lack of coherence rather than a paean to its cleverness. This play suffers from oft-repeated ritual lines that might have been funny in sketch comedy, but over a whole hour become just boring filler. (Aug 7)	Hill Street Theater	2011	7

159	Twelve Men Good and True (**) A man accused of murdering children argues that he is innocent by graphically describing gruesome murders of the past, and showing his revulsion. This is one of those plays that is superbly acted, but has such a distasteful subject that I see no reason to put an audience through it. At the end of the twenty-five minutes, we are suppose to judge his guilt or innocence like a jury, but virtually all of the critical facts of his particular case have been omitted. (Aug 15)	theSpaces at Surgeons Hall	2011	15
160	Coal Head, Toadstool Mouth, and Other Stories (**) While the opening scene with a human marionette with arms strung to a puppeteer drew me into the play, the rest of the show proved soporific. As the quirky tales continue, the monotonous narration of the mostly mute physical theater action caused both my wife and I to drowse. Because the tales are bizarre, if you do nod off for a minute, it is difficult to make sense of what is going on. (Aug 25)	theSpace at Symposium Hall	2011	25
161	Ten Plagues (**) Accompanied by a pianist and an occasional video, Marc Almond sings music inspired by the epidemics of the London plague of 1665 and AIDs. I drank two cokes to prepare myself for this modern piece, but to no avail. Though both performers were superb, I just have a tough time when there is no tune, and little lyricism to my ear. Not surprisingly, my more sophisticated companion loved it. (Aug 15)	Traverse Theatre	2011	15
162	Rosie Thorn, Butter Would Not Melt (**) In an insane asylum, a woman, once the model of propriety and culinary excellence, tells how a perceived rivalry led to the destruction of many of her town's citizens. This one-note black comedy goes too far in make-up, as she smears lipstick on her face to indicate her progressive insanity, and too long. One female audience member noted that when the insane woman mounted a placard after her first misdeed, and the viewer saw that there were five placards she cringed at the thought of four more slow descriptions. (Aug 13)	theSpaces at Surgeons Hall	2011	13

163	Standing Count (**) Kenny, a young man turns to boxing at Riley's gym much to the pride of his father, and concern of his mother. The story of redemption threw boxing is mundane, and much of the acting wooden. I think that the unnecessary decision to have actors play multiple roles real hurt them and confused the play—a consistent Kenny would be less confusing to the audience, and having Riley stay himself instead of acting as narrator and cheering kid would help him find his role. (Aug 10)	C eca	2011	10
164	Gutter Junky (**) A manic idealistic young man ventures to a South American country with the goal of helping the rebels by writing a book about his experiences living with them. The first scenes when he lives with a depleted fellow journalist work fairly well though the language is a bit too witty for the intended grittiness, but the play crashes in the second act. It is unbelievable that he would return from 42 days among the native people in the jungle, and still only speaks complex English, and virtually no Spanish, to his native girl friend/victim who knows no English. (Aug 4)	Assembly Hall	2011	4
165	Waterloo (**) This one-man show has two retired soldiers, one English and the other French, recount their heroic deeds at Waterloo. Combining a minimal story with a very slow delivery made the Englishman's tale quite boring. The Frenchman's tale was faster and more involved, but was still too slow for me. (Aug 7)	New Town Theater	2011	7
166	Wondrous Flitting (**) When a wall crashes through his living room, an unemployed 24-year old takes it as a sign from God that he is meant to do something special that day. While the initial adsorb dialog with his supportive parents makes a good start, and a later conversation with a burned out counselor is well performed, the bulk of the story just is not enjoyable to experience. I suppose I just feel uncomfortable around total incompetence, and having bad things happen to such a person makes me want to either step in or leave. (Aug 25)	Traverse Theatre	2011	25

167	A Day in November (**) This is a mundane day in the life of a puppet of a one hundred year old man. He takes naps, looks at his cucumbers, and mistakes his reflection for another man. That's about all there is to this boring show. (Aug 28)	Zoo Southside	2011	28
168	The Tour Guide (**) The tour guide of bus decides to retire and takes the bus on a surprising trip around Edinburgh. What could have written as a journey of exploration of change was instead a sparse, depressing litany of the woes of the working class. Though the view of Edinburgh from Leith was striking, his dour commentary, broken only by his five-minute visit to a bowling club while we waited on the bus, dragged the whole experience down. (Aug 25)	Departs from Market Street	2011	25
169	Cusp (**) Six women use physical theater to portray a young woman trying to find her identity. They convey the fact that there are now a huge array of choices available, but seem to stop there without any resolution or guidance. For one scene, a woman stands on a platform and speaks Korean for many long minutes without subtitles or translator to provide us with anything useful. (Aug 22)	Laughing Horse at The Counting House	2011	22
170	Imaginarium (*) On moving day, a teenager falls asleep, and becomes Wendy in Peter Pan. This high school play has all of the expected problems of an inclusive production on opening night. However, it was nice to see all of the supportive parents applauding their wide-eyed children. (Aug 28)	Gryphon Venus at the Point Hotel	2011	28

171	Scott Capurro: Who Are the Jocks? (*) I think this gay man's goal is to use his caustic wit to offend every group possible in less than hour using sex as his primary focus. Besides pronouncing his misogynistic views, his insults targeted Blacks, Muslims, Welsh, English, Scots, as well as many other nationalities. He was consistently abusive of his audience as well, first by asking a young couple intensely personal questions and ridiculing every answer, and then, worst of all, callously querying a deaf woman about the recent funeral of her mother. (Aug 19)	Pleasance Dome	2011	19
172	Le Cochon Entier (*) When a couple opens a shop to sell pork in a vegetarian town, demand outstrips their supply. This slow, dark, minimalist show failed on so many levels it is hard to narrow the list: over-amplification made the initial voice over introduction frequently unintelligible; a dresser twisted the apron one of two main characters so it covered little; when stabbed instead of bleeding the head of a cardboard pig fell off; one actor was incapable of shielding her head from view using the giant puppet head that she was holding; the serious guitarist devoted himself to one atmosphere the whole time; and finally the slow, shambling movements of the two large characters made all actions incredibly dull. What could have been a biting, dark theater piece was instead a demonstration of a production gone completely wrong. (Aug 14)	Zoo Roxy	2011	14
173	Fear of a Brown Planet (*) Two brown Muslim Australians take on racism in the current world. When they are talking about their own experiences as Muslims and brown in a skittish WASP world their comedy works very well, but when they speak of others their hypocrisy is particularly grating. While he deplores his own racially motivated treatment, Nazeem sees nothing wrong in belittling Indians as a whole, nor refusing to marry any white woman simply because she is white. (Aug 4)	Gilded Balloon	2011	4

174	At the Sans Hotel (*) This one-woman show starts out by passing around an invisible audience multiple-choice survey for which she supplies witty options, but the show soon becomes incomprehensible. I thought that maybe I had just missed something, so after the show I asked two Fringe veterans and two novices for their views. All four gave it one star, with one woman calling it "audience torture." (Aug 5)	Assembly Hall	2011	5
175	Odd Man Out (no stars) An older gay man sits in his small, dark room and vents his bile towards his cat and the world as he bemoans his lost lover. The acting is fine, but the play is only 15 minutes long when the program says 30 minutes!. After the play ended abruptly, the actor gave no apologies, and the three off us in the audience all felt ripped off. (Aug 12)	Zoo Roxy	2011	12
1	Ovid's Metamorphoses (*****) With World War II Britain as a touchstone, the company uses a little of everything to present innumerable Roman myths. Whether it be a puppet dangling from a real face, videos of destruction, Andrews Sister songs, music, or speech, every aspect of their performance works perfectly to present the myths in a clear and fun way. I loved how they used four sliding 4' x 7' screens in various configurations, particularly when one would slide across the stage and a god would appear as the screen continued on its way. (Aug 30)	?	2010	?
2	Freefall (*****) An orphaned man feels tired in the morning, and relives his recent and distant past. As they entered the performance the mini-cam and staged sound effects seemed unnecessary intrusions, but as the play evolves they become a critical, integral part of the whole experience. The blend of past and present works beautifully, with an earlier English lesson on trochee vs. iamb metrical feet laying the groundwork for the climax. (Aug 7)	?	2010	?

3	Lidless (*****) In 2018, a florist and her family must deal with her denied life as a Guantanamo interrogator when a former detainee enters their lives. Rather than focus on the horrors of interrogations, this play looks at their repercussions many years later. The utter humanity of the interrogated man, particularly as he responds to the florist's daughter, is more damning than any torture scene. (Aug 12)	?	2010	?
4	The Silver Darlings (*****) This saga chronicles the lives of an early 19th century Scottish woman and her son from when her farmer husband is lost at sea trying to fish for herring through to her own son' mastery of fishing. The play takes full advantage of its extra time with an intermediate section on the cholera "plague" that gives a sense of the times in northern Scotland as well as establishing the character of the son and mother. A separate scene of the young son capturing and then squishing a butterfly, and then regretting his action works particularly well to demonstrate both his sense of adventure, and his sensitivity. (Aug 11)	?	2010	?
5	You're Not Like the Other Girls Chrissy (*****) A perky young Parisian woman tells of her life from visiting England and meeting her true love in the 1930s through their separation during the Nazi invasion to just after VE day. The mix of whimsy, tenderness, period descriptions, and five set piece containing suitcases worked perfectly for me. I'll not soon forget her story of her first, horrible tennis game as her as yet unmet lover keeps shouting "Bad luck." (Aug 4)	?	2010	?
6	Out of the Blue (*****) The Oxford male a cappella group returns with their good natured choreography and great sound. As I expected, they performed both upbeat numbers and ballads with equal aplomb. One particular ballad held me enraptured with their soft harmonies. (Aug 30)	?	2010	?

7	The Blues Brothers –Live! (*****) Two singers portray Jake and Elwood with appearances by James Brown, and Cab Calloway among others with a good band behind them all. This was the last show of the Fringe for most, and the audience was into it by starting to dance right from the start. By the end, only one person in the entire room was not dancing to the great rhythm and blues! (Aug 30)	?	2010	?
8	Speechless (*****) Based on a true story, after a series of racial confrontations a pair of Black identical twins retreat into their own world and will not speak to any others, and end up in Broadmoor Prison. Though the two actresses are not identical, they conveyed the sister's peculiar bond perfectly, particularly with their stilted movements as they looked for mutual assent in new situations. Their mother, mutual heartthrob, and teacher each provide well-acted insight into the twins' interactions with those social spheres. (Aug 5)	?	2010	?
9	It's Always Right Now, Until It's Later (*****) Daniel Kitson provides more than thirty scattered vignettes from two lives that intersect for but a moment to illustrate that each life is composed of billions of moments that reverberate. Kitson's always poignant, and often humorous vignettes are generally in chronological order for Carline, but are in roughly reverse for William. The semi-randomness of the timelines had me concerned about when the play would end, but when the climax came, the culmination of events left me in tears. (Aug 10)	?	2010	?
10	No Child (*****) One woman portrays a janitor, a drama teacher, and a room full of troublesome inner city high school youths learning a play. Each character comes alive as she instantly switches stature and voices as the people carry on conversations. When the students finally perform, we rejoice in their individual expressions of pride in their accomplishment, and pity the hyper kid who unexpectedly babysat instead. (Aug 13)	?	2010	?

11	The Man Who Was Hamlet (*****) George Dillon starts as Hamlet, but quickly switches to the ghost of Edward De Vere telling of his life in Elizabethan court. The play implicitly argues that De Vere actually wrote Shakespeare's work by having De Vere meet an illiterate Shakespeare, and portraying other events in De Vere's life that end up in Shakespeare's plays. In both roles, Dillon presents a well-measured performance that enthralled me with Shakespeare's words and De Vere's privileged but volatile life. (Aug 28)	?	2010	?
12	The Girl in the Yellow Dress (*****) In Paris, after a French Congolese man hires a white English woman to teach him English, their relationship becomes more complex. I enjoyed the grammar lessons, and the clever banter using conditional sentences. Her facial expressions as he first touched her bare feet reflected all of her hidden complexity that we suspected was there. (Aug 5)	?	2010	?
13	The Man Who Fell Out of Bed (*****) A man with amnesia remembers snippets of his recent life while a voice in his head tries to guide him through political intrigue. This maintains the fine balance of being chaotic, and yet providing just enough clues to make sense by the end without the need for a final long exposition. The lead does a fine job of conveying his constant ambivalence in deciding what to believe at any given moment. (Aug 15)	?	2010	?
14	Wonderland (*****) In 1899, Charles Dodgson (Lewis Carroll) shares a flat with the actress Isa Bowman who plays Alice Little of "Alice in Wonderland." As the pair move back and forth between Wonderland and Eastbourne, they alternate between the playfulness of their fantastic world, and the sexual repression the Victorian house. With great unamplified voices, top notch acting, and touching songs, this had everything. (Aug 26)	?	2010	?

15	Camille O'Sullivan – Chameleon (*****) The Irish singer puts on quite a show as she progressively disrobes while she applies her soulful voice to ballads and rock. Unlike last year, she was not working hard to entertain, but instead was enjoying the band and her own performance. I had a firsthand experience of this as we shared a lighthearted mutual aside when her costume malfunctioned. (Aug 26)	?	2010	?
16	Penelope (*****) After years of wooing Penelope, her four remaining suitors prepare for the return of her irate husband, Ulysses, and try one last time to woo her with speeches. The play has a perfect mix of banter and drama, as some of the suitors move from hubris to self-revelation. While the eldest must suffer the most barbs from his competitors, he also presents the most affecting speech to Penelope. (Aug 7)	?	2010	?
17	Pulse (*****) In a city park, six people await the explosion of a missile sent to destroy a 10-mile wide meteor threatening all life on Earth. I found it compelling to watch as each of their attitudes and actions change, sometimes subtly and sometimes radically, as the situation changes. The atmosphere of the worldwide bank holiday leads to many thoughtful revelations about choices in life. (Aug 15)	?	2010	?
18	Firing Blanks (*****) A man who has discovered he is infertile talks with a teenage girl in a park about using donated sperm to impregnate his wife. The girl's unblinking questions and comments work well to elicit the man's doubts about his manhood and potential love for the proposed baby. His final paean to his new daughter brought tears to my eyes. (Aug 23)	?	2010	?

19	Mission of Flowers (*****) Based on a true story, in the 1930s, Bill Lancaster, an Australian aviator, awaits a rescue party after crashing in the Sahara. The play has a taut ebb and flow as it alternates between the suspenseful scene at the crash where he is counting down his days of water, and flashbacks detailing his experiences with his two loves—aviation and an aviatrix. Part of the power of the play is that though Kingsford-Smith acts as if he is writing in his logbook at the crash site, he is really reading from the Lancaster's actual logbook. (Aug 8)	?	2010	?
20	The Man Who Was Hamlet (*****) The actor George Dillon starts as Hamlet, but quickly switches to the ghost of Edward De Vere telling of his experiences in Elizabethan court that end up portrayed in plays attributed to Shakespeare. Besides demonstrating the mimicked events the play continues to implicitly argue that De Vere actually wrote Shakespeare's work by having De Vere meet an illiterate Shakespeare. In both roles, Dillon presents a well measured performance that had me enthralled with both Shakespeare's words, and De Vere's privileged, but volatile, life. (Aug 27)	?	2010	?
21	Transformation (*****) A 39-year old dancer/actress tells of her life of abuse, drugs, dance, cutting, sex, and her recent reformation. Gemskii demonstrated her mastery of dance throughout the performance. She also proved to be a fine playwright and actress as my attention never strayed. (Aug 29)	?	2010	?
22	Our Town (*****) Thornton Wilder's play looks at life in the village of Grover's Corners, New Hampshire in 1903, 1906, and 1917. Throughout the wide variety of events, the core agrarian honesty and sincerity permeates the play. Though the use of three actors for each of the two leads was initially confusing, it permitted the re-visiting of an earlier time in the third act to be easily understood, and all the more powerful for it. (Aug 27)	?	2010	?

23	A Solitary Choice (*****) Faced with an adulterous pregnancy, a woman thinks must choose between her safe, unfulfilling life, and an exotic dream life in Peru. Here imagined wild, black-haired Indian fetus provides a perfect counterpoint to her disinterested husband and frustrating, stifling finance job. I will try to get the script just for a counselor's wise advice on making life's choices. (Aug 25)	?	2010	?
24	Teenage Riot (*****) A video camera is passed among several teenagers as they perform the bulk of the show within an opaque ten-foot cube on stage. What could be seen as total chaos is clearly highly choreographed. The initial close-ups of the cube's inner walls set the tone as they look like the camera person is moving randomly until we realize it was all carefully planned. (Aug 17)	?	2010	?
25	River in Hiding (*****) River Phoenix faked his death, and has been living in the basement of a college bound teenager for five years. Both the charming Phoenix, and the studious girl seem real within the confines of the basement. I liked the way the play used their discussion of their different reading lists to provide access to their needs and thoughts. (Aug 13)	?	2010	?
26	Adam Hills Mess Around (*****) This year the Aussie comedian decided to use the audience as the source for the bulk of his generous humor. Though does have a few set pieces about sign language and performing for the Queen, it is his interactions with the audience that make this remarkable. From the seven hat-wearing kids celebrating a twenty-first to the fit 49-year old to well preserved 75-year old, he found wonderful humor without putting anyone down other than himself. (Aug 24)	?	2010	?

27	Danny Bhoy – By Royal Disappointment (*****) Bhoy combines spontaneous humor with routines based on his travels around the world. His use of an audience member's former banking job as a starting point for quips about the banking industry rather than ridicule for the patron was example of his good natured throughout the performance. If anyone is the target of his humor it is himself, as when he admits unintentionally shifting into Shakespearean speech when he met the Queen. (Aug 9)	?	2010	?
28	Shadow Boxing (*****) After watching his father be pummeled in his last boxing match, a boy grows up to believe that his own self worth depends upon winning a boxing title. Unlike "Beautiful Burnout", this actor has the moves and power of a real boxer. The drive of the boxer moves the gritty story relentlessly forward as his life outside the ring has a greater influence on his boxing. (Aug 9)	?	2010	?
29	The House of Mirrors and Hearts (*****) A man researching an 18th century poet takes a room with a hard drinking woman, and her two troubled daughters. It was a joy to hear a musical with strong voices, melodic music, and interesting lyrics that rhymed. I was touched by the researcher's final assertion that it is the poetry that is important, and not the poet's life. (Aug 15)	?	2010	?
30	One Man Lord of the Rings (*****) One fellow presents the entire content of the three "Lord of the Rings" movies by recreating an amazing number of memorable lines, actions, and sound effects. Aw with his "Star Wars" trilogy, his thoroughness and allusions are amazing. This year, his voices for Gollum and Sam Gangee were spt on. (Aug 18)	?	2010	?

31	Pedal Pusher (*****) Actors play Lance Armstrong, Marco Pantani, Jan Ullrich, and an interviewer/coach recreating their experiences of the Tour de France from 1994 to 2002 when drug testing became a way of life. The play uses a good mix of off-course vignettes and race simulations to help us understand the three men's lives. I found it particularly enlightening hearing how Armstrong and his coach duped Ullrich into thinking Armstrong was weak until Armstrong could deliver a psychologically crushing blow by easily passing Ullrich. (Aug 21)	?	2010	?
32	Des Bishop – My Dad was Nearly James Bond (*****) The comedian describes how his handsome Irish dad went from model to actor to salesman to manager to terminal cancer victim, and how these changes effected Des. He leavens the touching story of how he has become emotionally close to his father after the diagnosis with many bits of funny family history. Two extended tales have to do with his boyhood pride in his dad's one B-movie scene, and his recent conversations with his dad that have the family laughing into tears as his father relates his early sexual experiences. (Aug 22)	?	2010	?
33	Stripped (*****) This one-woman show has a naïve girl learns the ropes of the lap dancing in a seedy strip club. From the initial gritty laying down of the club rules to her final seduction each scene is touching and real. There are many memorable moments, with her voiced thoughts during her first pole dancing strip the best. (Aug 22)	?	2010	?
34	'Jordan' by Anna Reynolds with Moira Buffini (*****) A woman whose abusive lover leaves before her baby is born sets out to bring up the baby until a year later he returns to try to legally claim the child. The story is true, and the acrtress does a fine job of seeming troubled and a bit simple. As the story unfolds, I could understand her state of mind that led to her sad decisions. (Aug 29)	?	2010	?

35	'Dream Man' by James Carroll Pickett (*****) Since customers are charged $39 flat rate until they have an orgasm, a gay phone sex worker prides himself on making his clients come in less than five minutes. The story alternates between him creating stories tailored to his repeat customer desires, and him trying to help his former lover. The whole play worked well with the phone calls providing comic relief, particularly the one where he assumes the role of a young California surfer, complete with "dude". (Aug 27)	?	2010	?
36	Peter Straker: I'm Still Here … (*****) The veteran entertainer sings songs from Queen to Johnny Mercer. His voice is still strong, and his song selection was perfect as he moved among upbeat pop, rock, and ballads with nary a non-melodic tune to be heard. He allowed the band to shine with numerous guitar and piano solos. (Aug 26)	?	2010	?
37	Belt Up's Antigone (*****) King Creon has decreed that the loyal brother of Antigone should be buried with honors while his equally valiant brother, who fought against the king, must be left unburied. Though Antigone's decision to bury her brother has fatal repercussions, it is Creon's vexing choice between family and regal duty that is more difficult and intriguing. The repeated replay of the fight between the brothers works both as fine physical theater, and as a reminder of their valor. (Aug 15)	?	2010	?
38	All the Queen's Children (****) A large troupe of young people portrays the lives of illegal immigrant children from the negotiations with traffickers in their homeland to their perilous journey, and then to their varied experiences in Britain. To address the subject the play focuses on the lives of an oversized 16-year old trying to prove he is a child, a pair of girls being drawn into the sex trade, a girl lost between two worlds, a girl from homeland to tending pot plants, and a trio of oblivious British tourist children. While that seems like it would be too much, the play rotates through the stories flawlessly without losing their power. (Aug 8)	?	2010	?

39	Dance Doctor Dance (****) A real professor of psychology demonstrates his findings on the influence of dance on the minds of dancers and their observers. The most interesting finding was that women during the fertile part of their menstrual cycle dance with only their hips, which causes men to focus on their hips, while those women in that part where conception is unlikely dance using both hips and arms. By asking the audience to do seated exercises first he makes them comfortable as he gradually asks for more until by the end everyone is comfortable doing a full dance routine. (Aug 20)	?	2010	?
40	Misconception (****) A 40-year old woman discovers she is fertile even though she and her husband had agreed on no children long ago. The addition of their philosophical mutual friend serves as a catalyst for discussions of honesty and moral responsibility. The plays seems mature until the friend start wearing a baby sling before the baby is born. (Aug 26)	?	2010	?
41	Elvis – Live! (****) A fellow dressed like Elvis signs his songs working roughly backwards chronologically. Though he didn't match Elvis' voice, the songs are so great, I didn't care. When he started in the white jump suit, I feared that we were only going to hear the New Elvis stuff. (Aug 30)	?	2010	?
42	The Terrible Infants (****) Les Enfants Terribles apply their macabre 19th century music hall treatment to four dark tales. One protagonist is a puppet head made of two garbage can lids, and two others are ragged dolls. Even though their execution was fine, I do not what it is about their productions that make me sleepy. (Aug 23)	?	2010	?

43	Blackout (****) The son of a wife beater changes from a Goth to a violent Skinhead who has a run-in with the law. The initial blaring video montage had me afraid that the production would suffer the acoustic curse of the Big Belly, but the play quickly shifted into a physical character study. The pale, skinny lead embodied the nervous, bullied, kid that could lash out if his rage was unleashed with drugs. (Aug 17)	?	2010	?
44	The Demise of Christopher Marlowe (****) The Elizabethan playwright is the focus of Robert Poley's search for enemies of the crown. Each actor suits his character perfectly, particularly the robust, quick, and sure Marlowe. I was left wondering what was based on historical sources, and what was merely conjecture?. (Aug 15)	?	2010	?
45	The Fragility of X (****) A working woman seemingly cheerfully accepts the challenges of dealing with her hyperactive Down's Syndrome son. I was impressed with the many examples of her patience and resourcefulness, including a caged TV and the use of a trash bin in which he must stand for punishment. Both her brittle cheerfulness and his wild interactions with the world are quite believable. (Aug 17)	?	2010	?
46	Imperial Fizz (****) In the 1930's, a cocktail swilling husband and wife trade quips and barbs. The banter is fast and clever in the spirit of Noel Coward. However, when the wife whispered, I often could not understand her, and her monologue was not as clever as the rest. (Aug 25)	?	2010	?
47	Sticks, Stones, Broken Bones (****) One man performs shadow puppetry using oddly shaped material that when combined become recognizable objects on the screen. Throughout the show he takes advantage of the loss of the depth by having objects interact on the screen even though they are not close to each in the third dimension. He performed a chess game by laying on his back with each hand holding a head and his feet holding hands to move the pieces. (Aug 25)	?	2010	?

48	Lockerbie: Unfinished Business (****) David Benson plays Jim Swire, the father of a passenger on the bombed airliner who argues that the trial and conviction of XXX was a cover-up for an Iranian funded plot. He presents his argument by first providing evidence for an Iranian backed Germany-based terrorist band that created almost identical bombs, and then discrediting the witnesses at the trial. The play had less power for me because I am always skeptical of advocates when they provide no opportunity for rebuttal. (Aug 30)	?	2010	?
49	The Rat Pack – Live! (****) This year's version of Frank, Dean, and Sammy has three new singers front the 11-piece big band and three backup "sisters". As always, the song choices are excellent, with a good blend of upbeat signature tunes and ballad, but the imitations are only superficial. Dean only imitates the singer's drinking but not his breezy phrasing, and Sammy can barely whistle and does not even try to dance. (Aug 8)	?	2010	?
50	Running on Air (****) A young comedienne welcomes an audience of five into her orange VW camper van to tell of her first year in the bus and the trials of balancing her recent marriage with the demands of her career. She charmed us by combining minimalist audience participation props, a windscreen video screen, and her gentle anecdotes. I am not unbiased here since I own an almost identical orange VW camper, and lived in a VW bus for a year in the 1970s. (Aug 4)	?	2010	?
51	The Meeting(****) On the day before his release a convict must face the wife of his victim we see flashbacks of the important events of his life leading to the meeting. The lead actor provides a solid base of a good young man whose life is detoured by one short act. Only the telegraphed, predictable ending spoils the play. (Aug 5)	?	2010	?

52	The Author (****) Four actors hidden among the audience initially, tell of the making of a play about the Balkans war that contains horrific, graphic violence. The playwright challenges the audience to think about the effects on the theatre company and audience of creating and witnessing such unpleasant acts. The play is quite thought provoking, but the graphic descriptions caused more than ten people to leave. (Aug 5)	?	2010	?
53	The Ballad of Backbone Joe (****) In a small Australian town, a detective uses a wooly beard disguise to investigate a boxer and his promoter about the disappearance of the boxer's girlfriend. The three men start off with a song playing drums, guitar, and a bass violin made from a steamer trunk; and continue with word play, cardboard props, breaking the fourth wall, and even a reasonable story! The show works because the songs, props, and acting all maintain the cheeky approach. (Aug 9)	?	2010	?
54	The Big Bite-Size Breakfast—Menu 2 (****) Each of the three Bite Sized menus presents five short, unrelated plays. I found all of the plays clever and a good start on the day. I particularly liked one where a man plays a Rottweiler explaining the events, including sleepless nights and poorly designed fences that lead to him attacking two new neighbor dogs. (Aug 6)	?	2010	?
55	The Big Bite Size Breakfast—Menu 3 (****) This was my second sample of this sketch show, and it was almost as strong as Menu 2. The best sketch explored how a man with no sense of touch, and a woman with no sense of smell could find ways to express their love appropriately during intimacy. The ten minute version of "Pride and Prejudice" was the weakest, probably because it was the least original. (Aug 13)	?	2010	?

56	The Big Bite Size Breakfast—Menu 1 (****) This way my third sample of this sketch show, and it was similar in quality to Menu 3. One sketch provides a series of scenes with couples and singles demonstrating the different rituals of using the bathroom in the morning. Another has a simultaneous interpreter harassed by both her clients as they get into an insult match. (Aug 17)	?	2010	?
57	Beauty is Prison-Time (****) In a Siberian prison camp, a woman reviews the events that led to her incarceration while preparing for a beauty contest whose winner is set free. Her broken English gave her an appropriate air of an uneducated, naïve woman. Her ever so slightly stilted dance routine perfectly reflected her desperation, lack of confidence, and lack of skill. (Aug 22)	?	2010	?
58	The Door (****) A former enlisted man and his former commander await a hearing on the death of their comrade in a skirmish in Iraq. The plot twists nicely as they take turns playing prosecutor. The door of the title randomly slams throughout the play, and seems more of annoyance to all of us than anything else. (Aug 16)	?	2010	?
59	The Cage (****) Months after his bride spurns him at the altar, a man takes a gun and confronts his ex-fiancé and his best friend in her apartment. The play kept my interest throughout as he resists changing his initial notions of infidelity despite explanations to the contrary. Only the unnecessary character of an obvious audience plant hurts this play. (Aug 9)	?	2010	?
60	The Wake (****) To clear a charge of adultery, a mimic recreates the wake of his father for his wife by playing all of his family members. As the wife starts mimicking the family too, their quick change of roles is quite clever. The play does have a problem with the replaying of a revelatory taped message that she would have heard at the original wake. (Aug 20)	?	2010	?

61	Emma Thompson presents: Fair Trade (****) A woman in Darfur and a woman in Rumania accept free flights to England from people they trust, but find themselves forced into the London sex trades. The sex slave auction scene worked well to inform the audience of their low value (1000 – 3000 pounds), and their possible seamy roles besides prostitution. The huge tally used to count their sexual encounters was a powerful visualization of the hundreds (thousands?) of rapes they suffered at the hands of punters out for a good time. (Aug 19)	?	2010	?
62	The City and Iris (****) A little girl misunderstands an opthamologist, and for the rest of her life believes that her weak myopia means that her eyeballs will bore into her brain if she ever takes her glasses off. The troupe portrays every aspect of the grown woman's physical world both at home and as she travels to her work as a rigid librarian. The play has this living world conspire to help the woman rethink her understanding of herself and the world around her. (Aug 22)	?	2010	?
63	The Vaudevillains (****) The owner a century music hall is murdered at the beginning of the show, and we are treated to each vaudeville act along with its motivation for the murder. From knife thrower to magician each act is a macabre parody the 19th century original. While leaving, I heard many complaints about the sight lines in the Palm Court (Aug 16)	?	2010	?
64	The Penny Dreadfuls (****) The three men return with ten sketches ranging from professional racecar competition to children dealing with their step dad to a parody of "Twilight." My favorites were the two short, police identification sketches where we are lead to believe that the person is doing something entirely different from describing the criminal. Not surprisingly, since I have not seen "Twilight," I saw little funny in that sketch. (Aug 30)	?	2010	?

65	Legend (****) In search of glory, the son of King Theseus shipwrecks on an island populated by a defeated general, the general's daughter, and the last immortal dreamcatcher. The small cast does a fine job with the tragedy, and the multiple uses of screens was inventive. The one problem was the decision to have the chorus actor show up late to the play, and for him to often break character to interact with the prologue actor. (Aug 15)	?	2010	?
66	Gyles Brandeth – The One to One Show (****) The theatrical personality and former Tory MP amuses the audience with anecdotes from both his careers. His many years of theater serve him well as he is a master raconteur who knows how to interact with his audience. As a 57-year old American Anglophile, I could understand most of his reference to events of the 1960's and 1970's, but I would not recommend this for anyone less than 40. (Aug 5)	?	2010	?
67	Rachel Rose Reid: I'm Hans Christian Anderson (****) Rachel interweaves stories of Anderson's "The Little Mermaid", Anderson's own life, and her own romantic misadventures. Rachel is a master storyteller who clearly spends a lot time making her choice of words before the performance to paint wonderfully evocative tales. Unfortunately, as with last year, her style is so fast and dense that I tired, and nodded off for a minute or two again. (Aug 5)	?	2010	?
68	Reel-to-Real (****) In the 1930's, the son and daughter are sent on a race around the world by their billionaire father, and find opportunities to recreate famous song and dance numbers of movie musicals. The son demonstrated a great voice, and strong tap dancing, particularly in "Putting on the Ritz." The show is hurt by not exploiting the daughter's dancing prowess, and an Asian visit without any musical numbers at all. As usual, I sat in the front row, but think it would have been better to sit much further back to see the video projections on the whole of the façade. (Aug 5)	?	2010	?

69	My Romantic History (****) After a fellow has what was supposed to be a one night stand with an officemate, they find themselves sucked into a relationship based on misperceptions while they pine for lost loves. After hearing his view of the events, we are treated to her view with just the right amount of subtle changes to understand how her life contributed to the events that traps them. When they inadvertently meet their lost loves and discover how their fondness had idealized them, it reminded me to doubt my own view of past lovers. (Aug 4)	?	2010	?
70	Apples (****) Adolescent classmates gossip, party, and have sex. From the naïve OCD virgin who must learn how to woo his love to the suddenly pregnant party girl to the druggy rich girl each well-defined character learns a different lesson of life. Though everything is well done, I could not help but think that this overdone subject should be left to the many gap-year theater companies, and not the Traverse. (Aug 10)	?	2010	?
71	That Moment (****) An out of work actress becomes the dog sitter for a famous old director and uses her position to further her career. From an agent that shuns her to disinterested casting director to her own jealousy the play seems to portray perfectly the life of a aspiring actor looking for that one big break. Since my play companion for years is such an actress, I could help but sympathize with the character. (Aug 11)	?	2010	?

72	A Slacker's Guide to Western Theatre (****) As the title suggests, the troupe provides descriptions and short examples of Western theatre starting with the Greeks, and them moving forward until concentrating on the 20th century Six actors representing 37 Shakespeare plays competing in a horse race to determine the best is an example of how the whole play was both informative and fun. I loved their final medley of showtunes with their lyrics altered to become theater oriented, and found their "Flyering in the Rain" particularly witty. (Aug 20)	?	2010	?
73	Colours (****) As she dresses for her work as a prostitute, a widow talks to her husband's grave about the changes she has seen in Zimbabwe. Her gestures and facial expressions seemed too large for the small Baillie Room. I did like how she treated the weeds at the grave tenderly because she believed that their roots reached down to her husband's bones. (Aug 19)	?	2010	?
74	Bud Take the Wheel, I Feel a Song Coming On (****) After eight years, a land developer returns home to his family, including his abusive father. Abusive ancestors, unwanted pregnancies, and provincial conservatism all blend to provide satisfying motivation for all of the family dynamics. The unexplained arsons, and minimal boyfriend weaken the play. (Aug 23)	?	2010	?
75	Memory Cells (****) An older man keeps a young woman prisoner as his "wife" in his bomb shelter. The big man's anger at her supposed ingratitude combined with his paranoid rationalizations make him quite intimidating. The one flaw is that the story becomes confusing when it violates its reverse chronological flow in one scene near the end. (Aug 16)	?	2010	?

76	Kindly Leave the Stage (****) This farce begins with the performance of a play about a couple announcing their divorce that veers into an exchange of accusations of acting incompetence and marital infidelity. The barbs are uneven, but the cast keeps a good pace of increasing lunacy. The addition of old thespian souse, who launches into his King Lear with minimal prodding, provides nice relief from the bitter recriminations driving the rest of the play. (Aug 14)	?	2010	?
77	The Terrible Tales of the Midnight Chorus (****) Five macabre music hall actors and three musicians use stick puppets to tell three dark tales. The haunting instrumentals, clever solo ditties, and beautiful four-part harmonies were both well written and well performed. Despite being in our full view, the puppeteers transferred the four controls so seamlessly that I almost never noticed. (Aug 20)	?	2010	?
78	Long Live the King (****) A one-woman show tells of an Elvis-loving pregnant Indian woman who coincidentally emigrates to Australia on the day Elvis dies. Though Elvis permeates the show, his is always in the service of the themes of Indian family life and childbearing. Particularly memorable is the woman's first date with her husband at an Elvis-centric café where she argues for the supremacy of Elvis over his love of the Beatles by singing songs from their respective catalogs until they both hear Elvis sing "Something" over the café speakers. (Aug 10)	?	2010	?
79	I, Claudia (****) An actress presents the tale of a young girl dealing with her parents' divorce by creating a fantasy world in her school's basement. The other characters pale in comparison to her bouncy, desperate little girl trying to recreate her life. The use of half masks hinders her ability to communicate without gaining anything. (Aug 13)	?	2010	?

80	The Virtuous Burglar by Dario Po (****) This farce has a trysting Italian councilman interrupting a burglar. An opening phone call to the house from the burglar's complaining wife sets a great tone. The play escalates in wonderful complexity from there without the yelling or madcap action of so many weaker farces. (Aug 18)	?	2010	?
81	Just Macbeth! (****) This children's show has six "students" put on a severely abridged Macbeth. They do a good job of explaining the basics, and even provide an understandable lesson on the meaning of "soliloquy" by giving examples. The kids loved the whole thing, particularly when Macbeth stuffed his mouth with more than twenty marshmallows. (Aug 26)	?	2010	?
82	Tony Tanner's Charlatan (****) Tanner impersonates the Russian Sergei Diaghilev, who was the founder of the Ballets Russ in Paris in the early 1900s, and the spurned lover of its star, Nijinsky. While Tanner does cover Diaghilev's early ascent into the cultural nobility of Russia under the Czar, Tanner concentrates most of his energy on Diaghilev's interactions with Nijinsky. I found his description of the visit of the now insane and unresponsive Nijinsky to the company quite touching. (Aug 6)	?	2010	?
83	The Truman Capote Talk Show – Bob Kingdom (****) Bob Kingdom impersonates the flamboyant and gossipy author Truman Capote. Kingdom does a fine job of blending Capote's literary and personal life. While sprinkling the work with many of Capote's catty comments, Kingdom wisely uses Capote's description of his "party of the century", the 1966 Black and White Ball in New York City, to demonstrate Capote's social wiles and conceits. (Aug 6)	?	2010	?

84	The City of the Dead Tour (****) A guide provides a walking tour of Cowgate and Greyfriars Graveyard. While he started with an overly gruesome, though accurate, description of a tortured family accused of witchcraft, the balance of the trip he proved an able historian, paranormal scientist, and performer who provided many safety warnings about the uneven ground. It seemed he spent too much time on crowd control, and not enough on the characters of the graveyard. (Aug 3)	?	2010	?
85	Last Easter (****) Four twenty-something friends try to help one of their members deal with terminal cancer. The play's bright comedy and light romance provide a good balance for their trip to Lourdes and wrangling with euthanasia. Having had my father die of cancer in his 80's, I found the story particularly touching, and its naiveté understandable. (Aug 6)	?	2010	?
86	The Not-So-Fatal Death of Grandpa Fredo (****) The political satire has a tiny moribund town experiencing the whims of political notoriety when the Sarah Palin-like mayor discovers that a townsman has a rustic cryogenic shed that contains the remains of two people. The play makes a pointed indictement of the instant pandering in politics as the mayor changes from prosecutor to defender of individual rights overnight. Live bluegrass/country music, and the sets-in-box shed, including a boat on a lake covering the entire stage, contribute to the lighthearted ambience. (Aug 7)	?	2010	?
87	A Commedia of Errors (****) A Hawaiian high school presents Shakespeare's play of two sets of lost identical twins. For a young American company, this was an excellent production. While they wisely played it for laughs by keeping seemingly every line of the comic Dromios and adding clown sound effects for him, they avoided the pitfall of adding slapstick to the rest of the performances. (Aug 8)	?	2010	?

88	Winner by Submission (****) Derek convinces his two high school friends, Kelly and Jared, to invite Shannon over to watch "Inception," when they really plan to give her a date rape drug. From Derek's plan on becoming a cage fighter to the boys' interest in phone sex vids, and then to Shannon's succumbing to Derek's wiles, the scenes seem real and up to the minute. Of particular note is how the three boys stay true to their roles as bully/braggart, weak idolizer, and just plain good kid. (Aug 14)	?	2010	?
89	Anatomy Act (****) The playwright joins three women to provide his views on everything from grave robbing to women. Despite its self-centered approach, there is enough self-deprecating humor to keep this from becoming a vanity piece. He has written many thoughtful lines, and many clever lines, but the frantic chaos weakens them. (Aug 12)	?	2010	?
90	Another Someone (****) An uptight hard-driving legal intern moves in next to a contented chef and his roommate waitress. This blend of acting, modern dance, songs, and commentary works well as the lawyer learns to appreciate the moment. As is often the case at the Fringe, the engineer had the sound so loud that many of the lyrics were lost. (Aug 20)	?	2010	?
91	Under Milk Wood (****) Guy Masterson tells of the day in the lives of Welsh fishing village starting with dreams, and then moving through their morning rituals, work, and finally back to bed. This is a tour de force as he slips between the lives of more than ten characters at each point in the day. With so many characters, I had troubles keeping track of them all. (Aug 24)	?	2010	?

92	Keepers (****) Two lighthouse keepers on the Small Islands in 1801 must deal with boredom and storms using only two chairs and a ladder for the set. Both the dedicated veteran with his rigid maintenance routines, a his assistant with his interactions with the outside world contribute to the sense of isolation and hardship. I was confused when it looked like the assistant had drowned, and yet showed up in the next scene. (Aug 29)	?	2010	?
93	A Midsummer Night's Madness (****) This version of Shakespeare's play of love potions and buffoonery has energetic dancing and songs. The cast brings great hip hop moves to the story, and does not eliminate any crucial aspect of the play. The high stepping, wise cracking Puck was perfectly cast. (Aug 28)	?	2010	?
94	Touching the Blue (****) Clive Russell plays a former snooker champion recounting his rise and fall as he prepares for his comeback match at the national championship. This is a man who crassly refers to his ex-wife as Big-Boobs, but also clearly loved her, and regrets having to travel so much. I could see the 17-year old Thunderbolt as the 57-year old drunk simulates the significant games of his life. (Aug 18)	?	2010	?
95	Anatomy of Fantasy (****) Five dancers and a musician/flamenco percussionist present a piece involving death, courting, birth, and who knows what. I could only guess at the meaning of some scenes, but they felt like they fit together. I was particularly taken with the synthesized flamenco, and the use of red yarn both to connect and to entrap beings. (Aug 24)	?	2010	?
96	Ernest and the Pale Moon (****) A man who does nothing but sit in a darkened room and watch a light sensitive young woman in a nearby building, becomes violent when he sees a man talking to her. The company has created a gruesome tale well matched to their trademark 19th century macabre music hall styling. As with previous Les Enfants Terribles shows, I had trouble staying awake because of the dark staging and somber tone. (Aug 25)	?	2010	?

97	The Caucasian Chalk Circle (****) When the governor's mansion is overrun, the cook ends up his new baby, and raises him as her own despite being pursued. The blackened eyes emphasize the satiric aspects. The newly installed judge is an odd combination of drunk, rebel, and wise man (Aug 29)	?	2010	?
98	Soap! The Show (****) A circus performs using six bathtubs as their set instead of three rings. From jugulars to gymnasts to trapeze artists, all the performers were topnotch. Though the clowning woman integrated water into her antics, most of the rest of the show was just typical circus acts. (Aug 21)	?	2010	?
99	Lovelace – a Rock Musical (****) We follow the life of the porn star as she runs away from her heartless mother to marrying an abusive husband who pimps her and forces her to make "Deep Throat", and finally escapes to become a feminist with a normal family life. Though she comes across as a pure woman wronged by her husband, the gritty story is dramatic and real enough. All the voices and music are top notch, and only few poor lyrics hold the show back. (Aug 23)	?	2010	?
100	Stand Up for Freedom (****) This benefit for Amnesty International had several stand-up comedians. As in years past, Adam Hill proved a great compere, and the on stage sign language women provided many laughs as they valiantly translated lewd phrases. The line-up seemed weaker than in previous years, with a cameo by Jason Byrne faking being a sign language interpreter being the highlight. (Aug 19)	?	2010	?
101	Some and Mirrors (***) This one ring circus has gymnasts, a magician, trapeze artist, a bearded lady, a singer, and a great band. The first act was quite impressive, particularly because the close proximity of the gymnasts allowed me to see their muscles shudder as they made things look so easy. The problem was that after intermission, the same acts came out again and their routines were consistently weaker than that before the intermission. (Aug 28)	?	2010	?

102	The Hub (***) This light comedy has a woman returning from an attempt at an acting career in Hollywood to her old job as announcer at a BBC radio station with mixed feelings from the other announcers. The diverse characters, from compassionate gay man to socially inept do-gooder, provide opportunities to explore many aspects of life. Though funny in many places, most of the characters are too broadly drawn to be thought real. (Aug 19)	?	2010	?
103	Up 'N' Under (***) Arthur Hoyle, an old rugby player, wagers his house that he can train a horrible team to beat that of a loan shark. Though TV personality Abi Titmus is the draw for many as the gym instructor trying to train the unruly bunch, it is Hoyle that is focus of the play. Everything is done well, including the simulated climactic game, it just seemed so formulaic that it never grabbed me. (Aug 19)	?	2010	?
104	Reverie (***) A sleep researcher who has been hired to keep a Dictaphone diary of his lucid dreams finds his dreams better than reality, particularly when his current girlfriend listens to the diary. The extended series of dreams with his former girlfriend made sense, but it is not explained why he did not stop as he had previously. His current girlfriend's reaction seemed uncharacteristically irrational for her. (Aug 27)	?	2010	?
105	The Last Five Years (***) At the time of their divorce, the wife works backwards through their relationship, while the husband sings songs starting from the beginning of their courtship. The onstage string quartet and piano really highlight the beautiful music. Unfortunately, the lack of vocal amplification, unmasked the weak voices of the leads, particularly that of the wife. (Aug 24)	?	2010	?

106	Michael Topping – 'Heels over Head in Love!' (***) Michael, one half of the comedy duo Topping and Butch, has a quieter solo show of campy ditties. He's charming, and the ditties are full of clever metaphors for sex. "Boy of Brighton" is a lewd rewriting of "Girl from Ipanema" with even nuns turning their heads as he walks by. (Aug 22)	?	2010	?
107	Wild Allegations (***) A slob convinces a fledgling journalist to play his girlfriend so that she can investigate his brother who is a much beloved TV comedy star. Things are made more interesting as the star's girlfriend commissions the journalist to expose the star's shallowness. The likeable, though conflicted, star, and his erratic girlfriend work, but the brother is played as way too much of a boor for it to be credible that the star would believe that refined journalist was his girlfriend. (Aug 20)	?	2010	?
108	David Leddy's 'Sub Rosa' (***) As we silently toured the Hill Street Theater, we came upon characters who were all involved in a fictional serial murderer in that theater. The idea of moving around an old building is interesting, but the tales were not particularly compelling. The gruesome murders seem straight out the Les Terrible Infant writing team. (Aug 30)	?	2010	?
109	The Glenn Miller Mystery (***) In his dressing room at his last gig, a retiring Sinatra imitator meets a personable fellow who knows a surprising amount about Glenn Miller and the singer. The play is joy when the singer tackles Sinatra and Miller tunes. The underlying plot about the downing of Miller's plane works until the unsatisfying climax. (Aug 21)	?	2010	?

110	Waiting for Lefty (***) In 1930s London, cabbies are not making a living wage, and their seemingly corrupt union leadership is arguing against striking. This leftist play from that period has all the emotional stories of good propaganda: a hardworking husband with a starving family, young lovers forced to postpone marriage, a heroine who quits rather inform, and even an industrial cripple who becomes a great orator for the masses. Each scene is strong, but the whole feels contrived. (Aug 11)	?	2010	?
111	en route (***) Your are guided through Edinburgh with an Ipod, text messages, and packets you find along the way. Though the beginning of the trek retraced my steps from my own Cowgate hostel, the balance took me to new areas and sights, with the vista from the top of a car park surprisingly grand. I found that the initial ambiguous text made me so nervous that I spent a lot time worrying that I was following the route instead of listening to the Ipod's evocative music and poetry. (Aug 25)	?	2010	?
112	Pedestrian (***) A man describes his dream of walking along the sidewalk of a shopping mall, and his experiences with each store. With a video backdrop, each of the fantastic stories comes alive. Though everything was suitably surreal, I kept hoping that there would be a destination for the play/dream. (Aug 23)	?	2010	?
113	Five Clever Courtesans (***) Venus brings together five famous historical courtesans who present their accomplishments, and discuss their personal lives. From the concubine who becomes Empress of China to a Parisian whore who demanded jewels for her elegant services, each of their tales provided very different takes on the profession. The problem with the play is that after the five describe their lives, the discussion that follows seems aimless, and left me wondering when it would ever end. (Aug 21)	?	2010	?

114	An Acre and Change (***) The people of East Anglia, a restive English speaking province of France, want to rejoin the United Kingdom. This thinly veiled allusion to Northern Ireland argues that fight for land is senseless because there is an acre of land in the world for each person. While the play provides a nice contrast between the extreme hardliners and the people who suffer from violence, the underlying argument ignores the fact that much of the world's land is uninhabitable. (Aug 20)	?	2010	?
115	The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui (***) In 1930s Chicago, a mobster uses murder, arson, and blackmail to force a protection racket on green grocers. The whole cast clearly relishes playing mobsters and their molls, particularly the gunzel G. The problem lies in an overly complex plot broken up into almost 20 scenes. (Aug 14)	?	2010	?
116	Beautiful Burnout (***) We see the fate of five young aspiring boxers who are originally under the guidance of the same old, strict trainer. The play suffers from a lack of back stories to explain most of boxers' actions, and from the failure of four of the actors to look convincing when boxing. Though the initial choreography of each dance piece finds its inspiration in boxing movements, they consistently abandoned these for more mundane movements. Though the theater is in an arena configuration, the designer placed video screens so that two side sections of the audience could not see them and the actors at the same time. (Aug 4)	?	2010	?
117	Uber Hate Gang (***) The audience chooses to become of a webcast of this terrorist group that will blow up the room in an hour, but the group's solidarity weakens with the introduction of a children's entertainer. The initial twist of having the audience unwitting, but now voluntary members of the group tion wonderfully mind bending. However, their ill-defined justification, odd responses to the entertainer, and final death make little sense. (Aug 23)	?	2010	?

118	Speed .. Mating … (***) A comedian and a real professor of biology look at sex in the animal kingdom. The presentation of the of nature was informative and fun without need for the comedian. I was surprised to learn that more than one species uses “prostitution”, i.e., sex in return for favors. (Aug 27)	?	2010	?
119	Face (***) A Korean woman talks about the experiences of her mother in a Japanese “comfort station” during World War II. The incredible daily 16 hour non-stop sexual abuse the women experienced was heartbreaking, and damning when we learn that current Japanese politicians reject deny their pain. Though the subject matter was certainly powerful, the presentation seemed low-key. (Aug 30)	?	2010	?
120	More Light Please (***) An immigrant shoe saleswoman serves her clients and herself from shelves full of a hundred shoe boxes. Nothing in particular stands out with this play. (Aug 29)	?	2010	?
121	Poland 3 Iran 2 (***) With the World Cup as their common touchstone, using a slideshow an Iranian and a half-Pole Englishman alternately describe the events of their families since 1939. The Iranian’s family were Communist leaders until the revolution, and the Englishman’s POW father was freed by the Russian in World War II to fight the Nazis. The Englishman had a natural charm as he described his artistic creations for his fantasy Subbuteo World Cup matches, but the grainy YouTube vides of the real games contributed nothing to the show. (Aug 18)	?	2010	?

122	The Cry (***) For the full hour, a poet suffers repeated battering, roped arm stretching, and waterboarding by two masked men trying to force him change his political views. This is intense physical theater with the actor developing welts and really being subjected to waterboarding for many minutes. Though he is a poet, and he does speak a few lines, this play is more about forcing the audience to experience non-stop torture for an hour. This is the most intense play at the Fringe, and may not be suitable for many. (Aug 16)	?	2010	?
123	I, Elizabeth (***) Rebecca Vaughan plays Queen Elizabeth talking about her life, and her approach to ruling Britain. The play is informative, but she repeats many thoughts often. The lightning/thunder every five minutes seems to serve to no purpose since she continues with the same sentence after the interruption. (Aug 13)	?	2010	?
124	Bette/Cavett (***) Two actors with only a passing resemblance to their roles reiterate the words from an interview of Bette Davis by Dick Cavett in 1971. Because the show wants to mimic the hour-long TV show, it repeatedly interrupts the interview with commercials from the era. The show wastes even more time by starting with the Cavett actor quizzing the audience about Davis trivia rather than showing film clips, or simply providing a biographical sketch. (Aug 28)	?	2010	?
125	Why Men Cheat (***) With the help of another middle-aged man a “researcher” demonstrates his findings from interviewing 250 married men about cheating. The assistant provides many laughs any finding to an absurd degree. I was uncomfortable when the two men said how women feel and think. (Aug 10)	?	2010	?

126	There's Only One Lord Byron (***) On return from Greece, Lord Byron visits his favorite London brothel where five whores have learned to act like his significant lovers of the past. As Byron rejects each effort, we learn of his past as well as his search for contentment. This is the second play that portrays Byron as solely a narcissist, rather than the whole sensitive man. (Aug 27)	?	2010	?
127	Sex Idiot (***) The performance artist has created a piece based on her experiences contacting her ten former lovers to notify them she has a sexually transmitted disease. Her performance varies from a dance about being single to singing an ode to her current love while wearing a mustache made with scotch tape and the pubic hair cut from the audience. While she is talented at creating odd performances, her singing and dancing are weak. (Aug 29)	?	2010	?
128	Virtuous Flock (***) After suffering constant abuse in a convent, a daughter returns home for her father's funeral—and revenge. This parody of 19th century melodramas has many fun moments, with the pregnant cook having the best vulgar lines. I did have trouble with the gruesome murder of the cook using a hand drill through her vagina and fetus. (Aug 15)	?	2010	?
129	Double Booked (***) A harried middle class woman must deal with her texting son, partying daughter, doddering mother, and belittling "friend". From the son caught watching a wanking video of himself in class to the efforts to support her denture-losing mother, her challenges resonated with the many women in the audience. I found I had little patience with her because though the initial problems were not of her making, all of her later troubles arose from her unwillingness to approach a situation honestly. (Aug 9)	?	2010	?

130	Sunset Song (***) This saga looks at early 20th century Scottish farm life through the eyes f a young girl as she grows into motherhood. The play is thorough in its exploration of the vagaries of both farming, and family. Because of the strong accents used, I had a serious problem understanding many of the words. (Aug 18)	?	2010	?
131	Doctor Faustus (***) This version of Marlowe's play about a man making a pact with the Devil concentrates on those scenes when Faustus is dealing with the Devil's henchman Mephistopheles. This allows Faustus some time to express his selfish desires and hatred for God as well as his later mix of contrition and denial. The supporting cast's interpretation of the seven deadly sins seems like seven individual pieces straight out of acting class rather than some coherent whole. (Aug 8)	?	2010	?
132	Under the Lintel (***) A Dutch librarian becomes obsessed with tracking down a patron who returned a very long overdue book. I found the librarian's gentle Dutch humor, and the early pursuit of "Da Vinci Code" type obscure clues quite captivating, but his slide into obsession was unfulfilling. His most memorable detective work was when he searches the English pet quarantine records after learning his quarry had a dog on a Bonn trolley. (Aug 6)	?	2010	?
133	Of Women and Horses I Have Known (***) A cast of six provides excerpts from the life of Jean Hislop, the breeder of the "horse of the century" in the 1970s. Though most of the show was quite enjoyable and informative, the concentration on Jean's eccentricities and brashness made her a caricature. The occasional, inexplicable frantic milling by the cast detracted from the experience. (Aug 6)	?	2010	?

134	Do We Look Like Refugees?! (***) Five Georgian actors sing, and, with the aid of earphones, reproduce the recorded speech of South Ossetian refugees in Georgia. They had good harmonies, and many of the slice of life stories were touching. While they provided supertitles for the speech, they failed to provide it for the songs. Note that because of the supertitles and the need to see the projected scenes behind the actors, you should sit towards the back of the auditorium. (Aug 6)	?	2010	?
135	Decky Does a Bronco (***) Set at an actual swing set in a park, this play has a group of 9-year old boys enjoying their summer vacation with the typical hijinks for that age. The wonderful aspect of the play is that its mock battles, amateur competitions, and general camaraderie bring back memories of my own childhood. However, the story is slight, and keeping track of the older versions of the kids was confusing. (Aug 17)	?	2010	?
136	Bang Bang You're Dead (***) Five high school students killed by Josh tell him of their lives and dreams. The play does a fine job of piecing together the events both small and large that led to the killings. The kid's final litany about what they will never be able to do seemed more suited to a play for high school students than adults. (Aug 14)	?	2010	?
137	The Trojan Women (***) After its fall, the women of Troy must reconcile themselves to the loss of their men as well as the Greek decisions to enslave women, to make other women concubines, and to murder some of their children. The endless laments of Euripides' play wore me down. The ethereal voices of the four a cappella women, particularly that of the soprano, provided a welcome relief. (Aug 14)	?	2010	?

138	Feathers (***) A man and wife must deal with her fragile ex-addict sister and her party girl sister. The cautious ex-addict is finely drawn as we see her become more secure and open with her new lover, and yet still tentative with wife she had betrayed five years earlier. By contrast, the one-dimensional husband has no redeeming characteristics, and the unseen baby is never cared for by the mother and yet is the focus of the climax. (Aug 14)	?	2010	?
139	Spring Awakening (***) In late 19th century Germany, young adolescents sexual curiosity encounters the conservative strictures of their school and community. The brilliant liberal schoolboy and his dullard sexually confounded friend have many compelling lines, but the few lyrics I could understand were mostly rubbish. The one snippet of a cappella late in the play made it clear that the sound engineer had consistently boosted the orchestra so loud that it drowned out almost every lyric. (Aug 12)	?	2010	?
140	Occupied (***) This show has more than ten sketches all set in different bathrooms with scenarios ranging from replacing tile to shaving in the dark to accidentally meeting a new romantic interest. One of the best was the opening sketch has a boy sensibly refusing his girlfriend's orders to confront a burglar while he is in only his boxers. Another makes a wry comment on the times by having three partying girls blithely taking pictures of themselves while a companion repeatedly vomits in the toilet. (Aug 8)	?	2010	?

141	Daddy Ate All My Easter Eggs and Never Replaced Them (***) Starting with a medley of popular songs about Jack the Ripper, four actors provide ten sketches on a variety of topics. One sketch has a happily married middle aged man trying to buy insurance against a crappy life, and having the agent explain that the premiums would be high by putting the man's future in the worst light. Another sketch has a man and his broker use only the language of house realty, e.g. semi-detached and large front porch, to describe his requirements for a mate and the available women. (Aug 15)	?	2010	?
142	Lesbian Bathhouse (***) A male film director decides to develop a film about lesbians by directing a play using lesbians in traditional stag film scenarios. With the first few scenarios of teacher's pet, pizza girl, and randy electrician the play did have an initial funny twist, but after those the joke got old. Only one of the six lesbians had any significant off-set story, and even hers was not of much interest. (Aug 28)	?	2010	?
143	Bane 2 (***) In this sequel, noir Bane is the tough as nails enforcer for a loan shark. This show follows the pattern of most failed sequels; it reuses the fresh aspects of the original Bane, and then wraps them in a story beyond credulity. In this case, the reuses the same actor "miming" all interactions with invisible objects while a guitarist provides a jazz score, but this time monsters from hazardous waste and his brutality with innocents are less clever parody than second rate comic book science fiction. (Aug 11)	?	2010	?

144	Your Dream Wedding (***) An Ipod guides you to an beautifully appointed store where you are treated as bride selecting her bridal gown. The delicate Michael knows how you should approach your wedding to make it most memorable, and expensive, while constantly dismissing his assistant as inferior. I must admit that the Carpenter's "Top of the World" did buoy me as I walked through St. Andrews Square, but I wish that had explicitly given us a time limit when asked to describe our dream wedding. (Aug 7)	?	2010	?
145	Shakespeare for Breakfast (***) This year's version traces the story of King Lear through a selection of popular British TV series. While I could relate to "Who want to be an Heir," since I live in California and almost all of the rest were unique to British TV, I did not understand their references. While the Brits do love this format, I keep hoping that they will return to their earlier format of an original plot sprinkled with lines from throughout the Shakespearean canon. (Aug 8)	?	2010	?
146	Zambezi Express (***) The story of an aspiring footballer traveling from a rural town to a big city of Zimbabwe to try out for its team is told through song and dance. The first speech about the poverty of the region made me feel that the performers danced in modernized traditional costume dances out of desperation and not joy. The later scenes in the modern city garb worked better for me, but the feeling of colonial entertainment never quite left. (Aug 10)	?	2010	?
147	Some Gorgeous Accident (***) A bon vivant teaches his married friend how to seize life with many personal and professional repercussions. The bon vivant uses an lazy Irish accent that was so thick that not even my British companion could understand many of his critical lines. We both agreed that a court trial that excluded him was the best part of the play. (Aug 24)	?	2010	?

148	Flesh and Blood & Fish and Fowl (***) In his office, a biophobic social isolate manager must deal with a progressively more invasive world, including his amorous administrative assistant, a fly, hyperactive plants, and a menagerie of animals. His sticky flypapered hand routine covered all of the possibilities for that classic gag. However, unlike the rest of the audience, the ever-escalating chaos left me wondering at its source rather than laughing. (Aug 3)	?	2010	?
149	Story Shakespeare: King Lear (***) A young cast presents a heavily edited King Lear. While the acting was fine when it happened, too much of the time of the play was spent having a narrator explaining events. I have seen other abridged King Lear's that could retain more of the lines of the play. (Aug 21)	?	2010	?
150	My Dearest Byron (***) After a ten year absence, Lord Byron runs away from London society to visit his married sister, and finds his only solace to be in her arms and in her bed. Though we hear snippets of his beautiful poetry, it is said so fast and his actions are so consistently self-centered that I could never develop any sympathy for the wastrel. On the other hand, his incestuous sister is a more realized character with her concerns for her family as well her brother. (Aug 12)	?	2010	?
151	Flor de Muerto (***) Seven years after his parents died, the teenaged Gabriel still often resorts to living in a comic book fantasy world instead of accepting their deaths. The large skeleton puppetry is inelegant, and the slow story seems slight. The small cast did a remarkable job of creating a crowded Day of the Dead tumult for the son to navigate. (Aug 20)	?	2010	?

152	Julien Cottereau: Imagine-Toi (***) Julien is not silent, but a non-verbal mime who relies on highly amplified noises he makes to inform his actions. His early routine with a lassoed fly was well done, though not original. While his first two audience participants followed his signed instructions beautifully, he horribly mishandled an older man who could not grasp his role, and angrily tried to leave the stage out of frustration and embarrassment. (Aug 26)	?	2010	?
153	Mysterious Skin (***) A young gay hustler and his friend return to Kansas from a stay in New York City, while another young Kansan becomes involved with a woman who shares his belief that they have been abducted by extra terrestrials. Though the play would like us to think of the characters as real, except for the hustler's friend, each lacks depth. The final abuse of the hustler seems to serve no purpose. (Aug (	?	2010	?
154	Kafka and Son (***) Based on Franz Kafka's "Letter to His Father", the author tells of his life in the shadow of his overbearing, larger than life father. In his role as a son, he is a complex mix of idolization, humiliation, and efforts of self expression. The tone of the play never changes as it relentlessly move from one unpleasant experience to another. (Aug 20)	?	2010	?
155	Carnivale (***) The audience of twelve joins five actors at the black tie dinner party of a renowned host. Though I found myself distracted actually eating, those scripted malicious conversations that I did hear did help prepare me for what followed. The second half does not work because the host's "powerful" argument about the global economic murder was weak, and his surprise was predictable. (Aug 9)	?	2010	?
156	Performance Postponed (***) A man and a woman use physical theater in a variety of situations. The only memorable scene was when the man whiled away his time by contorting himself on his chair. (Aug 15)	?	2010	?

157	Righteous Money (***) A TV financial guru has difficulties maintaining his cool when his administrative assistant rebels, and a guest does not show up. The actor does a good job of playing the brash egomaniac who argues the case for unethical financial. Since we care little for his character, his subsequent profanity and uneven repentance is unimpressive. (Aug 4)	?	2010	?
158	Jack the Knife (***) The South African theater actor and raconteur Jack Klaff says he is risking "career suicide" by presenting a play about how people must reject false forced choices to rebel against an unjust system. As an actor, Klaff demonstrated his entire stentorian prowess, but as a playwright, his admitted proclivity for digression, and his lack of organization saps the power of his argument. For instance, he points out that a South African ad used "… buy it for one you love" for Whites, and "… buy it for one who loves you" for Blacks, but he leaves a parallel point about mature couples on the TV program thinking of each other until much later. (Aug 6)	?	2010	?
159	My Hamlet with Linda Marlowe (***) With the help of puppets Linda Marlowe voices all of the parts of Hamlet. Despite the fun use of puppets, this production seemed dull. I cannot tell whether this was because I've seen Hamlet too often, or Marlowe's reliance on the puppets to differentiate the characters instead of her voice. (Aug 13)	?	2010	?
160	The Crying Cherry (***) This is a supposed adaptation of a 5th century Japan legend of twins separated at birth to avoid a prophecy that they would kill each other. It seems that the Dutch company could not decide whether they were making a comedy or a tragedy as the two actors weave back and forth between straight-faced Japanese kabuki speech and movement, and slapstick pantomime. In the end, the play settles on a final, ever escalating battle of absurdity when they use a single hair as a deadly dart. (Aug 9),	?	2010	?

161	Vive Le Cabaret (***) This typical Fringe cabaret had a double entendre spouting compere and acts from other Fringe shows ranging from banjo players to strippers to dancers. This is an overpriced show with only the presence of "Fascinating Aida's" Dillie Keane separating it from any other cabaret. Beside Ms. Keane's sexy ditties, the two dancers were also good. (Aug 17)	?	2010	?
162	Miranda (***) A man plays an Indian woman who is recruited into a touring company rehearsing "The Tempest" in Goa, India. While the on stage violinist and drummer provided both lively music for both his/her dancing and the perfect soundtrack for the rest of the play, the story of phantoms and lies never grabbed me. The choice to have a man play a woman remained unexplained, and seems to be an effort either to showcase the actor, or to draw attention to an otherwise ordinary show. (Aug 10)	?	2010	?
163	Soho Storeys (***) Immigrants in London's Soho must deal with racism, finding work, and marital stress. With bad sound, and so many stories interwoven within such a large cast, the show just became a blur to me. The rapidly moving staircase chase was fantastic though. (Aug 21)	?	2010	?
164	Burns Bites Back (***) The small troupe portray twenty of Robert Burn's poems as skits. They played it all for slapstick laughs, but I was at a loss as they stayed true to Burn's Scottish. Nonetheless is was fun to share haggis pies with a bunch of older Scots who could recite Burns along with the actors. (Aug 26)	?	2010	?
165	Youth and Will (***) This workshop had three actors tell of experiences from their own lives, and then find germane excerpts from Shakespeare. I came in late, so I only heard of one actor's quandary over his political inaction, and another's confusion over a Shakespearean director's lack of person sensitivity. I think that by concentrating on a theme of choice this play would work well in schools to illustrate the importance of personal choice. (Aug 13)	?	2010	?

166	Jacob's Ladder (***) Five strangers form a cult lead by a man suffering from Asperger's syndrome. The bulk of the play has each character telling their disparate back story of alienation. The cult murder plot is poorly justified, as is the apocryphal climax. (Aug 16)	?	2010	?
167	Homo Asbo (***) It is five days after seeing this play, and the only things I can remember about it is my star rating, and ironically, that the songs were forgettable. (Aug 17)	?	2010	?
168	The Changeling (***) In London, a changeling who has endangered his immortality by taking human form searches for the word that will same a fellow human changeling who is dying. Not surprisingly, the word he finds is as anti-climatic as the end of the play is sudden. The biggest problem with this production is the two onstage musicians who played their drums so loudly that I could not hear many of the lines. (Aug 11)	?	2010	?
169	Alcatraz (***) A woman who has become an expert on one specific hotel room recreates the lives of its occupants from clues and tape recordings. I liked the interesting use of white boxes to create different settings. The initial play-defining statement that every cell on Alcatraz can see San Francisco is not true, and put me off the whole play. (Aug 19)	?	2010	?
170	Frances Ruffelle: Beneath the Dress (***) The Tony Award winning singer dresses in sexy costumes and signs some old standards, and some new songs. She still has a great voice, and the band was great. She put too much effort into trying to be sexy, and not enough into song selection. (Aug 19)	?	2010	?

171	A Perfect Corpse (***) In the early 19th century, an anatomist accepts the ill-gotten cadavers from his young illustrator. I liked the section negotiating a contract with a condemned hemophiliac in an inn with the hangman because it gave a sense of the prison system at the time. Dancing bookshelf bric-a-brac, and a lack of findings from his dissections made the protagonist a weird imitation of the historical figure. (Aug 27)	?	2010	?
172	Dean's Dad's Ducks (***) Dean's father lived a lie for decade so adding another seemed natural. It was intriguing to hear how he lied about so much, and yet his children felt that he loved them. It was touching to hear how his children hid his continued bigamy from their mother. (Aug 29)	?	2010	?
173	Lovesong (***) A nightclub singer tells of his life of sex, drugs, music, and the abused boy next door through vignettes and song. He presented his vignettes about the seamier side of life with just the right amount of grit and passion. While the music was good, the lyrics of the songs were mostly prose and consistently poor. (Aug 12)	?	2010	?
174	Mood Swing: A Manhattan Cabaret (***) This is not a cabaret, but rather a performance of obscure pop songs by the opera singer Michael Zegarski. There is a reason the songs are obscure; their lyrics and/or tunes are of little interest. Zegarski has a great voice, but his song selection and his last act in drag left me cold. (Aug 17)	?	2010	?
175	Quality Control (**) Two quality control workers, one conscientious and the other not, fall in love with married men, and must deal with their insecurities. Though their approaches to life differ, their lives parallel each other with different actions leading to identical results. I could not figure out the meaning of recurring mutilating pliers until a fellow audience member provided a plausible interpretation after play. (Aug 10)	?	2010	?

176	While You Lie (**) After breaking up with her boyfriend over her insecurity about her body, a beautiful immigrant resorts to seducing her married boss to get her much-delayed raise. These first three characters work well, but an overly slick plastic surgeon performs unexpected miracles, and the pregnant wife unnecessarily visits him rather than her obstetrician. The play wastes our time as we hear of an unseen nanny who spoils an equally unseen troubled 5-year old daughter, but later is not responsible for quieting the crying child. (Aug 4)	?	2010	?
177	Tales from the Blackjack (**) A croupier presents stories about three of his customers. Only the story about a housewife's descent to whore because of her gambling addiction had the ring of truth. From the very outset, the actor was too antic. (Aug 23)	?	2010	?
178	Kvetch (**) A couple, her mother, and his workmate have dinner together, and spend much of the time presenting soliloquies complaining. Most of the time they complain about their own insecurities, but they also have the others as secret targets. Though "Kvetch" is the title, the lack of personal growth really bothered me. (Aug 26)	?	2010	?
179	The Inconsiderate Aberrations of Billy the Kid (**) A little boy kills his mother and then convinces a pizza delivery girl to stuff herself into his mother's skin to fool his dad. The piece continues its effort to challenge the audience with three feminist angels that act as a SWAT team. Though I appreciated the play's appeal to the spirit of the Fringe with its effort at being bizarre, its songs and script are weak. (Aug 20)	?	2010	?
180	Belt Up's 'The Boy James' (**) A boy lives in his own world with an older protector until a girl tries to seduce him. When his protector tries to leave he desperately tries to prevent it by fighting him. The plot, and the play as whole are minimal. (Aug 27)	?	2010	?

181	Belt Up's 'Quasimodo' (**) A hunchback has the priest of Notre Dame as a father figure, and falls in love with a gypsy woman who feels tenderness towards him but not love. Belt Up chose to have all of the action take place at a table with the audience seated on cushions all around the table, but then did not take into account the layout. Almost all of the play took place with actors at either end of the table, so people at the ends were blocked from seeing anything but the back of an actor the whole time. (Aug 18)	?	2010	?
182	First Love (**) This one-man show adapts Beckett's novel about a withdrawn man who ends up sharing a house with a prostitute. While the acting is top notch, the subdued, stilted delivery is soporific. I did find his description of desperately emptying a room of junk to create space for himself amusing. (Aug 9)	?	2010	?
183	Marion Allen's Number One Hobby (**) This slight one-woman play has a wife talking about her addiction to sweepstakes, and her efforts to give away thousands of Crunchie bars she won. The central tale is amusing, and her dealings with a remorseful drunk driver are poignant. However, without innumerable unnecessary minute-long blackouts, the whole story would take only fifteen minutes. (Aug 9)	?	2010	?
184	Darcy's Dilemma (**) Mr. Darcy, from "Pride and Prejudice" mulls over his past action as he writes a letter to Elizabeth Bennet explaining his supposed mistreatment of Wickham. Though the idea of seeing Austen's world from Darcy's perspective is appealing to me, this show sets him in one room with first a monotonous defensive tone, and then a monotonous apologetic tone. As the woman next to me said, "I do not want to see him portrayed as a whinger." (Aug 8)	?	2010	?

185	Two Brothers and One World Cup (**) Under the guise of re-forming their musical duo, two fellows describe England's performance in each World Cup as well as their own relationship since 1982. Their animated commentary about each of the eight tournaments may entertain some English football fans, but they left me cold. The story of family interactions worked, but it was only a small part of the show. (Aug 16)	?	2010	?
186	Stationary Excess (**) For the half hour, a woman constantly riding an exercise cycle describes the life of her estranged lover, Superman. Her endless exercise, even while applying her make-up certainly conveys her desperation, but there is little more of interest. From the too often used ploy of repeating phrases to the broken down cycle everything seems in service of conveying here desperation, and nothing else. (Aug 23)	?	2010	?
187	Honest (**) A bureaucrat describes the uselessness of his job, and his department. The actor was charming by the story seemed slight. Because the show is performed in the noisy Milne Bar, a few of the audience, including me, often could not hear him. (Aug 18)	?	2010	?
188	The Master and Margarita (**) The Devil visits atheist Moscow in the 1930s, and wrecks havoc on its literary elite while a poet and author languish in an insane asylum. The individual scenes selected from Bulgakov's novel are dramatic, but, without more exposition, many aspects make little sense in the larger context. I found the character of the Devil utterly charming with the close of a dandy and succinct wit. (Aug 8)	?	2010	?

189	Waiting for Apollo (**) In Argus, after Orestes and Electra kill their mother, the queen, they must face the wrath of their people without the aid of their uncle, Menelaus, husband of Helen of Troy. The play lives up to is flier as a "… mish mash of high and low art." Unhappily, the mishmash surrounding the core Euripides play, including tennis playing in the background, contributes nothing but inexplicable chaos. (Aug 6)	?	2010	?
190	She's Dead of Course (**) The current pharmaceutical company driven health system prescribes progressively more dangerous treatments for a woman who has swallowed a fly. This is a one-note play that just takes the nursery rhyme and uses it to criticize the current medical system. Even the commercials on the TV stick to the messeage. (Aug 26)	?	2010	?
191	Lulu (**) This black comedy centers on multi-talented vaudeville woman. The plot is sketchy at best, and most of the characters drew little of my interest. If the woman had not been so talented with hula hoops, ropes, and roller skating, this chaotic play would have earned only one star. (Aug 29)	?	2010	?
192	Hamlet, the End of a Childhood (**) A French boy deals with the arrival of his new father by staging Hamlet in his bedroom. I quickly grew tired of alternately reading the long supertitles, and watching the actor. The use of everyday bedroom objects, like bed pillows as characters, helped bring a little whimsy to the dour play. (Aug 16)	?	2010	?
193	Maff Brown – Looking After Lesal (**) Maff tells of his familial events since his mother fell ill, and died. There were some good sections, including a scene at his mother's funeral where almost all of the mourners were dressed as Death at the deceased's request. Throughout he spoke too fast, often spoke his punch lines as an aside, and failed to pause to allow time for recognition and laughter. (Aug 4)	?	2010	?

194	Martin Creed—Ballet Work No. 1020 (**) Martin Creed, a conceptual artist, plays lead guitar and sings in front of a four-piece band while five women perform simple ballet steps in front of video screen backdrop. As a whole, the performance was coherent, but I found the minimalist slow progressions in the music and lyrics wearing. The same approach in the dance did provide some interesting, albeit quickly predictable, images. (Aug 7)	?	2010	?
195	Swann and Company Present: The Sad, Miserable Tale of Albert Belacqua and his Family of Doomed Neurotics. (**) This farce has a play within a play with a writer/director who is full of himself and a recalcitrant cast trying to perform his adaptation of "Heart of Darkness." From the confusing lack of demarcation of the play's back stage to the excessive volume of the actors to the mundane script, this play fails on many fronts. Surprisingly, for the few moments when they actually settle down to do the Darkness play I found that interesting. (Aug 8)	?	2010	?
196	Tokyo Love Song (*) The actress/director tells a story of a woman dreaming on a crowded Japanese train. She is vivacious, but the presentation is childish, often incohoherent, and amateurish. It is hard to give one star simply because she seems so committed to her vision, and so happy and grateful. (Aug 24)	?	2010	?
197	Kabaret Kantor (*) I think 'Oedipage' is a physical theater rendition of Oedipus. It was after one in the morning, I had a headache, and most of the performance was silent except for an occasional cryptic remark by a woman in a huge dress. It was just too avant-garde for me at that moment. (Aug 23)	?	2010	?

198	And Another Observation (*) The play constantly asks the audience what they notice when presented with simultaneous videos, overhead projections, speeches, and movements. While the question is initially of interest, the one-note play continues to ask throughout the performance. Such questions are easy to answer and soon boring, while a much more interesting question would be why we choose to notice some things and not others. (Aug 14)	?	2010	?
199	Gutted. A Revenger's Musical (*) A woman marries a man so that she can take revenge on his family for killing her parents. Despite the best efforts of the cast, the lyrics and script made this farce so unoriginal and ill conceived that many walked out in the middle. Who would guess that a swordfish used in a swordfight could be humorless, or that its use as murder weapon would be nothing more than expected? (Aug 7)	?	2010	?
200	When the Sex is Gone (*) With a synthesizer-playing accompanist, a hermaphrodite alternately sings and rants about his plight. The lyrics are simple, raunchy, and uninspired, and the music is repetitive and melody free. While many of his diatribes have clever lines, he yells them so loudly and quickly that most are unintelligible. (Aug 6)	?	2010	?
1	My Grandfather's Great War (*****) Cameron Stewart portrays the events from his grandfather's memoir/diary about serving as an officer in World War I. While relying on the grandfather's text for much of the script, Cameron occasionally adds his own views on his grandfather and war. He achieves a perfect blend of recitation, dramatic interpretation, reminiscing, and political commentary. (Aug 10)	?	2009	?

2	Cocorico (*****) An inspired French mime and a marvelous piano/trumpet playing contortionist combine to provide a splendidly varied show. From a piano that rolls back and forth while being played, to a frustrated effort to see some fireworks, to the wonderful variations on a shadow goose there is both clever and perfectly performed. A mimed bike rider on speed, a pianist ignoring a mime crawling all over him and his piano, a man in a suitcase—so many fantastic, memorable moments! (Aug 20)	?	2009	?
3	Words with A.L. Kennedy (*****) The writer A.L. Kennedy sets about demonstrating how powerful words are. Whether describing her own life as an award-winning author, or providing a debate style argument for the importance of words she always has wit and poignancy. Her final impassioned speech about using words for good is very well crafted, and powerful. (Aug 29)	?	2009	?
4	Orphans (*****) In an unsafe London neighborhood, a husband and wife must deal with her brother's bloody encounter with a Pakistani. I found quite absorbing both the moral ambiguity, and the three distinct styles of speech of the characters, particularly the wife's omission of key words. I think it fair to note that one of my companions agreed with me, while a director thought it "rubbish". (Aug 8)	?	2009	?
5	Zeitgeist (*****) An Australian company provides seven very different dance pieces. From babies maturing to kimono-clad men, I cannot remember a dance performance with such successful diversity. Be forewarned that the front center section does get showered with a few stray projectiles. (Aug 14)	?	2009	?

6	The Blues Brothers – Live (*****) Elwood, Jake, Cab Calloway, three female singers, and a septet start out with the Theme from Peter Gunn, and deliver a thoroughly entertaining show of rock and roll, blues, and jazz. Unlike last year, every singer nailed their song, and the hour flew by. Besides the singers, I could not help but notice the pure joy of the female drummer. If you sit in the front row, expect to join in the dancing, but with that music you'll want to get up and dance anyway! (Aug 5 & Aug 31!)	?	2009	?
7	The Noise Next Door: OtherWorld (*****) The Earth has been destroyed, an improv troupe creates a new world based on audience suggestion The premise provides a great starting point for the audience to provide interesting constraints for a variety of bizarre scenarios. Not only did the company provide funny responses, but they adroitly handled suggestions that were beyond their scope. (Aug 22)	?	2009	?
8	Accidental Nostalgia (*****) Years later, an odd young woman returns to her hometown after she was suspected of killing her father. Somehow, from the moment the actress starts to speak her husky, quirky voice defined the play. She is the soul of this bizarre mix of video, mini-cams, songs, and dances with oversized techies. We came out of the show not knowing whether to embrace it, or reject it, and, in the end, she won me over. (Aug 11)	?	2009	?
9	Art (*****) A long friendship between an is strained when one buys an almost completely white painting for a fortune. While this starts out as discussion of the merits of conceptual art, it moves seamlessly into a deeper exploration of the basis of friendship. The final disposition of the painting has some wonderful twists. (Aug 18)	?	2009	?

10	Out of the Blue (*****) For four years, these Oxford men have consistently provided the best a cappella I've seen here. They have the mix of songs, the voices, and the moves that cannot be beat. Since I saw them the last night, they were dressed in kilts and full of shenanigans, while the audience, filled with returnees, went wild. (Aug 31)	?	2009	?
11	Billy Budd (*****) On an early 19th century man-of-war, the preternatural goodness of a new conscript runs afoul of the ship's sadistic master of arms. I was astonished that this young cast could carry off this Melville classic. As with movie, the final disposition brought tears to my eyes. (Aug 21)	?	2009	?
12	Midsummer (a play with songs) (*****) After a one-night stand, the lives of a divorce lawyer and a minor Edinburgh criminal unexpectedly cross again after each suffer a setback, and they take a wild run through Edinburgh. This uses a mix of well-performed songs, monologues, and a few dialogues to enliven mostly humorous vignettes covering sex to wedding decorum to reconciliation with a lost son. The many references to locations in Edinburgh added a sense of place that was surprisingly evocative. (Aug 6)	?	2009	?
13	Little Gem (*****) In Dublin, three generations of women provide rotating monologues that deal with boyfriends, children, and loss. While the description may sound trite, the play works well because each of the three actresses has a unique style and tale. From the young woman's slangy bar date, to the abandoned wife's first dance with a hirsute fellow, to the grandmother's tentative bout with a dildo, the play is filled with memorable moments. (Aug 6)	?	2009	?

14	Lilly Through the Dark (*****) After her father dies, a young girl, played as a puppet, tries to find him in the netherworld. The fine acting, character delineation, set, and story line all make this a touching fairy tale. The imaginative multi-purpose set composed of books, and the simply designed articulated Lilly combined to make it was easy to forget that Lilly was only a fixed expression puppet instead of a real little girl. (Aug 15)	?	2009	?
15	Brocante Sonore: The Mechanicians (*****) Eleven men use all manner of objects to create lively music. While I expected the large PVC pipes and hanging bars of steel, I was amazed at their use of garden hoses, inflated 2-liter plastic bottles, tuneful drilling, grinding pots, and violin bows on nails pounded into boxes. Their game of musical chairs had a wonderful second meaning as each different chair was removed the loser transformed it into a flute, a chime, or a xylophone. (Aug 26)	?	2009	?
16	Adam Hills: Inflatable (*****) Adam interacts with the front row, and tells tales from his life as a comedian. Whether describing passing through a metal detector at the 2008 Chinese Paralympics, or talking about the unifying nature of Bon Jovi songs in a Belgian TV studio, Adam has a life affirming way about him that few can match. The very title of the show has to do with how we can go through life interacting with other people so that they grow. It turned out that my friend and I were subject of some his attention, as he, unlike my wife, had trouble understanding how an old married man could have a warm, platonic friendship with a pretty young actress. (Aug 30)	?	2009	?

17	Sylvia Plath – Three Women, The First Revival (*****) A contented mother, a woman suffering from a miscarriage, and a student with an unwanted pregnancy, provide rotating monologues on the experience of pregnancy and its aftermath. Because the first monologue of each woman was low key, I feared that the play would reflect only Plath's depression. Thankfully, the mother brightens, and the lyricism of the prose asserts itself. (Aug 10)	?	2009	?
18	Woody Sez (*****) The actor/musician David Lutken, with three other musicians, uses words and songs to follow the life of the folksinger Woody Guthrie. The show perfectly integrates Guthrie's personal life with descriptions of the life of the poor Americans during the Depression, and his contemporaneous songs. As a Californian, I was particularly saddened by the tales of destitute Dust Bowl farmers trying to find work picking crops in California. (Aug 29)	?	2009	?
19	The Timekeepers (*****) In a concentration camp, as a Jewish watch repairman reluctantly teaches a gay man his craft they develop a friendship. Surprisingly, this play is not centered on mistreatment, but rather on the many ways one man can nurture friendship in another. After running for seven years in Israel, the cast is pitch perfect (even in an opera), and the script tight and compelling. (Aug 22)	?	2009	?
20	A Night of Comedy for Ray – Hosted by Michael McIntyre (*****) Michael McIntyre emceed 17 comedians in the benefit for the daughter of the late techie, Ray Cowper. It is the compere that either makes, or breaks these types of shows, and McIntyre was brilliant. Though only Adam Hill made use of his own personal experiences with Ray in his act, except for Rich Hall's lame foul mouthed act in which he dismissed Ray, the rest of the comedians were very good. (Aug 23)	?	2009	?

21	Lotte's Gift (*****) Australian classical guitarist, Karin Schaupp, describes the life of her German grandmother, Lotte. Lotte was a beautiful singer who married her pianist in World War II when she thought the love of her life had died on the Eastern Front. This rises above other monologues because Schaupp uses her artistry on the guitar to reflect Lotte's love of music throughout her life. (Aug 27)	?	2009	?
22	Bane (*****) An actor, with an electric guitar accompanist, plays Bruce Bane, a film noir action detective. From providing the opening title sequence of the movie, to playing the prototypical hard boiled Bane dodging poison darts, to the closing ad for the sequel, the actor masters every aspect of this parody. Instead of going for known movie themes, the guitarist wisely provides his own strong soundtrack to all of the action. (Aug 30)	?	2009	?
23	Chronicles of Long Kesh (*****) We follow the lives of a three IRA men, two Loyalists, and a guard within Northern Ireland's Long Kesh/The Maze prison. The play focuses on the IRA men, as they sing excerpts Motown and later rock tunes to maintain their morale and show their defiance. How can I forget Oscar "furnishing" his cell with his own excrement? (Aug 19)	?	2009	?
24	Mind Out (*****) Each of five actors moves only when commanded by one of the other actors, always prefacing the command with only "You..". The play wisely introduces the audience to the concept with fixed master-slave relationships, but then starts to get to be really fun when the associations begin to change. One particularly memorable scene has one actor controlling two people at once as they alternately enter and leave while searching for something. (Aug 25)	?	2009	?

25	Land Without Words (*****) A woman visiting Afghanistan tries to use art to express her impressions of the country. While describing life in the dirty, poor land, the actress works with clay, smears dirt on herself, and douses herself with water. Maybe because it was the first play of the day, and I was fresh, but her efforts to become one with the land seemed perfect to me. (Aug 24)	?	2009	?
26	Funny (*****) Based on revealed government documents, the play has a British interrogator train with a comedian so that he can use comedy to break through terrorist prisoner's interrogation training. The power of this play derives from alternate turns of comedy, including clowning, followed by desperation as the disciplined military man hurries to develop a technique that may save three hostages' lives. Add to this the conflict between the comedian and the interrogators harsh partner, and you have a taut play that makes you laugh, and then look on aghast. (Aug 25)	?	2009	?
27	Greatest Bubble Show on Earth (*****) In this children's show, a fellow invites kids to join him as he makes bubbles that vary in size from huge that he makes with a hula hoop to foam emerging from a horn. To retain the children's interest, he keeps the show moving fast with a variety of stunts, including shooting himself with a water pistol. I gave this five stars based on the fact that all of the children stayed interested for the whole fifty minutes. (Aug 31)	?	2009	?
28	Success Story (****) At the end of a long day of repetitive interviews, the writer/director of an Academy Award nominated picture is confronted by his ex-lover who accuses him of using her life as the basis for the story. I never lost interest as the many layers of deceit dwarf the obvious fabrications of the interviews. I cannot forget the wonderful range of silent facial expressions that the ex-lover, played by Felicity Wren, used during one taut exchange. (Aug 9)	?	2009	?

29	Precious Little Talent (****) After a couple of years of separation, a 23-year old English woman visits her father, and discovers that he has a full time 19-year old American aide. The growth of the relationship between woman and aide, and the revelations about the father's illness proceed complement each other as they share the same graceful pace. A highlight is how the two young people interpret their first encounter so differently; he sees it as a whirlwind romantic encounter with magical music while she sees it as an unwelcome intrusion by a brash American. (Aug 15)	?	2009	?
30	Doctor Whom? My Search for Samuel Johnson (****) David Benson follows the life of Dr. Samuel Johnson with particular focus on the creation of the first dictionary of English. Like Johnson's range of interests, this play careens from excerpts from Boswell to Powerpoint pages of the dictionary to querying the audience. While the style may reflect Johnson's diversity, the presentations lack of organization detracts from its power. (Aug 28)	?	2009	?
31	Richard Herring – Hitler Moustache (****) Herring uses his newly acquired toothbrush moustache as a starting point for discussing racism. Though there were funny moments, I was surprised, and pleased, how much of the time Herring spent seriously discussing the many aspects of racism. I particularly liked how he explored the artificial categories of racists, and his exhortation to vote in order to deflate the BNP. (Aug 27)	?	2009	?

32	Djupid (The Deep) (****) We follow the day of a big, young Scottish man as he leaves his parent's home to return to his mates on board a 150-ton fishing ship. The large, wrinkled, middle-aged actor embodied the young man as if the character had aged from years of life on the sea. At the beginning, his heavy accent was almost indecipherable, and his volume too unwaveringly strong, but after a short while his brogue became clear and the story more varied as he started to describe the comfortable walk to the ship, his cramped, sweaty cabin, and his dreams. (Aug 13)	?	2009	?
33	Don't Forget to Breathe (****) At a remote railway station a gregarious young woman tries to draw out an unhappy law clerk. Her mystery, warmth, and acceptance are a perfect combination to enchant the fellow. I was surprised to find out that the playwright was the clerk because woman's observations and advice seemed so keen. (Aug 17)	?	2009	?
34	Dead Cat Bounce (****) This four man band returns with its unique blend of witty songs, and short sketches. The music is well played rock and the lyrics catchy and funny. While I laughed often, nothing in particular is memorable. (Aug 21)	?	2009	?
35	Jane Austen's Guide to Pornography (****) A writer known for his graphic, gay, comedies has writers block, and seeks help from Jane Austen to produce something other than a story composed of one-liners about gay sex. The mix of 19th century scenes and 21st century scenes while the writer and Jane collaborated proved winning as the two sexual cultures began to overlap. Though an over-forceful bar scene kiss contrasts nicely with a final kiss of love, I do wish that the playwright had not chosen a stereotypical coupling of an older man with a young man. (Aug 16)	?	2009	?

36	Circa (****) Four men and three women perform gymnastic dances. From the beginning, the men consistently demonstrate tremendous strength and balance. Later, the women started to provide interesting dances involving balance and grace. In one case, a woman in stiletto heels walks over many parts of a man's body has he goes through many contortions. (Aug 8)	?	2009	?
37	Stand Up for Freedom II (****) Mark Bishop was the compere for five comedians. Unlike the first Amnesty International show, these comedians seem to tailor their show to the older audience. As in the first show, I marveled at how the two women signers accepted with such good nature, the comedians testing them with crude phrases or unusual concepts. (Aug. 19)	?	2009	?
38	Kit and the Widow: All That Twitters (****) Continuing a more than 25-year tradition, the singer and pianist return to Fringe with their topical ditties. This is smooth, professional cabaret with each song well written and performed at a high level. I only gave them four stars because, as an American, some of their British cultural references were lost on me. (Aug 17)	?	2009	?
39	Fascinating Aida: 25th Anniversary Tour (****) Three women provide topical ditties. This is the female version of Kit and the Widow, with a tradition of top quality song writing, easy banter, and just plain fun. A friend pointed out that this act makes the older Brits so comfortable that they will laugh at some racy stuff that would offend them if performed by a younger group. (Aug 19)	?	2009	?
40	6.0: How Heap and Pebble Took on the World and Won (****) As global warming takes its toll, two ice dancers decide to move from the ice to "gliding" on a wooden floor. The pair does a pitch perfect job of making the absurd transfer as we see them training on the real wooden floor, and conducting interviews with the press. Their actual final performance of skating on the wood is surprisingly effective. (Aug 11)	?	2009	?

41	Crush (****) After seven years of marriage, a wife discovers that her husband has a crush on a younger woman on Facebook. Both her thoughts on regaining her figure, and his efforts to re-focus on the wife he loves ring with truth. The big problem with the script is that the final plot "twists" do not depend on the characters' actions so much as on chance, which makes the playwright all too visible. (Aug 20)	?	2009	?
42	Rat Pack – Live! (****) Backed by a eleven piece band and three female vocalists, three young fellows sing the songs of Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, and Sammy Davis Jr. While Dean did drink, and Sammy did dance a little bit, these are good singers first, and only rough imitators second. The band did an outstanding job, particularly when Frank called for them to really hit it. (Aug 31)	?	2009	?
43	Year of the Horse (****) Tam Dean Burn provides brief narrations for 52 recent political cartoons drawn by the late Harry Horse. I was impressed with diversity, power, and level of detail that Horse produced on a weekly basis. Burn is superfluous, and more of a distraction from the slides. (Aug 29)	?	2009	?
44	Kursk (****) A hunter killer submarine leaves port on a mission that takes it to the North Pole, and then, on a surveillance task, it witness the August 2000 onboard explosion and sinking of the Soviet submarine Kursk. The show takes place as the audience is free to roam among the actors in a huge mock-up of parts of the British submarine. While the performance does a fine job of conveying the various aspects of life on board a modern submarine, I found the most intense part was when the entire set went completely dark, and we were treated the experience of the few Russian survivors of the explosion hearing only slowly dripping water while they wait for their death at the bottom of the sea. (Aug 26)	?	2009	?

45	The Penny Dreadfuls Present..The Never Man (****) A policeman, a little boy, and an amnesiac combine forces to defeat a trio of henchmen of a mysterious billionaire on his newly opened island amusement park, Beefland. From a seven foot little boy to an assassin who specializes in pushing people to their death, the trio of comedians create six characters that produce a perfectly silly satire of spy adventure movies. On this night, after a particularly violent scrum it appeared that two of the actors really had it in for each other, though in a playful way. (Aug 25)	?	2009	?
46	Certain Dark Things (****) A young Basque man comes of age politically and sexually during Franco's repression and suffers the consequences. As a cellist plays, the play quickly changes from scene to scene as the placement of a single chair indicates the wide range of settings. Though the settings provide a clear vision of the turmoil and tension of the times, I was left to guess why he was punished. (Aug 19)	?	2009	?
47	Jason Byrne : The Byrne Supremacy at Assembly (****) Jason mixes stories from his lazy eyed childhood and home life with audience interactions. This is the third time I have seen Jason, and I continue to laugh at most of the things he says, and tries. However, this time I became more aware of how dependent he is on ridiculing the audience and participants on the stage. For example, during a "saw a man in half" stunt using two men selected (not volunteers) from the audience, he spent most of the time criticizing the men as they dealt with a cheesy corrugated box that he knew was designed to make their tasks needlessly difficult. (Aug 7)	?	2009	?

48	Stefan Golaszewski is a Widower (****) In 2051, an award winning TV actor recounts his wondrous loving relationship with his wife and baby, and how it changed in an instant. Stefan's sunny clearness and evocative metaphors exude the depth of his joy of sharing life with his wife. Most memorable for its novel intimacy is his story about their shared secret language of subtle touching to indicate that some person at a dinner party is full of it. (Aug 6)	?	2009	?
49	The Devoured (****) In a Jewish concentration camp, a father, played by Steve Lambert, recounts his family's story from German bombing to gas showers and incinerators. The play is relentless, starting with an exhausting, repetitive run in place, through the public humiliation of the man's mother by an SS officer, to his final running lament on cowardice. The play is a marathon for Lambert and the audience, with a steady rhythm of high energy repetition followed by short passages of slower, tender exposition, that, by the end, proved too exhausting for me. (Aug 5)	?	2009	?
50	Internal (****) The audience of five meet five actors, and go off as couples into separate booths to have short, intimate conversations. What follows must be left to those who are willing to try interactive theater. As a married man, I found my re-immersion into the romance of dating a pleasant experience, though quite thought provoking—Thank you, Sophie. (Aug 8)	?	2009	?
51	The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie (****) In the 1930s, a strong-willed, flamboyant teacher at a conservative girl's school tries to enculturate a small band of girls into her liberal philosophy. The play provides many subplots to explore the facets of cultural conflict, both interpersonal and professional. While all of the rest of the characters seemed real, Jean, with her constant posing and facial contortions, is not a person, but a caricature of Margaret Thatcher combined with Isadora Duncan. (Aug 7)	?	2009	?

52	I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change (****) The musical comedy provides vignettes about romantic relationships from first dates to widowers searching for mates at funerals. No voice disappointed me, and all but title song had both good music and good lyrics. I was surprised with how well a keyboard and violin provided quite satisfying accompaniment. (Aug 9)	?	2009	?
53	Bedtime Stories (****) The bed on stage is the focus of ten sketches. From a scene about snooze buttons to a pillow fight started by an ignored wife to a boy thought caught masturbating, I was most impressed by the diversity of subjects. There wasn't a bad sketch in the lot. (Aug 28)	?	2009	?
54	Up and Over It! An Irish Dance Spectacular (****) Irish dancers Suzanne Cleary and Peter Harding literally take off straightjackets to apply the techniques of barrel dancing to a variety of musical forms. They integrate their quick moves into ballet, hip-hop, and jazz dance, and even have table slapping duet. Their adaptations were consistently interesting, but their homemade videos detract from the experience, albeit the videos did give them time to rest and change costumes. (Aug 31)	?	2009	?
55	Austen's Women (****) For each of her thirteen fictional women, Jane Austen sketches their descriptions, and then assumes their roles for excerpts from her books. The writer/performer carefully wrote using only Austen's words to provide both an overall theme of the plight of 19th century women as well as concise illustrative examples. While I am steeped in Austen theatrics, others who had read Austen could derive more pleasure from the play. (Aug 22)	?	2009	?

56	Been So Long (****) This musical centers on two women who visit a familiar bar to catch-up, but find themselves becoming involved with the bartender, a womanizer, and a deluded rapper. From first to last, all the music and voices are great, but the lyrics of most of ballads are uninspiring. I was particularly impressed in how the actor who played the womanizer could exude that charismatic mix of style, charm, and masculinity. (Aug 8)	?	2009	?
57	The Overcoat (****) This almost completely mute physical theater piece has an office worker striving to earn an overcoat so that he can win the heart of a woman he works with. Whether in the huge, frantic office, or his cramped bedroom with a live portrait of his parents looking on, all of the performances are top notch. I wish that the office manager's orders had been in English so that I could better understand the leads shortcomings and successes. (Aug 19)	?	2009	?
58	Fucked (****) Working back through time, a lap dancer tells of the aftermath of each of her first sexual experience with each of her boyfriends. While many shows that tamper with chronology do not work for me, the clear effect to cause pattern worked well here. My young companion said that she could identify with many of the woman's dating situations. (Aug 10)	?	2009	?
59	Beachy Head (****) After accidentally filming a man committing suicide off a cliff, a documentary film crew interviews both his wife as she tries to understand her husband's act, and the medical examiner for the clinical facts. The staging uses video well, and provides a nice pace as we cycle through following the trail with the wife and husband, hearing facts from the doctor, and ethical discussions by the filmmakers. In the end though, the husband still seemed elusive. (Aug 11)	?	2009	?

60	The Virginia Monologues – Why it's great to be old (****) Virginia Ironside, an "Agony Auntie", makes wry observations on her life now that she is 65. While she did not ignore the drawbacks, she concentrated on the more subtle advantages of being older like realizing that she feels safer because hoodlums will now smile back at her. It did bother me that she was happy that sex and travel were behind her. (Aug 9)	?	2009	?
61	The Red Room (****) This series of dances portrays the story of a medieval duke who tried to boost morale during a plague by inviting his healthy men to a wild party, complete with jester. I found it hard to ignore the wizened choreographer/duke as he ruled the party whilst showing off his own little dance moves. When he leaves the action, the dancing often seemed to become monotonous. (Aug 8)	?	2009	?
62	The Island (****) Two men who have shared a cell in a in South African island prison prepare to present the play "Antigone" while reviewing their incarceration. I felt that each aspect portrayed was compelling. The final speech by Antigone was a great inditement of a government overreaching human rights. (Aug 21)	?	2009	?
63	Don Carlos (****) The crown prince and queen of Spain conspire to save Flanders from the harsh wrath of their king. It was intriguing how Don Carlos' friend, Posa, manipulated the many vested interests to best help his friend and promote human rights in Flanders. The modern setting, with cell phones and ear buds, did not suit a story of kings and their power. (Aug 22)	?	2009	?

64	The List Operators (****) Two fellows create lists of all sorts of things as well as few other routines. They start with a list of countries that the audience thinks it is OK to be "racist" about, and finish with the audience learning to speak Australian by waving ping pong paddles labeled with four words. One memorable routine has Matt act as a shopkeeper that repeatedly responds to a customer's questions in a seemingly infinite different variations on pronouncing "hello". (Aug 30)	?	2009	?
65	F.L.O.W. (****) Neel de Jong uses performance art to create a new world each day. On this particular day she silently rearranged branches and twigs in three piles on the stage for 15 minutes, and then spoke quietly about life for another 10 or so minutes. While on another day I might have dismissed this as arty dreck, after a day of bad drama her serene performance soothed and re-invigorated me. (Aug 23)	?	2009	?
66	Shakespeare for Breakfast: A Midsummer Night's Scream (****) The five actors use much of the plot of Midsummer's Night Dream, but little of the language. In the past, this show relied on clever excerpts from other Shakespeare plays for its humor, but this time it relied more on topical references. Nonetheless, the audience laughed throughout at the good natured fun. (Aug 26)	?	2009	?
67	In Search of Miss Landmine (****) This was a combination of lecture on the history of landmines, and a true story following the life of a landmine victim. The slow, careful pronunciations by three Italian actresses provided a grace that added much to the presentation. I wish that instead of video graphics for the beauty contest, they would provided more real photos. (Aug 18)	?	2009	?

68	Sound & Fury's Sherlock Holmes and the Saline Solution (****) Three Americans provide a lighthearted satire of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's stories. The trio clearly enjoyed making fun of their own mistakes as much as they did Doyle's style. With Professor Moriarty out to sabotage the tea dependent English, this is nothing more than good-hearted fluff, but I loved it. (Aug 27)	?	2009	?
69	The Secret Life of Robert Burns (****) This two-part program had a medical research present a lecture on the life of Robert Burns, followed by a pair of other researchers singing ditties associated with Burns and Scotland. After so many plays, the lecture, complete with well-chosen slides, was a welcome change. He provided a fine selection of excerpts of Burns' work as well as solid evidence debunking many of the myths about Burns being an alcoholic wastrel. (Aug 20)	?	2009	?
70	The Shadow Orchestra (****) A magician/musician uses a video backdrop in many novel ways. When in front of the screen, he produces a prodigious number of items from nowhere, while when he is behind it we see chairs and instruments come alive. While I could discern how his trick cymbals worked, his manipulation of reappearing glass balls impressed me. (Aug 27)	?	2009	?
71	Late Night Impro Fight (****) Six actors from a variety of shows got together for an improve competition judged by the applause from the audience. The quality of improvisation was pretty high, with all earning at least four out five ratings from the audience. My companion revealed her Zimbabwe childhood when she suggested "hippopotamus guts" for a skit on solving famine. (Aug 31)	?	2009	?

72	Morecambe (****) Bob Golding portrays the well loved British comic Eric Morecambe, telling of his life from childhood joker to his third and fatal heart attack. Golding skillfully weaves in Morecambe's personal life with excerpts from his many famous and loved routines. As an American, I had never heard of Morecambe and would have to give this four starts, but Golding received a standing ovation from the audience who clearly loved the homage. (Aug 31)	?	2009	?
73	Jazz A Cappella – The Oxford Gargoyles (****) Five men and five women sing a variety of cool jazz songs while doing a little choreography. The songs are well chosen, and we all had fun as their stilted leader emerged as a star. As with last year, when given the lead the two high-register female singers were often drowned out by the background singers. (Aug 30)	?	2009	?
74	Searching for Eden: The Diaries of Adam and Eve (***) Eve wakes on her first day, delighting in Eden, but then must contend with a man that would rather have things as they were before she arrived. Whether Eve is fumbling for words to name things, or Adam is hiding in a tree from the new "beast", a wonderful sense of innocence pervades this play. While I will admit that the total nudity of the beautiful Eve was sometimes distracting, her airy movements and lack of self-consciousness made a critical contribution to the theme of innocence in Eden that I can still feel days later. (Aug 5)	?	2009	?
75	The Shadow Within (***) A young priest hears an ominous confession, and later the same day is visited by his ex-lover who is now a psychologist. While the mystery side of the story has a nice twist, the romantic side seems pedestrian. The final scene is just annoying to the audience. (Aug 24)	?	2009	?
76	Crave (***) Four characters in a café talk and share their inner thoughts with the audience. There are many times that the audience does not know to whom the characters are speaking—themselves or one of the others. The sum of the chaos worked for me on that day. (Aug 26)	?	2009	?

77	Pythonesque (***) Four actors portray the six members of Monty Python as we follow the group from their college days through their TV shows and movies. The actors do reasonable impressions of the men as they perform several sketches in the styles of the Python's most memorable sketches. Because of copyright infringement issues, the group could only do new sketches that paled in comparison to the originals. (Aug 29)	?	2009	?
78	The Trial (***) As Kafka's protagonist is shuffled through his legal system so too is the audience moved around the room as the play takes place. The dark and smoky setting provides the right amount of oppression, but I had trouble hearing much of what was said. I found that I spent much of my time analyzing the format, instead of working to find place from which to hear better. (Aug 28)	?	2009	?
79	Matinee (***) A troupe of mimes present several send-ups of movies such as "Superman", "Pink Panther", and the Kung Fu genre. There were some fine miming and inspired moments, particularly in the Superman piece. It will be long time before I forget short Kung Fu master created by the actor kneeling and placing his knees in tennis shoes as he jumps up and does the classic midair kicks. (Aug 21)	?	2009	?
80	The State We're In (***) Based on Brian Haw who has pitched a tent in front of Parliament for the last six years, we learn about a fictional Tom Price and his cause through the interactions of Tom, his wife, his reporter friend, and a MP. From the oft choked up idealist Tom, to the smooth talking MP, all of the acting seems spot on. While the play provides good breadth and context, I was left wondering about how Tom/Brian became such an idealist. (Aug 16)	?	2009	?
81	David Leddy's 'Susurrus' With and ipod and headphones, I walked to different set points in the Botanic Garden listening to the opera 'Midsummer Night Dream' and a tale of the fall from grace of it lead opera singer. The story was interesting enough, but the real enjoyment comes from wandering in the park. I am sure of this because the first time I attempted this experience, I discarded the headphones, and spent my time exploring the gardens with a new friend. (Aug 30)	?	2009	?

82	Merman on Broadway! (***) Dominic Mattos impersonates Ethel Merman and gives a little background for most of the songs he sings. I was surprised at how well Mattos matched Merman's range and volume. I did not like that he chose to sing medleys of many of her hits, while choosing to sing less known songs in their entirety. (Aug 31)	?	2009	?
83	Light Bites (***) Like "Tasty Treats," this is three short plays presented in thirty minutes. In the first, an artist bargains with an art dealer, in the next a widower deals with his wife, and the last has the police dealing with a suspect who speaks in Shakespearean language much of the time. Each little play worked pretty well and felt complete. (Aug 31)	?	2009	?
84	After Magritte (***) A family at home must deal with an unexpected investigation by the police. This whole play is just an excuse to provide scenes from Magritte's paintings. While I did recognize the allusion to a man with a bowler, and the policeman in the window, I would have enjoyed it more if I had studied Magritte's works beforehand. (Aug 26)	?	2009	?
85	The 14th Tale (***) A man presents a (autobiographical?) monologue about his prankster childhood in Nigeria, and new life in England. Despite finding many parts interesting, I found myself falling asleep on the warm afternoon. He told an inspired tale of squirting stinging toothpaste on strategic places on a sleeping bully so that when he awoke each of his attempts to wipe his eyes would only compound his torment. (Aug 25)	?	2009	?
86	And All the Children Cried (***) Two women in prison for killing children, share their stories of child abuse. The story of the lead works well as it provides a twist that runs counter to the belief that abused children go on to abuse their own children. The second women's story had less time, and seemed less compelling. (Aug 22)	?	2009	?

87	Controlled Falling Project (***) Under the direction of a grunting lab coated scientist, three silent gymnasts perform various acts of balance and strength. The gymnasts are amply skilled, but the music is overload and the scientist wastes time with his dolls and incoherent scribbling on the floor mat. The repeated, reinforcing jumps on the seesaw was the most memorable part of the act for me. (Aug 14)	?	2009	?
88	Tasty Treats (***) This a collection of six short plays presented in an hour. They vary from a man visiting his aging barber over the years, to two skydivers being reincarnated as praying mantises. The acting is fine, and none are overlong. (Aug 14)	?	2009	?
89	Adam, Jason, and Friends (***) Adam Hills and Jason Byrne compere five other comedy acts. While the comedy acts were better than average, they paled in comparison to the interaction of Adam and Jason. It will be hard to forget Jason's section yelling like drunkards while the audience on Adam's side of the stage yelled "huzzah" when beckoned. (Aug 13)	?	2009	?
90	Zemblanity (***) A prim, deadpan ringmaster, Hans, tries to control four antic clowns as he woos the top half of a mannequin. Somehow, Hans provides a perfect counterbalance to the clowns to keep this zany without being just silly. The highlights were his indignant efforts to follow a reappearing spotlight, and his aplomb driving a children's car. (Aug 23)	?	2009	?
91	Shade Ain't Right (***) In a Prohibition cabaret, a dark Black chorus girl is jealous of a new light-skinned Black girl getting the headliner spot. The interactions of the two Black women work well, but the Southern hayseed White chorus girl seemed too naïve. This half hour play lays the groundwork for a fine play exploring intra-racial bigotry, but ends before there are any satisfying explorations. (Aug 15)	?	2009	?

92	Bach for Breakfast (***) A flutist and pianist played five sonatas from J.S. Bach and his contemporaries. Both artists performed well, and the tea and scone after were welcome. It was a nice way to start a day, but nothing extraordinary. (Aug 16)	?	2009	?
93	Showstopper! : the improvised musical (***) The company creates a musical based on an initial setting provided by the audience and a guest, and from there on mostly under the guidance of the narrator. The concept is fun, and there were a few inspired moments. However, throughout the play I could feel the heavy hand of the narrator, and I was repeatedly reminded that only three stars the large company had decent improvisation skills. (Aug 24)	?	2009	?
94	Origins by Steven Canny and John Nicholson (***) Starting with his grandfather, the company portrays significant aspects of the family of Charles Darwin. As its title suggests, the play investigates the diverse elements that led to Darwin finally boarding the H.M.S. Beagle. I was a bit disheartened when the play ended with him starting his trip instead of continuing through his life. (Aug 26)	?	2009	?
95	Elvis Still My Heart (***) In 1970 London, a shy, stilted, woman with a secret love of Elvis reluctantly rents a room to two outgoing women. The story works well to provide opportunities for dances set both Elvis and the rock music of the late 1960s. Both the big brash roomer who unlocks the landlady's secret, and the gentler Welsh roomer combine nicely to accept and encourage her. (Aug 12)	?	2009	?

96	Tap & Chat with Lionel Blair (***) The choreographer/dancer from the postwar English stage and TV tells stories from his life with only an occasional effort at dancing. The highlight of his life for both him and me was a video clip of him dancing with Sammy Davis Jr. at a Royal Command Performance. Because the older, British audience recognized many more of British celebrities in his stories than I did, I am sure they would have given this show at least four stars. (Aug 23)	?	2009	?
97	Play On Words (***) A director, an actor, and technician try to retrace what happened to the director's girlfriend. As the title suggests, the play is full of sometime clever word play, but seems to do it at the expense of clarifying the plot. While I regret that I saw the play after very little sleep, others in the audience also found the plot confusing. (Aug 12)	?	2009	?
98	My Life with the Dogs(***) A four year old Moscow boys runs away from his drunken mother, and joins with a pack of three dogs. The 40-year old actor conveyed the wide-eyed innocence of the boy perfectly, and the rest of the cast proved able canines and nemeses. After the boy shares a cigarette with the dogs during their initial encounter, I remained confused as to whether I was watching an allegory, or not. (Aug 5)	?	2009	?
99	Go to Gaza, Drink the Sea (***) We see the plight of the normal Gaza residents during the Israeli incursion through the eyes of a young Palestinian and a BBC reporter. The play mixes super titled songs, dance, drama, and Aljazeera broadcasts to tell the story of the suffering Gazans. While the reality is compelling, the play itself has serious flaws in many areas, from the set composed of piles of shoes that too readily harkens to the Holocaust Museum's room of shoes, to the misplaced English tunneler character, and finally to the ill conceived dance. (Aug 13)	?	2009	?

100	The Interminable Suicide of Gregory Church by Daniel Kitson (***) The humorist recounts a tale of spending three years piecing together another man's life from the 33,000 letters that he left behind after his purported suicide. Daniel has crafted an ingenious series of wry excerpts to explore how one could flesh out diverse aspects of person's life from such records. While I laughed at many of his observations, I found myself (and some others) dozing as the story gently meandered without any perceptible destination. (Aug 6)	?	2009	?
101	Becoming Marilyn (***) Marilyn Monroe talks about her life, and intermixes some of her songs as she goes. Not surprisingly, the actress does not quite look like Marilyn, but her presentation is pitch perfect. The problem with the play is that it dissects all the bad events of her life, while only alluding to her triumphs. (Aug 7)	?	2009	?
102	The Jewish Chronicles (***) A middle aged Jew uses his own songs to tell of his life growing up and participating in various Jewish life events. His songs tell extended stories, and have nice tunes. He provides a nice slice of Jewish culture, but there is nothing thought provoking here. (Aug 23)	?	2009	?
103	Catwalk Confidential (***) The 1970s fashion model, Robyn Peterson, tells of her modeling career rising from a 16-year old runaway from Miami to become a top model in Paris married to her photographer. She certainly had an interesting ten years, including having her stilettos nailed to board for a shoot in the Sahara. She is still working on remembering the script, and her efforts to sneak a swig from a water bottle rather than just drink in front of us seemed odd. (Aug 13)	?	2009	?

104	Unit 46 (***) A 50-year old unemployed bureaucrat and a 39-year old English teacher who lives below him, complain about each other even though they have never spoken. The program had indicated that this play was about the importance of communication, but it seemed to be more about living in isolation. A highlight was hearing the man singing the praises of his too brief letter for which he was fired because after six weeks of diligent work his version simply said, "We regret." (Aug 30)	?	2009	?
105	I-Witness (***) A cast of four retraces the four-day hike along English coastline described by WG Sebald in "The Rings of Saturn." Just as Sebald's book is a collection of disparate facts and fictions purported to be facts, the subjects of the play vary widely as each actor retell part of Sebald's book as well as tell of their personal experiences on the hike. In the final chaotic literal dissection of a copy of the book, I was concerned for the safety of actors as they casually wielded a power grinder among themselves. (Aug 26)	?	2009	?
106	Sea Wall (***) A young man, played by Andrew Scott, tells of his visit to his father-in-law in the south of France with his wife and young child. Andrew has a gentle, too quiet, halting style suited to the plain, short story. The play suffers from following the longer "Stefan Golaszewski is a Widower," which has a similar plot and more time and more evocative prose. (Aug 6)	?	2009	?
107	The Event (***) A very personable, and accomplished actor, David Calvitto describes his craft in real time in the third person. The first twenty minutes of this show is fantastic, but by then it has thoroughly mined the concept, and the topic switches to a commentary on 21st century society. At about that time, he begins to periodically announce the time left, and I realized how the time dragged for those last forty minutes. (Aug 11)	?	2009	?

108	Palace of the End (***) This has monologues by actors portraying Lynndie England (Abu Ghraib prison leash holder), Dr. David Kelly (WMD whistle blower), and Nehrjas Al Saffarh (as the wife of the leader of the Iraqi Communist Party under Saddam Hussein). The fictional monologues of all three grated on me because they seemed so extreme. England is portrayed as devoid of compassion, Kelly is suicidal though there is little evidence and no note, and Al Saffarh's part is little more than a litany of torture. (Aug 8)	?	2009	?
109	The Sound of My Voice (***) An alcoholic business executive spends a week dealing with his too understanding wife, children (referred to as "accusations"), and office workers. While an actress provides a few opportunities for dialogues with various female characters, the bulk of the play is listening to the pseudo happy thoughts of the businessman as he deludes himself. The repetitive daily routine went one day too long for its desired effect, and I sensed no seemingly unusual cathartic event that would trigger his transformation. (Aug 10)	?	2009	?
110	The Critic (***) This farce has two critics, one harsh and one effusive, approach people and a play differently. The broad treatment obscured the scripts fine lampooning all aspects of the creation and critiquing of plays. In particular, the mincing and mugging by the lady in waiting in the play being critiqued was way over the top. (Aug 28)	?	2009	?
111	School for Scandal (***) While a May-December marriage is full of bickering, a man must decide between whether his ward should marry a seemingly upstanding fellow, or his ne'er do well brother. This fluff is more about celebrities hamming it up in a farce than anything else. Since I only recognized two of the ten celebrities, much of the fun was lost on me. (Aug 26)	?	2009	?

112	The Sticky Bivouac (***) A young comedian brings his interpretation of a young Steve Martin to the stage. While he matches Martin's low key delivery and offbeat humor, I am not sure why he felt the need to imitate Martin's voice. His demonstration of difficult juggling using a baby doll, a frying pan, and a corded phone was inspired. (Aug 17)	?	2009	?
113	Camille O'Sullivan: The Dark Angel (***) Camille is a singer that works hard to provide a good show for the crowd. She roams the audience, changes wardrobe frequently, and ranges across many styles of music. Maybe because I was in the balcony, or maybe because I know Holly Penfield (an older entertainer with a similar style), but it seemed that she was working too hard to entertain—her artifice was showing. (Aug 7)	?	2009	?
114	Burn (***) Three recently deceased people awake on a small island surrounded by boiling liquid, and try to escape by recounting their lives more and more honestly. The acting is impressive, but the reverberating acoustics of the Big Belly made about a fifth of their lines unintelligible for me. I was most trouble by the unexplained understanding of the situation by one of the characters. (Aug 24)	?	2009	?
115	Rachel Rose Reid: And They Lived … (***) Rachel brings a bright, cheerfulness to her storytelling and music. The gifted storyteller makes this feel like a series of spontaneous stories rather than an oft-repeated show. Regrettably, my own self-conscious efforts to keep time with alternate clapping and feet stamping made me miss many of the words of her songs. (Aug 24)	?	2009	?
116	If That's All There Is (***) Two weeks before his wedding to an insecure woman, a control freak seeks help from a dismissive counselor. Despite the fine acting, I must admit the mix of dreams and reality completely lost me. Once a friend, helped me better understand its structure, I could see that it could have been very good. (Aug 18)	?	2009	?

117	Snatch Paradise by Van Badham (***) An amnesiac boy-band star returns from three months in jail for battery, and tries to understand his life of contrived pop celebrity. From the opening sexy chorus line number by the all-girl cast, a feeling of sleaziness permeates the whole play that makes any empathy for the characters almost impossible. Except for the lead, these are not desperate people trying to make their lives work, but rather empty characters stripping needlessly for the playwright's pleasure. (Aug 12)	?	2009	?
118	My Name is Sue (***) A talented fellow in drag plays piano, and, with help of a trio, sings absurd songs. All of his piano playing was outstanding, and most of the intelligible songs were quite fun. Some of the songs had a dark twist that I missed for lack of local references. (Aug 5)	?	2009	?
119	An Evening with Psychosis (***) The crew of a Star Trek Enterprise type ship tries to maintain the sanity of the Earth through satellites as they also read from nine real interviews of people dealing with psychosis. The set and action aboard the ship mimic Star Trek nicely, and the varied interviews are interesting, but the interviews do not match well with the story. The two aspects detract from rather than complement each other. (Aug 12)	?	2009	?
120	My Darling Clemmie (***) Rohan McCullough's, plays the wife of Winston Churchill. Rohan seems to have the character of the upper crust Clementine, but the story lacks vitality. Even when I hear of her having to bundle up on the floor of a frigid bomber, the story seems to be told by a dispassionate observer instead of the bone-chilled woman. (Aug 28)	?	2009	?

121	Micaela Leon: Kabarett Berlin (***) Micaela presents the lives and associated songs of several Berlin cabaret singers of the Weimar Republic era. The only singer I knew was Marlene Dietrich, and it seemed to me that despite the appropriate costume, Micaela's voice and style did not reflect the star. I did find it gratifying when she recounted what happened to each singer after the Nazis took power. (Aug 29)	?	2009	?
122	Stand Up For Freedom (***) Despite its good cause, this was a night of mediocrity. Much of the comedy was the typical sex and dating fodder aimed at twenty-somethings, when much of the audience was older. It is telling that the most memorable moment h the hounding of bigoted heckler out of the theater. (Aug 12)	?	2009	?
123	As You Were (***) We compare the postwar lives of two English veterans, one a former Japanese POW in World War II, and the other recently returned from Iraq. The play does a fine job of telling the history of post traumatic stress syndrome. On the other hand, the portrayal of a man suffering from PTSD is becoming too common to be interesting. (Aug 22)	?	2009	?
124	Escape (***) The Earth will be uninhabitable in thirty years, and a space colonist who as returned to Earth tells of his experience to a reporter friend. This half-hour play has all the hallmarks of a short story; it has intriguing premise and plot, but the characters are only sketches. Though the video commercials for the colonial transport organizations were unpolished, they still worked well to describe the mental state of the world. (Aug 15)	?	2009	?

125	Why do all Catherines call themselves Kate? (***) On New Year's Eve, the son of a recently deceased loan shark visits his half-brother's flat, only to discover his father's girlfriend is there. The characters run through a series of verbal thrust and parries that cause unexpected damage. In particular, the older brother cowers when bullied by his younger brother, but then reasserts himself minutes later. (Aug 16)	?	2009	?
126	Words of Honour: The Mafia Exposed (***) A mafia boss explains how the Mafia is integrates itself into Italian society by relying on honour. While I liked learning that people with many non-violent jobs are members of the Mafia, the whole show seemed like an Italian accented Wikipedia article, with little drama. I suppose it is telling that I spent some of my time analyzing the white shade cloth that served both as a screen for videos and, with other lighting, as a transparent wall. (Aug 13)	?	2009	?
127	Killing Alan (***) After attacking his brother, to be honorable, Alan agrees to allow his brother stab him in exactly one year. Though there is a simple plot here, this dark, morality play seems to work hard to be confusing. The completely separate prolog and epilog caused most of my confusion, but the lack of recognition of his brother after a year's time also contributed. (Aug 20)	?	2009	?
128	Lola: The Life of Lola Montez (***) The fiery dancer and self-made celebrity of the early 19th century tells of her life while her conservative Irish stands by rejecting much her joie de vivre. The lead brings requisite high energy to her role, and the male flamenco dancer maintains it to little purpose. When we suddenly discover that she dies of syphilis, I realized that I had learned of her conflict, but little else. (Aug 10)	?	2009	?

129	East 10th Street Self Portrait with Empty House (***) This is a memoir by an actor describing the crazy inhabitants of his rooming house in New York City. The low set lighting and his macabre bass voice make this seem like a ghost story around a campfire. The late introduction of a love interest, and the unexplained disappearance of his sister both detract. (Aug 6)	?	2009	?
130	King of the Gypsies (***) A gypsy man, played by Paul McCleary, recounts the history and persecution of Gypsies from before Christ India to England 2009. McCleary proved personable, but the play lacked much drive. The poor quality of the excerpts of news reports and interviews did not help. (Aug 5)	?	2009	?
131	Animals of Butter Bridge (***) A badger, mouse, and panther agree to track down an untrustworthy fox who has eloped with a naïve bunny. This is a grim fairy tale with tragic endings, and no moral. Though the costumes were minimal, each animal had an appropriate personality, with the fox most notably doing a nice sly Alan Rickman turn. (Aug 21)	?	2009	?
132	God: A Comedy by Woody Allen (***) A playwright and actor have troubles getting a play written while dealing with play within a play issues. The cast is enthusiastic, but Allen's play seems stale now. The staging using people as furniture, and even toilets, was quite imaginative. (Aug 18)	?	2009	?
133	The Kosh in the Storeroom (***) A physical theater piece that has a woman in a storeroom reliving the events that led up to her murder conviction. The play is an imaginative mixture of storage box props, acrobatics, and even ventriloquism. While the actress demonstrated great versatility, her talent in each area is only average. (Aug 18)	?	2009	?

134	The Visitor (***) In a future London of war, gangs, and rubble, a woman discovers an injured man on a bench, and takes him back to the hideaway she shares with another man. The play does a good job of creating an atmosphere of desperation by combining her tale of forced re-location with her current reverence for a used tea bag. I had trouble with when she scrubbed the visitor's face, and none of his grime and blood came off. (Aug 17)	?	2009	?
135	St. Kilda – Island of the Birdmen (***) This massive International Festival uses every imaginable form of entertainment to describe the life on the remote island of St. Kilda where the economy of the twenty residents dependent on harvesting feathers from the puffins and other birds on the nearby rocky islands. While I can appreciate the high concept of the project, the use of Gaelic and French without supertitles made it inaccessible to me. The vintage photos and films, and the ethereal singer (when not obscured by the orchestra or chorus) were the highlights. (Aug 15)	?	2009	?
136	Stand by Your Van (***) Similar to the dance marathons of the Depression, to win a new truck, twelve contestants must keep at least one hand on it for as long as eighty hours. While I found some of the interactions among the diverse contestants interesting, the play felt like a marathon for the audience as we were subjected to eleven, repetitive dismissals. Because of the Fringe length of the play, and the time taken for the dismissals, there was not enough time to provide satisfying back stories for most of the characters. (Aug 5)	?	2009	?

137	Jordy Pordy: Taking the Bull by the Horns (***) Jordan Herskowitz, a young mascot for some professional sports teams in the U.S., provides an autobiographical monologue covering his Jewish home life, his work as a mascot, and his brother's battle with cystic fibrosis. Because I had seen the three other Jewish plays at the Sweet, I was bored with that aspect of his life. As would be expected, the ten minutes he spent on his life in a mascot suit were the most entertaining. (Aug 22)	?	2009	?
138	The Yellow Wallpaper (***) In the late 19th century, a physician rents a house, and tries to treat his frail wife's anxiety by placing her in a nursery room with strange yellow wallpaper. The wife does a wonderful job of portraying an isolated woman slipping into hysteria and hallucinations. However, her rejection of her sister-in-laws help, and the unrelenting sternness of her husband have no explanation. (Aug 26)	?	2009	?
139	Coffee (***) A trio of advertising people spend a day trying to come up with an ad campaign for Donkey Coffee. While there are a few funny moments, I never began to care for any of them. It was particularly troubling that one character expressed a severe allergy to coffee, but when he drank some he just had a antic caffeine high. (Aug 20)	?	2009	?
140	Unknown Album (***) A bored receptionist working on her PhD agrees to a celebrity TV date with the quiet member of a popular boyband. The relationship between the proceeds nicely enough, but his decision about his sexuality has no conviction. The third character, a guardian of a young girl admirer of the celebrity, is ill-defined and portrayed with bursty speech that I often could not understand. (Aug 20)	?	2009	?

141	Parents' Evening (***) As parents of the children of a private school during its parents' evening, the audience is treated to teacher introductions, short quizzes, and the scandals of the school. Having the "teachers" join us in the audience helped us participate in the play, but they all seemed one-dimensional and uninspired. The British mother next to me thought a little better of it. (Aug 23)	?	2009	?
142	A Grave Situation (***) During World War II, a family of gravediggers are drafted, sent to Dunkirk, and then miss the evacuation. This comedy starts out quite promising as it deals with shortages, and innocence, but takes a wrong turn into a literal hell with Nazi devils and heaven in literal clouds. The initial scene dealing with a shortage of coffins really had my hopes up. (Aug 18)	?	2009	?
143	Opening Night of the Living Dead (***) The company of "Romeo and Juliet" must deal with a techy who becomes a zombie, and an egocentric Romeo who has his own over-the-top ideas of how to play his part. The play has a nice romantic parallel in the gulf between the Juliet actress and her secretly admiring techy. While originally fun, the zombie angle devolves into just a lot of "zany" chases. (Aug 17)	?	2009	?
144	Take the Empire: The Great Big Marvellous Victorian Game Show (***) Two pairs of the audience spend the evening competing with each by answering questions supposedly based on the Victorian era, and performing tasks. The first set of questions were based on Victorian fact, but with later questions such as "What part of a wolf am I thinking of?", and tasks such as building towers of cardboard and tape, the show became just silly and uninteresting to me. (Aug 15)	?	2009	?

145	The Grind Show (***) This allegory has the ringmaster of a bizarre circus repeatedly trying to have a child join each of the various dysfunctional acts. From a beast tamer who uses pain to recreate herself, to a pair of knife throwing twins that repeatedly impale each other, the symbolism is dark and macabre. The concept is coherent in its way, but unpleasant to behold. (Aug 14)	?	2009	?
146	Let's Do It: a Celebration of the Works of Cole Porter (***) A man and a woman singer, accompanied by a pianist, present more than twenty Cole Porter songs. While the performers are quite capable, the show is poorly directed. The techie had the piano overpowering the singers, and the order of the songs had his hits at the beginning, and then followed them with a long series of more obscure downbeat ballads. (Aug 27)	?	2009	?
147	Underground: A Forgotten World (***) In the near future, with everyone living underground, a detective seeks the Charring Cross for one of seven sisters that rule much of the The Underground. There is some smart dialog, but the plot is a mishmash with the quest continuing even though the Cross is returned midway through the play. For instance, the character of Sapling, a tree/elf, serves as a guide, love interest, and an unnecessarily horrific sacrificial lamb. (Aug 22)	?	2009	?
148	Luck (***) The daughter of the leader of a team that exploits bad blackjack dealers at casinos tells of her life on the team, and dealing with her compulsive gambler father. The explanations of how such a team works together, and her anecdotes work quite well, but her attempts at strange video and dance fall flat. I found her tale of her father attempting to scam her as she is about to walk down the aisle of her wedding most poignant. (Aug 24)	?	2009	?

149	A Doubtful Guest (***) In the late 19th century, a Gothic family must deal with large beast that intrudes into their staid household. This is full deadpan melodrama combined with zany antics. As usual, my Brit friends loved the same silliness that left me cold. (Aug 18)	?	2009	?
150	Hou Hou Shahou's Chorus of Descent (***) In the early 19th century, a wife takes her child and leaves her drunk abusive husband to rebuild her life, but gin again befouls her life. The cast is young and enthusiastic, but the play requires more of them that they can give. (Aug 15)	?	2009	?
151	Generation Crunch Presents (***) The character Hans from the Bedlam show "Zemblanity" emcees this cabaret. This night acts were an average comedian, a lousy comedian, an excerpt from "Zemblanity", and a pair playing a bass clarinet and steel drums. (Aug 23)	?	2009	?
152	Ernest and the Pale Moon (***) A man who has spied on his neighbors from his darkened room kills one, and stuffs her body in a wall. Though the whole play exudes the macabre, it moved too slowly for me. (Aug 27)	?	2009	?
153	Fistful of Snow (***) An Australian screenwriter tries to find his muse by agreeing to guard seeds on remote island in the Arctic Ocean, but instead of a month, his stay extends to eight months. His conversations with an inflatable reindeer head, and doorbell ringing polar bear are fun, but the absurd storyline of his successful movie was touched upon too many times. The poster for the movie, "Nullarbor Gunslinger", looked incredibly real. (Aug 14)	?	2009	?

154	Ritter, Dene, Voss (***) The brilliant, but mentally unstable philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, returns to his family home to be with his two heiress sisters who own the theater in which they infrequently act. While there are few interesting observations by Ludwig, on whole the play is just too dense. The mobiles composed of the letters of the names of his friends and families was a nice allusion to the philosopher's interest in the relationship between words and reality. (Aug 19)	?	2009	?
155	Cardenio (**) After wooing and raping a chaste maid, the younger brother of a duke, Henriquez, tries to steal the heart of his best friend's fiancé. From the opening rape, I knew this abridged version of Shakespeare and Fletcher's play would not have a satisfying way of redeeming Henriquez, and I was correct. The play had little of Shakespeare's beautiful prose, and most of the actors were weak. (Aug 26)	?	2009	?
156	The Dentist (**) The daughter of a Jewish survivor of a Nazi concentration camp tells of her home life and his experiences in the camp. This was the third play this year that I have seen dealing with the Holocaust, and it seemed the weakest. The meandering story provided little new, and the title itself reveals the "surprise" ending. (Aug 23)	?	2009	?
157	Snatch Paradise by Van Badham (**) An amnesiac boy-band star returns from three months in jail for battery, and tries to understand his life of contrived pop celebrity. From the opening sexy chorus line number by the all-girl cast, a feeling of sleaziness permeates the whole play that makes any empathy for the characters almost impossible. Except for the lead, these are not desperate people trying to make their lives work, but rather empty characters stripping needlessly for the playwright's pleasure. (Aug 13)	?	2009	?

158	Weepie (**) A man is trained, seduced, and interviewed by another man before they commit a crime. I know that that is not a perfect recapitulation of the play, but that is its problem. It is designed as tour de force for the actors, and they both are great, but the story is too choppy. (Aug 26)	?	2009	?
159	How to Survive a Zombie Apocalypse After Dark (**) With the help of a survivalist, a weapons expert, a scientist, and a counselor, the head trainer helps the audience to learn how best to deal with zombies. After less than ten minutes of introduction to the world of zombies, the show turned into improv based on the questions and answers provided by the audience. The show was quite week simply because other than the trainer/emcee, all of the actors had little skill in improvisation. (Aug 16)	?	2009	?
160	Timeshare (**) On a vacation to Spain a couple rents a condo near a another couple from work, but discover that Macbeth and his retinue are living in the condo between the couples. While you would think that with modern day Malcoms, Duncans, and MacDuffs running around, this would be a fun farce, it is instead a drama centered on pregnancy and mistrust. From the modern lives that only occasionally parallelthe Scottish play, to the inexplicable potions and smells of gas, this play never gels. (Aug 23)	?	2009	?
161	All That Gomez (**) A lesbian Latina stand-up comedienne follows the typical pattern of audience interaction followed by her routines. She had a tough audience composed of six lesbians (two of whom could barely understand her English) and me spread around the venue, so she finally resorted to humorless interviews of each of us. While her Latina jokes would be expected to have little traction, I was surprised at how most of her lesbian humor seemed to stir little reaction. Some of her stories had small witticisms that it seemed only I got. (Aug 16)	?	2009	?

162	Bob's Date (**) Actors play various aspects of Bob's personality attempt to prepare him for his first date in two years. As a man with a degree in psychology, I was perplexed at how the play considered the artifacts of nerves, bull, and confidence as having equal weight to the much broader concepts of libido, logic, memory, and emotion. Each aspect did have a few entertaining moments, but many of their interactions seem as childish and ill considered as the division of characteristics. (Aug 17)	?	2009	?
163	The Lamplighters Lament (**) Three actors play a lamplighter whose young daughter dies. This slow, somber piece spends an hour using puppets and overusing thumb lights to tell the slightest of stories. There is not much here. (Aug 15)	?	2009	?
164	The Fuss (**) Two brothers move in to their sister's house as she dies of pancreatic cancer. While there are some scenes that are sincere and work, particularly with the sister, most of the scenes between the brothers lack authenticity. For example, the hyper-dominant brother forces his shy brother to play scrabble, but then does not keep score. (Aug 11)	?	2009	?
165	Self-Murders (**) After meeting on the Internet, a young woman invites a young man to take a trip to the mountains to leap off a cliff with her. Though in English, its dark Russian source permeates the work, even during the symbolic rebirths in a water trough. Her transformation seemed out of step with the other events of the piece. (Aug 9)	?	2009	?

166	The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection …or The Survival of (R)Evolutionary Theories in the Face of Scientific and Ecclesiastical Objections: Being a Musical Comedy about Charles Darwin (1809-1882)(**) Charles Darwin tells of his life using musical ditties, audience participation, and brief reenactments of important events of his life. As the first play of the Fringe for me, I could not help but think how the play represented the Fringe as a whole—original, but uneven. The acting was fine, but while I found the ideas behind many of the songs amusing, most of their lyrics and performances were forgettable. (Aug 5)	?	2009	?
167	A Stroke of Genius (**) To provide for her old age, a librarian whose library is about to close, hatches a scheme to artificially inseminate herself with the genetically modified sperm of a world class scientist. The actress is wonderfully eccentric, but her male companion is inexplicably horrific. In particular, we see him cleaning gruesome slicing implements as another character reads of his sadistic murder of an innocent young woman. (Aug 12)	?	2009	?
168	In Bed With Poets (**) A very nice woman reads from her "Erotic Poetry for Vegans and Vegetarians." While it was clear that she could feel the eroticism of her poems about vegetables mixing with spices and sauces, only rarely could they resonate with me. A reading with her techy did work well though. (Aug 13)	?	2009	?
169	Heroin(e) for Breakfast (**) A 26-year old man shares, his ex-girlfriend, and his young lover share a flat, and then some heroin (in the guise of Marilyn Monroe). Starting from the initial self-centered tour-de-force of sex positions and continuing through his seeming immunity to the ravages to heroin addiction, the male role just does not work. While the interactions of the women seem real, their interest in demonstrably ignorant, selfish fellow has little foundation. (Aug 12)	?	2009	?

170	Icarus 2.0 (**) For the past 15 years, a hermit has obsessively trained his equally isolated son to be able to fly with wings. The quirky, always just slightly useful, training regime intrigued me the first time. While the play remains true to the concept throughout, the interactions with the outside world, and the primitive wing development did not work for me. (Aug 9)	?	2009	?
171	Withheld (**) A woman suffering from hallucinations has lunch in a restaurant with a an old girlfriend. I was confused by what was real, and what was not, since there was never a response from the management or other diners. In the end, it mattered little to me, because the play seemed to go nowhere. (Aug 8)	?	2009	?
172	The Gannet (**) Hansel and Gretel escape a diseased future land through a tunnel, and enter a disquieting world of talking animals and endless candy. While the new world does have a cheesy (actually marshmallow) surreal feel to it, the initial serious tone left me hungry for explanations. What was this oft spoken of disease, and why do the pair willingly step into the oven? (Aug 12)	?	2009	?
173	Koi (*) While she assumes various roles, including a koi and a water lilly, a Japanese woman has members of the audience read parts of her play from copies of the script that she hands out. The audience actors had to scour the script because the individual parts were poorly indicated. Though personable, her acting skill seemed minimal. (Aug 29)	?	2009	?
174	After Circles (*) Sometime in the future, sisters share a dingy space of deprivation with a young woman. While I had no problem with the acting, the play provides no explanation of why things are the way they are. As the play progresses, in each new situation the characters act in bizarre ways based on some unseen political/social influence, but in the end we are left asking ourselves why did they do any of that? (Aug 13)	?	2009	?

175	Or f unny (*) A brother and sister left alone at home create havoc with all manner of food. I just got nothing out these Italian performance artists pouring milk and ketchup over themselves. There is one nice section where they bend over the ends of table and interact with each other under the tabletop. (Aug 14)	?	2009	?
176	Puppet Grinder Cabaret (*) This early evening cabaret relies only on acts that utilize puppets. The acts ranged from a passable ventriloquist with a bear dummy to worthless videos made by a university student. I am surprised that Assembly would allow such a low quality show under its roof. (Aug 10)	?	2009	?
177	Me Too – A Sideshow (no stars) A woman portrays Siamese twins with two heads, three breasts on her chest, and two breasts on her butt. This was amazing disaster. The accompanying videos contributed nothing, she hid her face behind the dummy head when attempting ventriloquism, and the introduction of a talking baby dummy only added to the confusion. (Aug 21)	?	2009	?
1	Nocturne: (*****) A piano prodigy recounts his life after shattering his family by accidentally killing his 9-year-old sister. The monologue is full of so many evocative similes and metaphors that I found myself smiling often just because of their beauty. Combine the prose with a well-tempered delivery and you have the most enjoyable play I have seen in a long time. I am sorry it closes Aug 11th. (Aug 5, and again Aug 7)	?	2008	?
2	Ed Byrne: (*****) According Ed, and the people waiting in line, he is one of the comedians you know you have seen on TV, but cannot quite remember well. His routines revolve around his button-down, nice guy, geekdom. As a man only two months married, he has many gentle tales of courtship and wedding plans. His final story of his thoughts in the instant after his intended temporarily refused his proposal had a great ring of amusing truth. (Aug 1)	?	2008	?

3	Terminus: (*****) A shy man who makes an ill-advised bargain with the Devil, a teacher turned counselor, and a lonely young woman give semi-poetic rotating monologues as their disparate life's paths move toward each other. The arrhythmic rhyming (that actually makes sense!) conveyed powerful images of a world of imps made of worms, lovers on crane tips, and unchecked vicious sadism. Though it now seems quite dark in the re-telling, I found the lyricism enthralling. (Aug 2)	?	2008	?
4	Correspondence: (*****) A man and a woman set about creating a story of a man and woman on a train trip, and intermingle their life's stories with their creations. The acting, script, atmospheric sounds, and short musical interludes all are perfect. As the play progressed, I kept thinking that they could not keep up the delicate tone of the piece, but they did! (Aug 11)	?	2008	?
5	On The Waterfront: (*****) An ex-fighter must choose between loyalty to his fellow stevedores, and loyalty to his brother and mob union bosses. This play has everything: taut writing, a large cast of fine actors, and staging that effectively transformed stevedores into hoodlums and back again. I had not realized what a difference it makes when older men are played by older men with life's experiences really etched into their faces instead of young actors relying on face paint. (Aug 24)	?	2008	?
6	The Idiot Colony: (*****) This mostly silent play follows the surreal lives of the three women in a mental hospital. Whether bathing, recounting a tryst in a movie theater, or having their hair done, each scene is haunting. They do not all make sense by themselves, but contribute to a very satisfying whole. (Aug 9)	?	2008	?

7	A Dog Called Redemption: (*****) Two homeless men, one a young drug addict, and the other a naïve mental outpatient go through life together. Each actor looks, and acts their disparate, interdependent parts perfectly. The bare walls of the Baby Belly cavern contributed mightily to the dirty, isolated atmosphere. I cannot help but think that this play is a diamond in the rough. (Aug 21)	?	2008	?
8	Expert at the Card Table: (*****) A card sharp displays his talents while telling the life story of the 19th century author of the classic book of his field. He tells the story of cheating, drinking, and murder well. I have never seen a performer with his ability to quickly memorize a deck, and then deal out a number of a requested color upon request. His final shuffle ordering trick is worth price of admission. (Aug 19)	?	2008	?
9	I Love You, Bro: (*****) A 14-year-old retells his story of fabricating personas in a chat room to keep the attention of a young footballer in his town. Based on a true story, the actor aptly conveys all of the online tricks, self-conceits, and emotional turmoil as he desperately tries to prolong the ruse. It is powerful, pitiful, and scary. The story is from a Vanity Fair article http://www.vantiyfair.com/ontheweb/features/2005/02/bachrach2005002 (Aug 9)	?	2008	?
10	Reasonable Doubt: (*****) Just before a re-trial verdict is to be announced, two former jurors meet in a hotel room to explore their differing views of the case and their own relationship. This onion-layered play does a masterful job of exploring how new facts can change the perceptions of events. Only a short, unconvincing scene on the bed taints the superb acting. (Aug 14)	?	2008	?

11	I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change: (*****) This musical tells tales of love from awkward adolescence, through marriage, and on to old widows and widowers. The voices, the three-piece band, the music, the acting, and most of all the lyrics all worked well. Two lovely ballads were highlights, "Tonight I'll be Loved", and another with an empty nester rejecting the stereotype and loving his wife. The only the bad song, was the title song, and, ironically, it was the last one. (Aug 13)	?	2008	?
12	Regretrosexual – The Love Story: (*****) A fellow who experimented with the gay life style has trouble telling his fragile, quirky girl friend of his past. Everything works in this comedy as she portrays his mother, best friend, former girl friends, gay partners, psychiatrist, and love interest. One of many high points is his imaginative way to stop her runaway cartoon train nervous breakdown. (Aug 15)	?	2008	?
13	Alun Cochrane. Owner of Shed. And a Son. Thinks the World is Wonky.: (*****) Stand-up comedian Alun Cochrane relates stories from his life, spending extra time on his recent fatherhood. The whole show is thoroughly funny and clean. Having seen him do part of the routine at Stand Up for Freedom, I came to realize how every gesture is well considered and practiced, and that I was watching a fine actor/writer for an hour. (Aug 19)	?	2008	?
14	Nina Conti – Evolution: (*****) The ventriloquist must deal with her "smartass" monkey dummy who wants to leave the show. The whole show works beautifully, beginning with her being a dummy to the monkey, through when a dummy of her father, Tom Conti, interacts with the monkey, to when the monkey is manipulated by a children's clown. One of many highlights was when the monkey hypnotizes her, and then realizes he cannot speak. (Aug 21)	?	2008	?

15	Jarlath Regan – Relax the Cax: (*****) Irishman Jarlath provides standup comedy with a little discredited video at the beginning and end of the show. Even when the topic is learning how to fight, his gentle tone permeates the work in a most agreeable fashion. When he polled the audience, at least 90 percent, including me, came because he had personally invited them when flyering. (Aug 25)	?	2008	?
16	Jason Byrne: (*****) I saw Jason two years ago, and he continues to have a wonderful mix of improv based on the front audience, and routines about his family. As before, his prodding of his targets is not mean spirited, and serves as a starting point for some great riffs. While he uses profanity throughout, his routines about sex are surprisingly observant rather than graphic. (Aug 1)	?	2008	?
17	Dead Cat Bounce…Late Night Radio: (*****) At last, a midnight show worth staying up for. Four guys mix an Indiana Jones story told as an old radio serial with well-played rock and roll to create an incredible pastiche. A 911 call during labor leads to an endlessly funny digression between two archetypal Minnesotans. They even pull off a happy go lucky tune describing four ten year olds killing a man. (Aug 7)	?	2008	?
18	Dead Cat Bounce: (*****) This time, these three guys apply their talents to sketch comedy. These fellows explore a wider set of topics with more humor and less slapstick (none) than the other sketch comedy at the Fringe. From non-executive vice president hopefuls dealing with a dead hooker, to a cockfight bag filled with a peacock and rabbit, to a demanding tandem bicycle partner, there are so many memorable moments! (Aug 24)	?	2008	?

19	Once and for All We're Gonna Tell You Who We Are So Shut Up and Listen: (*****) Thirteen Dutch teenagers bound about the stage in contrived chaos displaying the many interactions among themselves. This show of seemingly uncontrolled exuberance swept up most of the audience, while some left disgusted at its at such a seemingly pointless hour. The cast wisely demonstrated the underlying choreography of the many-ring circus of chaos by repeating the antics of the first scene almost verbatim in the second scene. As such, I was the sole member of the audience that had my cheeks and forehead marked with lipstick, not once, but twice. (Aug 12)	?	2008	?
20	Free Outgoing: (*****) In India, a widowed Tamal mother and her son must deal with the tremendous consequences of her teenage daughter's sexual indiscretion. From fierce loyalty and denial to frantic desperation, the mother's portrayal is riveting. I loved learning about a culture of which I knew little. (Aug 12)	?	2008	?
21	Departure Lounge by Dougal Irvine: (*****) After their plane is delayed in the Malaga airport, four high school buddies review their week of sex, and their individual encounters with one woman in particular. Accompanied perfectly by two guitarists, the fresh songs reflect the complexity of relationships as well as the high jinx of teens. There are two highlights: a duet of different perceptions of a friendship, and a voice with a range and strength seldom heard. (Aug 24)	?	2008	?
22	Bully: (*****) A 32-year-old gay man tells of his life growing up with an abusive father, and trying to find happiness in the gay bar scene. This well crafted monologue provides a fine mix of abusive events with coping techniques that include hiding, fraternal bonding, and escape. Throughout the play, I could feel his recurring fear that, despite his best efforts, he would be drawn into another abusive relationship. (Aug 21)	?	2008	?

23	George Orwell's 'Coming Up for Air': (*****) A 45-year-old insurance salesman in 1938 describes his home life, and his childhood and adult fishing adventures. The 1930's have always fascinated me, and Orwell provides all the details to understand the fears and angst of an everyman in pre-war Britain. At some points, you can hear the first mutterings of the themes of '1984'. (Aug 19)	?	2008	?
24	Deep Cut: (*****) Based on actual events, a mother and father anguish over the British government's poor investigation of the death of their daughter, Private Cheryl James, at the Deep Cut army base. The play provides powerful testimony that casts doubts on the findings of the commission that found that four deaths at Deep Cut were probably suicides. Though it suggests that all four deaths were murder, it only provides an alternative scenario for Private James. (Aug 12)	?	2008	?
25	Shakespeare Made Easy: (*****) This children's show presents abridged versions of Shakespeare's tragedies, histories, and comedies. Fast pacing enthralled the children, while clever synopses intrigue the adults. Because they spent the most time on Romeo and Juliet, it seemed the most satisfying. (Aug 10)	?	2008	?
26	The British Ambassador's Belly Dancer: (****) A young woman describes her life growing up in Uzbekistan as it leads to her becoming the mistress of Ambassador Craig Murray. From the beautiful flow of her arms in her introductory dance to her description of life under an unjust post-Soviet regime and on to her final description of English impoverishment with her lover, I found a rare, stark sincerity in this self-possessed woman. I admire her honesty, her resourcefulness, and her love for Mr. Murray. (Aug 3)	?	2008	?

27	Out of the Blue: (****) Thirteen men from Oxford combine pop a cappella with energetic, though somewhat chaotic, choreography. Though still the best of the a cappella groups at the Fringe, it seemed a little weaker than in the past, with the leads often unable to rise above the group. It was the very last show together, and their emotions ran high from joyful high jinx to tearful reprises. (Aug 25)	?	2008	?
28	The Great American Trailer Park Musical: (****) The arrival of a stripper in their trailer park disrupts the lives of an agoraphobic woman and her tollbooth attendant husband weeks before their 20th wedding anniversary. This show had almost everything going for it; the voices, music, lyrics, acting, and band all were topnotch. The only problem was that I could not understand many of the lyrics in the ensemble numbers. (Aug 22)	?	2008	?
29	Russian Play: (****) After a few songs, five women from St. Petersburg entertain children and adults with Russian games, and dances. Though the young children stared in wonderment, when the singers tried to get the audience to join them in games and dances, most of the kids fearfully refused. The only problem with the show was that the background music drowned out the singers. (Aug 25)	?	2008	?
30	The Year That I Got Younger: (****) Aindrias de Staic, an Irish fiddler, mixes music with tales of drugs and going on the wagon from the year he spent travelling about Australia. He has the Irish gift for storytelling, and the musical talent for scat singing, Jews harp, as well as the fiddle. An introductory video provides an excellent biographical sketch of his itinerant lifestyle. (Aug 17)	?	2008	?

31	Answers: (****) Three assistants to an MP help the prime minister's press officer use social blackmail to manipulate a vote on a civil liberties bill. The systematic use of lies to coerce one person after another was both plausible and chilling. The play is shorter than advertised, but its abrupt end works. (Aug 17)	?	2008	?
32	Borough Market: (****) A gay medical student reluctantly becomes a cocaine dealer to support his lover's habit. From the student's despairing love to the supplier's tough supervising to the lover's descent into addiction, each character is finely wrought. The only blemishes are the recurrent presentations of parts of the climactic scene. (Aug 18)	?	2008	?
33	One Small Step: (****) Two young men use household objects from the 1960's to tell the story of the Space Race from Sputnik to the first walk on the moon. The creative use of sugar bowls, thermos jugs, and file cabinets provides much of the fun. A slide projection of the first pictures of the Earth from the moon was a showstopper for me. (Aug 19)	?	2008	?
34	Joan Rivers: A Work in Progress by a Life in Progress: (****) Joan Rivers talks about her life as she steps in and out of a play that has her preparing to interview stars on the red carpet at the Academy Awards. This strong willed woman, with her stories about her family and show business, touched me with her sincerity. The play, particularly the hairdresser seemed superfluous. (Aug 25)	?	2008	?
35	Behind the Mirror: (****) An alter ego from the other side of a mirror disrupts the marriage proposal of a gibberish speaking mime. The protagonist is clearly the star, and performs exquisitely, with an initial toiletry routine, and a mirrored image routine straight out of the Marx Brothers as highlights. The storyline is appropriately simple with many opportunities for a variety of mimed activity. (Aug 18)	?	2008	?

36	Scaramouche Jones: (****) On his hundredth birthday an unnaturally white faced man relates his well travelled life, from son of a Dominican Republic whore to an African snake charmer's assistant to Nazi concentration camp grave digger/clown. I marvel at how the writer successfully links the wildly diverse and entertaining chapters of his life. I must admit that when he had only told of his first fifty years, I was afraid that tales of the next fifty would make the play interminable, but, thankfully, he skips them. (Aug 14)	?	2008	?
37	The Good Doctor: (****) Chekov's Russia as re-imagined by Neil Simon. Wit, and timing characterize each of the stories from a successful seducer to a professional drowning man. Each story seemed original except a tooth pulling that was straight out of W.C. Field's "The Dentist" short. (Aug 7)	?	2008	?
38	Stand Up For Freedom: (****) This benefit for Amnesty International had a collection of some of the best comedians at the Fringe. As host, Ed Byrne provided a continuity of humor to the whole proceedings. I would have given this five stars except that I was yet again confronted by an American comedian, Rich Hall this time, who thinks that hatred and saying F*** is funny. (Aug 6)	?	2008	?
39	How It Ended: (****) The arrival of a Frenchman training to be an RAF pilot in World War II changes the life of an orphaned young Welsh woman who is living with her four sisters. Slow, rich, and delicate in the telling. Live, subtle sound effects, and a swaddled baby repeatedly created from a long sheet add to the magic. (Aug 6)	?	2008	?

40	I Caught Crabs in Walberswick: (****) The night before their big tests, two teen buddies from different side of the tracks take a knockout girl to a club in a nearby town while their parents deal with their absence. The play does a good job with most of its subjects, from male bonding to underage clubbing to peer pressured joy riding to marital disenchantment. The incompetent, grief stricken father who incessantly plays an airline flight simulator seems too bizarre in such a real setting. (Aug 21)	?	2008	?
41	The Rat Pack – Live: (****) Three young men, backed by a big band, impersonate Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, and Sammy Davis Jr. doing a Las Vegas show. Though they do not quite look their parts, and their voices do not quite match those of their idols, the whole show is quite satisfying and fun. Frank opened the show with "Fly Me to the Moon", which was the song I played when my bride first stepped into my MGB to start our honeymoon to ParisJ (Aug 11)	?	2008	?
42	Aeneas Faversham Forever: (****) In Victorian London, a disgraced former policeman and a young doctor join forces to defeat a cult housed below the recently completed Tower Bridge. Unlike similar efforts I have seen, this play maintains just the right amount of silliness throughout. It was a pleasure to find cleverness instead of the slapstick and mugging common in other broad comedies at the Fringe. (Aug 21)	?	2008	?

43	Slick: (****) A self-centered couple discovers oil coming from their toilet and attempt to keep the treasure secret from their landlord as their 9 and 3/4-year-old son transports the oil to a refinery on his skateboard. The key to this comedy is the half size puppets composed of an actor who provides the head and controls feet, a stuffed miniature body, and another actor that provides the shortened arms of the character in wonderfully miniaturized sets. I found myself entranced while the company explored the many possibilities of their creations, including climbing staircases and outside walls. The final scenes lacked such novelty, and served only to complete the story. (Aug 12)	?	2008	?
44	After Liverpool: (****) Three actors and three actresses mix and match to create short scenes about dating and shacking up. The recurring themes were sharing an apple, seeking approval, decision making, and lack of conversation in a longer relationship. This is light, fast paced stuff that somehow worked for me than the other sketch comedies. (Aug 22)	?	2008	?
45	In Conflict: (****) Slides combined with seventeen monologues based on transcripts tell the story of Iraq War veterans' experiences in Iraq, and after. From a constantly smiling doctor to a Navaho who has lost part of his spirituality to an alcoholic Harlem private trying to forget images of a baby run over by a convoy, each of the stories is unique and powerful. The only problem is that, at two hours, the play needs either an intermission, or shortening. (Aug 19)	?	2008	?
46	The Boy from Centreville: (****) This play explores many aspects of the Virginia Tech killings through dramatizations, lectures, video, and recordings. In the background, as some of the action progresses in the background, we see a seemingly endless chronological scrolling of dates and casualties of school killing incidents. I found quite chilling the replay of a 911 call complete with gunshots in the background. (Aug 18)	?	2008	?

47	Six Wives of Timothy Leary: (****) The play uses monologues by each of the six remarkably different, albeit consistently young, wives to provide the biography of this professor turned famous LSD advocate by describing her own intense experiences with him. While the performances completely captivated my younger friend, I sometimes found myself drifting off to my own experiments in '70s. I found it disquieting that the playwright omitted that he was the epitome of an acid burnout later in his life. (Aug 3)	?	2008	?
48	Call Me If You Feel Too Happy: (****) A young woman describes her experiences dealing with bi-polar disorder while packing for a trip to America. The play provides well-constructed stories of both the mania and the depression in a lighthearted fashion. Since both my wife and I have degrees in psychology, I probably was not as fascinated as the rest of the audience was. (Aug 3)	?	2008	?
49	Fall: (****) A troubled prime minister looks for solace in a stranger, and ends up finding a sacrificial savior for his desperate country instead. The play provides a well-chosen blend of personal, political, and ethical dilemmas. With strong performances throughout, the only weaknesses are a conniving assistant and a loving doctor who both act inexplicably rashly. (Aug 1)	?	2008	?
50	Auditorium: (****) A bookshop owner discovers a portal in his closet that allows us, the audience, to watch the goings on through a one-way wall, and then must defend his shop from a corporate buyout. This farce does a fine job of exploring the possibilities of the situation, from having the audience actively participate to characters questioning their own existence. Only a water drinking scene, and the company agent, cross the line into silliness. (Aug 17)	?	2008	?

51	Uncle Vanya: (****) An old professor and his beautiful young second wife disrupt life on the estate of his first wife. Though set in late summer, the play of drunkenness, doomed romances, and essays on Russia's decline seems more like people trapped in a Russian winter. I had heard that the company had attempted to mine the play for its comedy, but I found little. (Aug 10)	?	2008	?
52	Charlie Victor Romeo: (****) In a mock airliner cockpit, actors re-enact the events taken from actual cockpit flight recorders of downed airplanes. They perfectly convey both the professionalism and tension of each event. A slide showing the actual casualties of each downing after each scene reinforced the sense of danger. (Aug 9)	?	2008	?
53	21:13: (****) This two-hander uses mostly physical theater to tell stories of foreign language difficulties centered on an Englishman and Italian woman whose train is delayed overnight. I liked that though I did not completely understand some of the scenes, they all felt within my reach. I will long remember silent words portrayed as butterflying hands, and her perched on him swimming through a sea of pre-recorded foreign conversations. (Aug 22)	?	2008	?
54	One More Than One: (****) After meeting online, a three-foot woman and a very tall Asian date. While the verbal probing and sparring was good, the beauty and variety of their physical interaction amazed me. The scenes at the beginning and in the middle, when they are separate, have a different, arty style that I found unappealing. (Aug 23)	?	2008	?
55	The Oxford Gargoyles – Jazz A Capella: (****) Six men and six women provide wonderful arrangements of a wide variety of songs. Beside good voices, they have some nice footwork to add to their energy. One fellow sounded just like James Taylor. (Aug 23)	?	2008	?

56	In A Thousand Pieces: (****) Three women provide an expose about the naïve East European girls kidnapped into the British sex trap. The play utilizes physical theater, lip synched man-on-the-street interviews, and re-enacted testimony to great effect. I found their dance to the sounds of a rape quite moving. According to their figures, a woman purchased for 1500 pounds is raped more than 1500 times in less than a year! (Aug 13)	?	2008	?
57	The Censor – Anthony Neilson: (****) While defending her pornographic film, a female director teaches a censor about love, sex, and sensitivity. I found intriguing her instruction of how the sexual techniques changed in the film to reflect the varying state of the relationship of the lovers. However, I was dissatisfied with her insights into background of the lovers and censor because they had observable basis. (Aug 24)	?	2008	?
58	Christiaan Oranje: Boy Meets Piano: (****) A Dutch pianist recounts his life from birth, with a large section where everything he did was fowt (sp? Dutch for wrong). I sought Christiaan's show out because I knew from seeing him in a midnight cabaret that his wistful low-key style appealed to me. It did work for me, and the senior crowd, but I doubt younger audiences would have the needed patience. (Aug 8)	?	2008	?
59	Finished with Engines: (****) A female officer and a male seaman banter while watching an island politically disintegrate. Much of the dialogue is quick and clever. However, the play seems to peter out, and its misleading program hurt. (Aug 5)	?	2008	?
60	Inside Yerma: (****) A Spanish wife looks to her neighbors for answers as she agonizes over being childless. It wasn't the clapping, dancing, magical ambience that impressed me. The soulful, anguished voice of the man who played the wife captivated me. (Aug 4)	?	2008	?

61	Saving Tania's Privates: (****) This autobiographical monologue from a Jewish lesbian who had a mastectomy at age 21 tackles both the travails of lesbian dating, and the entire medical regime for finding and treating breast cancer. She treats both topics with humor and self-honesty. Her stories of seeming years of nausea and hair loss from chemotherapy, made me even more thankful that my own reaction to chemotherapy was exactly one afternoon nap. (Aug 4)	?	2008	?
62	Elephant Man: (****) A one-man show telling the story of Joseph Merrick, a 19th century man who suffered from the disfiguring Proteus Disease. The host character provides a carnival barker light touch that keeps the story from becoming maudlin. I think that the use of a trapeze to provide action during Merrick's character was unneeded and misleading. (Aug 22)	?	2008	?
63	The Sword of Maximum Damage: (****) Two young men, each with an assistant, play a Dungeons and Dragon game for the world championship. While the bard detracted, the clever parallels between the characters in the dungeon, and the real competitors won me over. I loved the victor's clever and honorable solution to the final obstacle in the game. People who have not played role-playing games would probably give the play a much lower rating. (Aug 4)	?	2008	?
64	Lynn Ferguson – The Plan: (****) A one-woman black comedy has Death relating some of his/her more recent fatalities. Ms. Ferguson's quirky writing provides the necessary light touch to keep most of it funny without being silly. It is surprising to me that though I enjoyed it, little is memorable. (Aug 13)	?	2008	?

65	The Positive Hour: (****) At the behest of a social worker, a negligent mother, a single family friend, and a homebound student form a women's group. Their stories, both inside and outside of group, were well told, and seemed real. Only an encounter with a latex-hooded man seemed a little out of place, though it well served its purpose. (Aug 8)	?	2008	?
66	Borderline: (****) A borderline schizophrenic tells of his addiction to ecstasy, violence, and days in an asylum. The actor provides a fine performance as he veers from near sanity to drug induced highs to violence to withdrawal drug aided sanity. I found the play particularly interesting since my wife has counseled a borderline person. (Aug 23)	?	2008	?
67	Lynn Ferguson – Heart and Sole: (****) The one-woman show has a lonely schoolteacher falling in love with a fish at an aquarium. This quirky tale works because Ms. Ferguson allows the teacher to be self-aware enough to know she looks daft to others and yet sincere in her love. My only problem was that I could barely understand the Scottish friend's brogue. (Aug 13)	?	2008	?
68	Jabberwocky: (****) A banished young man agrees to try to slay a monster for the hand of a princess. This children's show works for kids, but is not adult fare. I gave it four stars because the 4 to 12 year old kids became engrossed as the story progressed. (Aug 7)	?	2008	?
69	I Love You! And You… And You…: (***) This is a set piece with a man explaining why each of his five relationships ended to a group of single women. The diverse stories of meeting, sharing life, and final emotional commitment thoroughly engaged me. The inexplicable lack of self-awareness that bridges the stories just does not work as a plot device. (Aug 6)	?	2008	?

70	The Art of Dating and Dumping: (***) An emcee has two actors demonstrate the right way and wrong way to go about different aspects of dating. Though this is light fair, the actors nailed the vagaries of the dating scene. I was surprised to realize how many aspects of dating continue in my own marriage. (Aug 19)	?	2008	?
71	In the Pink A Capella: (***) Eight Oxford women provide arrangements of a variety of songs. Though their harmonies work well on softer songs, their mostly thin voices cannot get the full volume needed for such songs as "Foot Loose". I found their rendition of "Both Sides Now" particularly touching. (Aug 23)	?	2008	?
72	The Patriot Act: (***) A liberal playwright must decide whether to write a play for the U.S. government, or stand trial in a military tribunal for sedition. From the opening scene where he reads key passages from the Magna Carta exhibit through his final argument with his son, he provides an impassioned defense of the rights of an individual that resonated with me. Unfortunately, the play lost much of its power because the actor playing his government adversary fell ill, and the actual author of the play took his place simply reading from the script. (Aug 20)	?	2008	?
73	East: (***) Two young men tell of the rough life in London's East End. The language is almost Shakespearean, and the two men appear as rough as their parts require. My whole problem lay in my inability to understand many of their words because of the appropriately accented language. (Aug 17)	?	2008	?
74	Strippers & Gentleman: (***) My last show had the audience roaming a space while three strippers and three white shirted young men prowled the space among us. With video, loud music, dancing behind window screen, a shower, and terse dialogue this seemed like the epitome of the Fringe experience. It was experimental, unique, imperfect, challenging, and insightful. (Aug 25)	?	2008	?

75	Sammy J in the Forest of Dreams: (***) A Londoner crawls through a portal in his kitchen, and finds himself in a puppet land of happy forest creatures seeming ruled by a selfish king. I enjoyed wide variety of puppets, from trees to birds to blobish sidekick, as well as the many allusions to feature length cartoons. Despite the puppetry whimsy, the show felt hollow with jarring tragic plot twists such as Sammy J seducing the love interest of his sidekick. (Aug 24)	?	2008	?
76	Shakespeare for Breakfast: (***) Romeo, Juliet, Macbeth, and Lady Macbeth are transported into the world of television game shows. This is light stuff with many wonderful corruptions of well known Shakespeare lines. As usual, you get tea or coffee and a croissant. (Aug 15)	?	2008	?
77	A Pirate's Life for Me: (***) A busboy in a bar is shanghaied onto a pirate ship where he must learn how to be a pirate, and then help search for buried treasure. This children's show is action packed, and utilizes soundtracks from popular movies and Benny Hill to add humor to some scenes. While the sword play is appropriately wacky for young children, there are too realistic punches and the use of "boob" that seemed misplaced. (Aug 24)	?	2008	?
78	Vincent: (***) Shortly after Vincent Van Gogh's death, his brother uses scraps of written artifacts to portray Vincent's life and argue that he was sane. It is an interesting story well told, though a little humor would have helped to break the unrelenting depressing tone. The two montages of Vincent's paintings provide a fine reminder of his diversity and talent. (Aug 14)	?	2008	?

79	Torn Out Pages: (***) A woman who suffered child abuse uses the ghost of her recently deceased mother to help overcome her fear of intimacy. I am friends with the theater company, and so had a different, probably harsher, take on this play than others I have seen. As I expected, the acting was superb and powerful. However, the omission of an admission of guilt, and unneeded, poorly presented video detract from the play's power. (Aug 8)	?	2008	?
80	The Bird & the Bee: The Bird: (***) The crippled son of a Russian immigrant whore learns of life after his mother sequesters him in his early childhood. Though the story is well told, because it is one part of a two-part play, significant aspects lack clarity. I liked the use of a slowly encroaching "wall" of cardboard boxes to signify his physical growth. (Aug 20)	?	2008	?
81	NewsRevue: (***) Two men and two women provide sketch comedy on current British topics. Though the performers had lots of talent, of all the shows I have seen, this suffered most from me being from America. I simply did not understand half of the references. (Aug 25)	?	2008	?
82	Same Time Next Week: (***) Each week a teacher talks about his girlfriend and underachieving students while his marriage counselor drinking partner talks about a couple he is counseling and his own marriage. While the plotting had potential, the marital problems of the couple in therapy seemed routine. The inability of the longtime drinking partners to reveal their troubles to each other made no sense to me. (Aug 25)	?	2008	?
83	Barry and Stuart: Part-time Warlocks: (***) Two affable fellows have a nice comedic patter as they alternate doing magic tricks. Almost all of the tricks are standard, and their sloppy work unintentionally reveals many secrets as they go. In particular, for the sword stabbing card trick, the magician inadvertently revealed that the choosing deck had multiple ace of diamonds. (Aug 23)	?	2008	?

84	Army of Reason: (***) A sinister interview of a playwright ends up starting a war between secularists and believers in England. The opening interview provides a cogent argument for secularism, and the play portrays the subsequent acts by both sides as implicitly reprehensible, but the believers are straw men. In particular, rather than providing a cogent response to a religious fanatic at the end of the play, a pedophilic pastor must simply read out loud a very, very long chapter of Leviticus that often has little relevance to modern life. (Aug 11)	?	2008	?
85	Shakespeare's R and J: (***) After hours at a boarding school, twenty-something actors play four young schoolboys re-enact an abridged version of Romeo and Juliet. The boys find all of the vitality and emotion in the play. The severe editing kept the memorable parts, but sacrificed pacing, and crucial facts. (Aug 9)	?	2008	?
86	The Aluminum Show: (***) Six dancers utilized innumerable aluminum accordion tubes and Mylar pillows to create life forms and visually striking effects. The highlight was the opening dance with each dancer within a 10' creature composed of 2' aluminum tubes. The rest of the show paled a bit in comparison despite the creative use of aluminum puppets and air blowers. (Aug 18)	?	2008	?
87	Absolution: (***) A man describes the pedophilic acts of four priests, and how he goes about murdering them. Though I found the acting and writing gripping, I left with sense of unneeded repetition. (Aug 14)	?	2008	?
88	Assassins: (***) Sondheim's musical explores the lives of nine people who tried to assassinate the president of the United States. Unlike the other musicals I have seen here, the cast had strong voices and the live band was well tempered. I just did not enjoy the subject matter. (Aug 10)	?	2008	?

89	Nycht-Hemeron: (***) Three young women dance to Dawn, a Storm, and Dusk. Only some of the slower, atmospheric parts interested me, but the piece really works when they dance to jazzy music with a beat. (Aug 17)	?	2008	?
90	The Rebel Cell: (***) In 2013 England, two former rappers debate the best way to change the political system, from within or through direct activism, while one awaits trial for bombings. The reporter, Baba Brinkman, cites philosophy and history, while the bomber, Dizraeli, recounts the lives of the downtrodden. At then end of their prison visit debate, I found it essential and perfect that the bomber asks his friend to get a message to his mother. (Aug 9)	?	2008	?
91	Who's Afraid of Howlin' Wolf: (***) An early morning blues DJ recounts his experiences with a sultry caller to his bored engineer. Whether speaking or singing, the woman commanded my attention with her smoky delivery and tight red 1950's dress. The engineer provided good comic relief and counterpoint to the DJ, but the live guitars added little. (Aug 8)	?	2008	?
92	The Highwayman: (***) A stable boy informs on a highwayman who is wooing an innkeepers daughter. Though the plot is predictable, the story is well written. The videos detract, and the noise of the cooling fans obscured the lines of the too quiet daughter. (Aug 7)	?	2008	?
93	66a Church Road: (***) A fellow describes how he came to move into a flat, grew to love it, tried to buy it, and then moved out. The odd suitcase props, his self-deprecating humor, and his explorations of love of place amused me without engendering many outright laughs. The occasional blackouts with taped voiceovers contributed little. Because the suitcase props are undersized, make sure you sit near the front to see them. (Aug 5)	?	2008	?

94	Undermind: (***) A salesman for a startup company that offers memory deadening tries convince a distraught driver with PTSD to try the treatment. As we encounter victims, girl friends, and bosses the plot explores the some of the ramifications of the introduction of such treatments. However, the plot leaves to only a brief coda the meaty territory of how memory neutralizing would affect an ongoing relationship. (Aug 6)	?	2008	?
95	Our Country's Good: (***) In 1789, a Lieutenant tries to use convicts to present the first play in the Sydney penal colony. The play does a good job of portraying the many facets of the rough life in a colony barely able to feed itself. The lack of projection by the actors made many lines unintelligible. (Aug 10)	?	2008	?
96	Yasser: (***) A Palestinian tells of his boyhood in Palestine, his respect for Yasser Arafat, and performing Shakespeare's Shylock, a Jew. The play wastes the strong acting as it jumps back and forth between different settings forcing him to re-establish his character and the mood. The story wastes time on a stolen suitcase, when an airport scene already conveys the difficulties of being a Palestinian in Britain. (Aug 19)	?	2008	?
97	One from the Heart – in concert: (***) Two singers and a band perform ten songs written by Tom Waits from the movie of the Coppola movie 'One from the Heart'. Her voice was good, and it was fun to have a full string section for the ballads, but he sang too quietly. While 'Broken Bicycles' has novel, evocative lyrics, others songs seemed rife with clichés. (Aug 22)	?	2008	?
98	Glenn Wool – Goodbye Scar(***) Glenn provides a standup routine with mixed results. He has some fine set pieces, but his patter is mediocre. I found his piece about stifling a giggly marijuana laugh in a queue for 'Shindler's List' the best of the night. (Aug 19)	?	2008	?

99	The Straight Man: (***) A man who wants to marry outside his faith tries to win over his fiercely Jewish mother by saying he wishes to marry a gay Black man. The two marrying men stay within the bounds of reality while the rest of the cast goes to extremes. Had they backed off this could have been quite good. (Aug 9)	?	2008	?
100	Root of -1: (***) Separately and together a couple seeks help from a counselor to deal with the loss of her young sister who was a math prodigy. Numbers pervade the script as the woman decides to continue her sister's math course, and a nursery rhyme involving numbers figures prominently. While the novel ongoing references to the properties of numbers proved interesting to me as a computer scientist, the story of reconciliation with grief seemed mundane. (Aug 8)	?	2008	?
101	Black Stuff: (***) A honeymooning couple find themselves stuck at a very remote gas station in Latin America. What starts out as an engaging piece on economic and cultural differences takes an unsatisfying turn into absurdist theater with instant wars, and unreasonable flash floods. The highlight of the show had the station owner dancing to the rhythm of locking and unlocking the couples SUV as he manipulates its remote key. (Aug 11)	?	2008	?
102	Involution: (***) In the future, a young man nags his sister and friend to take their drugs for a genetic disease while the Christian government uses DNA coding to regulate employment. The writing works well for all of the relationships, particularly the love between brother and sister. A barely audible Christian actress, and a superfluous sex robot detracted from the play. (Aug 13)	?	2008	?
103	FxP2 in Trouble!: (***) Four young men provide a variety of comedy sketches. The kept the sketches with punch lines appropriately short. They have two send-ups of music videos that the younger people just loved. (Aug 17)	?	2008	?

104	Sketchy Beast: (***) I found this young troupe of five(?) men and one woman presented sketch comedy that was better than other amateurs I have seen. While there is still too much reliance on silliness, there are some good characterizations. The scenes utilizing the fine talents of the comedienne rise over all the others. (Aug 10)	?	2008	?
105	Max and Ivan: Exposed –The Edinburgh Fringe: (***) Two comedians present sketch comedy while waiting for a telephone call reporting important breaking news. I am afraid I must lump this in with the other amateur sketch comedies. There are a few good sketches, but the poor ones really hurt the whole. (Aug 25)	?	2008	?
106	Anna the Slut and the (almost) Chosen One: (***) On his 21st birthday, a very nice guy visits a bar for the first time and tries to chat up a sexy woman who turns out to be a goddess. The play mixes current live action with the shadow puppet story of how the goddess became trapped in Hell. The play works because the Christopher Reeve-like protagonist seems so genuinely nice and naïve. (Aug 17)	?	2008	?
107	The Miller's Tale: (***) We see the original bawdy Miller's Tale by Chaucer intermingled with an updated version with a supposedly gay PhD student seducing the wife of his bigoted upper crust landlord. The translation to modern times works very well. While the landlord's gullibility matches, his horrible table manners played badly against type. (Aug 17)	?	2008	?
108	1913 or Nude Descending a Staircase: (***) Four actresses portray the real events of the Russian Countess Tarnowska who was tried in Venice for having one her lovers kill her fiancé in 1913. The prologue tells us that she was a captivating young woman, but we only see her beauty and desperation throughout her story. This dour, one-note play is missing the humor, and vivacity that she must have had. (Aug 15)	?	2008	?

109	Boys of the Empire: (***) A gay schoolboy finds love, spanking, hazing, odd teachers, and intrigue at his new public school. The play relies on a peculiarly British fascination with schoolboy homosexuality and spanking for much of its humor, and has as its moral that is better to be loyal to your school chums than to your family and friends that their parents have had killed. Though much of the audience loved this stuff, I found it "tasteless", particularly after a cast member took my daily Guinness, then drank it on stage, and never bothered to replace it! (Aug 19)	?	2008	?
110	Kiss of the Spider Woman: (***) The warden of a Latin American prison tries to coerce the gay man to gather information from his revolutionary cellmate. This play had three problems with its songs that conspired to muddle a good play: weak voices, an over loud orchestra, and poor sound engineering that often failed the singers. (Aug 4)	?	2008	?
111	Mother Land: (***) Intertwined monologues repeat the recorded words of more than ten wives and mothers of soldiers assigned to Iraq. While the topic is certainly of great import and power, the choice to alternate throughout the telling of each pair of monologues seriously detracted from their impact. The effort to understand so many heartfelt discontinuous heavily accented (for me) stories wore me out. (Aug 4)	?	2008	?
112	Sir Barrington Granch: My Life is Art: (***) Set in his mansion's drawing room, this play follows the fictional career of an 85-year-old actor from his first surprisingly successful audition while swatting at a wasp to final TV cameos. The story is replete with video of films and TV shows, and photos with real stars. The comedy is light and inconsequential. (Aug 7)	?	2008	?

113	Simply Fancy: (***) An addled father and each of his two teen children go on separate quests for fruit in their magical land. As the title indicates, this is a wonderfully fanciful comedy full of whimsy. Unfortunately, I lost interest as the Teviot Turret became unbearably hot. (Aug 20)	?	2008	?
114	Secret Agents: (***) A jazz obsessed secret agent has only one week to foment a terrorist act in London. The plot is humorous, but the play needs serious cutting. The shows projected text and scenes to great effect. (Aug 11)	?	2008	?
115	X-Files Improv with Dean Haglund: (***) The host creates a stereotypical X-Files episode utilizing audience participation and suggestions. While I laughed often, I realize now that Mr. Haglund spent much of his time ridiculing his audience participants after he had set them sometimes difficult predetermined tasks. When it came to utilizing audience suggestions, he could repeat them during the episode, but lacked the clever elaborations that mark a fine improv performer. (Aug 4)	?	2008	?
116	Whacker Murphy's Bad Buzz: (***) A young Irish man tries various schemes to come up with 1500 pounds in three days after a sale of stolen DVD players falls through. The story has many of the fanciful embellishments of a good Irish tale. I particularly liked the part where his plan to euthanize an old dog by feeding him MSG laden Chinese food fails as the limping dog goes into a frenzy and bounds over a fence. (Aug 13)	?	2008	?
117	Volpone: (***) A man feigns a grave illness and with the aid of his servant dupes prospective heirs to give him gifts. Though Jonson's farce has a clever plot, the company still found it necessary to play this with over the top characterizations and silliness. The addition of a subplot involving a television travel reporter added nothing. (Aug 23)	?	2008	?

118	There's Something in the Fridge that Wants to Kill Me!: (***) A woman tells of her efforts to manage her eating while dealing with her Spanish, French, and English cultural roots. Isabelle Gregson is slim, pretty, and vivacious, but should not be singing in this. Her trim body undermines the oft cited theme of having legs like tree stumps and big Spanish butt. This last point became moot when days later I learned that the show was an autobiography of Ms. Gregson. (Aug 15)	?	2008	?
119	The Shadow: (***) A poet that only writes of beauty and light has his shadow leave him in a quest for truth. While I liked the allegorical device of the shadow to argue for the necessity of darkness and ugliness to have real truth, the later plot of role reversal and sickly princesses did not work for me. (Aug 24)	?	2008	?
120	Lady Garden: (***) Six actresses provide sketches. Though I was occasionally bemused, nothing here engendered an outright laugh. The amateur sketch comedies just do not seem satisfying this year. (Aug 20)	?	2008	?
121	The Boom Jennies: Shindig: (***) Three women present sketches ranging from cheeses on platter to preparing for an 18th birthday gala. Many sketches were of the form of confusing build-up with a final punch line that clarifies. It hurt the show that the actresses seemed to keep the same characterizations throughout, whether cheese or dancers. (Aug 6)	?	2008	?
122	Oxford Imps: (***) Seven Oxford students provide improv based on audience suggestions. Two years ago, I had given the Imps five stars so I was expecting quite a lot from them. By comparison, this team seemed quite pedestrian, often relying on mundane repetition instead of wacky creativity. (Aug 20)	?	2008	?

123	Pornography: (***) We follow the lives of several sets of people in the days leading up to the subway bombing in London. The stories for which the bombing is of only tangential significance seem banal. Those more on point had more poignancy. I found particularly touching a scene where an old woman forced to walk a long distance home courteously requests some barbequed chicken from a homeowner. (Aug 1)	?	2008	?
124	Tina C. – Tick My Box: (**) The show is treated as a purported campaign rally for a country western drag queen singer who is running for U.S. president in 2008. The canned music backed by a live choir is good, but most of lyrics are forgettable. It particularly bothered me that she did not have well rehearsed answers for obvious questions, such as Iraq, during a planned ten-minute Q and A session about her policies. (Aug 21)	?	2008	?
125	Theatre of Sex: (**) A man and a woman provide a taste of their Academy of Sex that is suppose to improve the sex lives of its students. Though the topic is sex, their dry, deadpan delivery provides no titillation, nor spark. Between the small audience, and the methodical presentation, the show just had very little energy. (Aug 13)	?	2008	?
126	Old Girls: (**) When five glamorous, wealthy women gather for a reunion, murder ensues. Except for one moment of sincerity involving a gift, everything is over the top in this farce. I suppose the idea was that the audience would enjoy seeing each of the haughty, self-centered women killed, but I cared little. (Aug 10)	?	2008	?

127	Dr. Brown and Duncan Bolt: (**) Duncan Bolt needed notes written on his hand to remind him of the new jokes with which he opened this twin bill of comedy. His infrequent explosion of rapid-fire descriptions usually worked, but there was a lot of time nervously wasted. In perfect contrast, Dr. Brown's deadpan minimalist persona had the audience rapt from the moment of his entrance. One audience member with infectious laughter who tested Brown's composure, and another who good naturedly attempted to mimic the minimalist provided fodder for ten minutes of unrepeatable laughter. (Aug 8)	?	2008	?
128	New World Order: (**) Using Shakespearean language, this one-man play has a king explain how to manipulate the masses in terms of 9/11 with a layman occasionally commenting on the king's lecture. While the language has a few beautiful lines, the king's lecture is scattered and repetitive. I found the conspiracy theory laden script unconvincing. (Aug 22)	?	2008	?
129	Tied Up in Knotts: (**) Karen Knotts provides an autobiography as well as a homage to her comedian father Don Knotts. I could feel her love for her father, and sincerity throughout. Unfortunately, the writing is leadened, with each joke falling achingly flat. (Aug 13)	?	2008	?
130	Architecting: (**) In the American Old South, we see three stories of reconstructing lives intermingled. The play uses a proposed re-make of the "Gone with the Wind" film to fine effect to explore the Reconstruction of the South after the Civil War. However, the other two stories of more personal resurrections were a mess that made the play too long, and severely reduced the power of the first. (Aug 12)	?	2008	?

131	The Tailor of Inverness: (**) A Polish immigrant tells of his family's ordeals during World War II. While the underlying story is quite dramatic, this tale has too many proper nouns. I was a little tired, but it seemed to me that only his story of his rise from apprentice to plant supervisor avoids the curse of a flood of city names and family names. (Aug 14)	?	2008	?
132	Womb Man: (**) A monkey is transformed into a man while dealing with the repeated appearances of male historical figures, and then the process is restarted as it is transformed into a woman with female figures. While the actor certainly demonstrates tremendous range and energy, the script is too frenetic. Rather than longer deep discussions of man's motives, the play treats us to as many as six characters arguing with each other in less than a minute. (Aug 22)	?	2008	?
133	The Gymnast: (**) Physical theater depicts events related to the Pol Pot regime in Cambodia that killed hundreds of thousands Cambodians. Despite the tremendous effort of the talented dancer/actress, I could comprehend almost no aspect of the play. A huge chest of drawers topped with a large shrine cabinet served many imaginative purposes—from disappearing act to stairway. (Aug 11)	?	2008	?
134	The Exquisite Corpse: (**) The theater company presents fifteen scenes in random order that deal with dogs, death, angels, dates, and soul searching, among other desperate topics. The actors do a fine job with each scene, but the scenes did not form a cohesive whole for me. Instead of one playwright carefully crafting a single story that could be randomized, they present a hodgepodge written by many. (Aug 10)	?	2008	?

135	Generation Divide: (**) A 45 year old former Punk rocker, and a posh twenty-something split an hour of comedy. The older fellow spent most of his time telling of life as it relates to his punk core, and generated only a few chuckles from the small audience. Having learned from his partner's experience, the posh found the his recently written doggerel had a much better reception. (Aug 7)	?	2008	?
136	Silence in C Minor: (**) Two office workers trapped in a massive Orwellian company try to discover the truth of their situation. There is lots of silliness here, but it had little soul. I did find engaging the way the lead would literally slide from one character into another. (Aug 9)	?	2008	?
137	Jumping the Shark: (**) Several young men provide mostly uninspired sketches. None of it memorable. (Aug 7)	?	2008	?
138	Crypt of a Thousand Horrors: (**) A fellow mostly reads horror tales based in and around Edinburgh. He does a fine job reading, and the tales are well written. It is just that I come to Fringe for more than reading hour at the library. (Aug 6)	?	2008	?
139	Wanderlust: (**) A woman on stilts brings the whole audience on stage and has them dance, massage each other, wave a fabric tent, drink vodka, and many other things while she tells the story of her life. The whole scene is surreal, and would work best if the audience was already a little bit smashed. Her story is too bizarre to comprehend, and serves only as distraction and filler. (Aug 23)	?	2008	?
140	Edges: (**) This musical uses two couples to explore modern dating. The four must sing every line, and the lyrics have neither rhyme, nor convincing sentiment. The piano and bass provide good music, but the drummer should be eliminated, or at least taught how to play softly. With only one strong voice, the only highlight is when the entire cast sings about Facebook while accompanied by slides of their Facebook pages. (Aug 14)	?	2008	?

141	She Stoops to Conquer: (**) A young man and woman play tricks on their parents, and lovers in 19th century England. I found it difficult to stay alert during this long, lifeless play. Each character seemed to be a cipher rather than a whole person with which I could I identify, and thus care about. (Aug 6)	?	2008	?
142	Augury and Entropy: (**) These three high concept dance pieces proved fairly inaccessible to me. I liked the circus-like rope tying and balancing, and one segment of the very long final piece. The arrhythmic, atmospheric music did not help. (Aug 8)	?	2008	?
143	Actor's Nightmare: (**) An accountant awakens to find himself an understudy rushed into plays in a theater company of which he has no memory. The play uses his amnesia as only a source for broad laughs as he tries to guess his lines under the unrelenting gaze of co-stars and spotlight. It descends to questionable slapstick in the final scene. (Aug 6)	?	2008	?
144	Greg Fleet and Friends: (**) As with all late night samplers, this show is as good as its host and booker. Most of Fleet's routines are funny, but his patter is dull and his "friend" is fine guitarist with lousy lyrics that kills the room. The three comedians ranged from very good, to decent, to barely passable. (Aug 5)	?	2008	?
145	Mommie & the Minister: (**) Two children spend twenty years locked in a rat-infested basement by their mother. The unrealistic bizarre behavior of adults growing up in such a cramped unchanging environment provides the bulk of the play. Because the actors yell almost all of their lines, there is little room emotional content. (Aug 4)	?	2008	?
146	The New Electric Ballroom: (**) Three spinster sisters remain stuck in their home re-enacting the older sisters one failed romantic effort over and over again. Long pauses, and dull characters make this quite boring. Only the daily fishmonger's tale of insecurity brings any life to their lives and the play. (Aug 2)	?	2008	?

147	Dinner: (**) A haughty wife hires an ominous waiter for a special dinner for her author husband, his old vegan flame, and his microbiologist friend and sexpot wife. Though each character has a few lines that give them heart they remain shallow because the play fails to develop such moments into whole scenes. There is some wit here, such as primordial soup, but, despite a lot of yelling, it felt dull. (Aug 16)	?	2008	?
148	Calvin Wynter's V.I.P. Lounge: (*) This midnight cabaret presents three acts with comedian Calvin Wynter as the emcee. Because I thought it unfair to rate it on a poor first night of the Festival, I revisited it the last weekend. In both cases, it was substandard. Of the five acts I watched over the two nights, only one was worth viewing. The last night started a half hour late, and Wynter's continued to choose to be an absentee host speaking from the wings rather than providing some of his own material to warm the crowd and segue between acts. (Aug 1 and 22)	?	2008	?
149	Out of Your Knowledge: (*) An actor, accompanied by a violinist, provides modern day observations as well those of the poet John Clare as he retraces the poet's 1841 trip from his asylum back to his home 90 miles away. While some of Clare's writing is lyrical, much of the script is mundane observations of how things have changed. As the play proceeded, I kept looking at the provided map, and measured how much more boredom I would have to withstand. (Aug 21)	?	2008	?
150	All Dressed Up To Go Dreaming: (*) A man in top hat and tails criticizes opera, and then serenades a woman. The actor is a quite talented song and dance man, but this is a scene, not a play. This deserves only one star for charging 6.50 for a scant 15 minutes of performance. (Aug 20)	?	2008	?

151	Fawn: (*) A woman riding on a tram suddenly finds herself running in a forest, and then she is in a hospital bed. The play has an incredibly slow pace with few words, and is even less coherent than the "plot" indicates. At one point, she is running in place facing toward the audience while the video behind her is also moving towards us instead of receding. The only redeeming part is a short section where she relates a story of her daughter's near drowning. (Aug 15)	?	2008	?
152	Apocalypse: The Musical: (*) The Devil convinces God that he needs to start Apocalypse, and they decide to use a dairyman and whore in a rural American town as their recruiters for their respective armies. With nary a strong voice, nor clever song, this off-the-wall play just never interested me. However, I did find the antics and dancing of the Devil amusing. (Aug 3)	?	2008	?
153	One on One & Working Saturdays: (no stars) This is actually two plays with one scene each. Working Saturdays has two bored shipping receiving clerks trying to kill time. One on One has a man brutally torture a bound man, and nothing else. Though the acting was superb in the latter, I found absolutely nothing enjoyable in watching a man convincingly torture another man. At one point, he pours bathtub cleaner in his victim's eye, and we then watch as the man writhes in pain for a full minute. It is the most revolting play I have ever seen.	?	2008	?

1	End of the Rainbow (*****) Judy Garland's piano accompanist and fiancé try to help her with her six-week comeback at London's Talk of the Town nightclub in 1968, months before she died of an overdose. Every aspect of this show is perfect. Not only can Caroline O'Connor perform Garland's songs beautifully, but she nails the scenes in the hotel room when we see the pill-popping, hard drinking personality side of Garland as she tries to once again give her all to her audiences. While I expected the lead to be excellent, the talented acting and piano playing of her devoted gay accompanist matched her. (Aug 15)	?	2006	?
2	Knots (*****) Three men and three women dancers explore the vagaries of romance and early marriage. I found the movements innovative, appropriate to their theme, and had just the right amount of repetition. It was kick to see the many uses they found for six Plexiglas closets from initial individual turmoil to final marital fights. (Aug 19)	?	2006	?
3	Dusty Limits is Heartless (*****) Much the same as last year, when I found Holly Penfield's cabaret act wonderful, this year I found Dusty captivating. His non-stop patter about his fab gay life and his renditions of great songs with added lyrics were perfect for me. He ended the act with back to back show stopping renditions of an updated Cole Porter's "Bee's Do It", and Doctor Doolittle's "Talk to the Republicans". (Aug 7)	?	2006	?

4	One-Man Star Wars Trilogy (*****) Just as the title indicates an actor recreates the complete Star Wars Trilogy. With no props, he provides all of the snippets of verbatim dialogue, music, sound effects, and visual effects to tell the stories completely. As Star Wars fans, the audience and I were rapt as he recreates one memorable scene after another. Some are only 5 seconds long, while others last more than a minute. It is fun to see how he portrays the strange creatures of Lucas' universe. His version of Jabba the Hut, complete with huge slurping tongue, is inspired. This is a reverent homage, so he keeps his sly asides to a minimum. I would only recommend this to people who know the films fairly well. (Aug 24)	?	2006	?
5	Girl Blog from Iraq: Baghdad Burning (*****) Four women and a man read from, and provide context for the real blogs of a 24-year old Iraqi woman. She started her blogging when the Coalition invaded in 2003, and the play has a blog from August 6th of this year. The presentation is straightforward, but this may help to not obscure the power of her words. (Aug 10)	?	2006	?
6	Dialogues 2006 (*****) ends Aug 12th! Six diverse pieces of dance and/or music all done at the top level. There were so many highlights that I feel bad that I will only mention a couple. The first piece, "Group Therapy" had four duets choreographed to a variety of recorded pop tunes. The most fun of the duets had a narcoleptic woman who constantly went limp on her partner. The second piece, "Epitaph", had the dancers perform to a string trio while the writer/composer read a witty set of epitaphs. The rest of show had an original violin solo, a dance to Shostakovich, a John Cage piano solo, and finally dances to a set of Joe Cocker tunes. (Aug 11)	?	2006	?

7	Holly Penfield – Both Sides Now (*****) The singer, with a trio of musicians, has created a show that explores the two sides of her career: nice songwriter and "wicked" cabaret singer. Most of the songs she wrote are tender ballads ala Joni Mitchell, while her voice reminds me of Judy Garland. Holly is the consummate showman; during the show she maneuvers through the pews so that she can interact with almost every member of the audience. (Aug 22)	?	2006	?
8	Seven Points for 'Love' (*****) With the help of his intended's teenage sister, a young man tries to use scrabble to propose marriage. While this is quite light fare, the charming performances of all make this quite winning. Yeah it is fluff, but it is well done fluff. (Aug 14)	?	2006	?
9	Tom Crean- Antarctic Explorer (*****) Based on the real life of a regular crewman on three expeditions of to the Antarctic, this one-man show provides an engrossing description of the travails of this man. Besides his adventures on the ice, I found his extended description of his clothing particularly fascinating. (Aug 5)	?	2006	?
10	A Boat's Yer Whole World (*****) This one-woman show portrays the life of a woman who spent her whole life on the towboats of the canals of England during the first half of the twentieth century. The narrative poignantly describes her marriage, her work as first mate steering the boat while her husband led the horse 160' ahead, and the trials of being a mother on the Cut. (Aug 6)	?	2006	?
11	And Even My Goldfish (*****) In this physical theater piece, a very tall man tires to recapture a lost love while dealing with an insistent cleaning lady. There is an ineffable clarity to the piece that just feels right. There are many memorable moments, including a small man climbing inside the coat of the lead, and feet becoming gold in a fish bowl. (Aug 14)	?	2006	?

12	Floating (*****) The multimedia performance art tale of how the island Anglesea sails around the Atlantic was a perfect Fringe experience for me. Unlike anything else I have seen, the two performers operate a slide, overhead, and laptop projectors while acting out the story using chains, dunking their heads, outlining the whole story, skateboarding on the island map, passing around wrestling magazines, and so many other things. This is not some high concept incomprehensible show; this is a well designed performance piece that all around me loved and admired. (Aug 16)	?	2006	?
13	The London Underground Song (And Other Ballads) (*****) Dr. Adam Kay, a real anesthetist, performs countless ditties he has written about girlfriends, medicine, and many other topics. The shorter pieces have the feel of Douglas Adams—a couple of short lines followed by a punch line. He has two Lord High Executioner type songs in which he deftly negotiates a tight list of drugs or subjects, as well as rag reminiscent of Tom Lehrer. Please be warned that there are many songs are off-color. (Aug 16)	?	2006	?
14	Paper Flowers (*****) A lonely Chilean woman, who initially allowed a hunted tramp to stay the day, finds her apartment and life drawn into his mesmerizing chaos. I found the portrayals of her need and debasement as well as his angry self-possession both riveting throughout. (Aug 13)	?	2006	?
15	Esme Tales (*****) Based on six short stories revolving around, though not necessarily including, a free spirited schoolgirl. We see stories of her classroom, her mother and father, her teacher's sister, and a young man who loves dust. The stories combined with the original music proved quite moving for me. (Aug 9)	?	2006	?

16	Out of the Blue (*****) After seeing this Oxford A Cappella last year, and giving them 5 stars, I looked forward to seeing them again. They did not disappoint. I loved all but one All but one of the songs was perfect. Their choreography is even better than last year. (Aug 27)	?	2006	?
17	Hamp (*****) A firing squad looms over a guileless, shell shocked soldier as he is court-martialed for desertion in 1918. The power of this play lies in simple honesty of Hamp, and the growing misgivings of his conflicted attorney. Both actors carry off their roles beautifully. The only weak point in the trial occurs when the medical officer is dismissed from his testimony before properly answering questions about shell shock. (Aug 20)	?	2006	?
18	Cabin Fever (*****) A veteran shipboard emcee/comedian tries to get his new boss to appreciate his talent. The comedian provides a wonderful characterization of life among shipboard entertainers. It is worth seeing this show just for the section where he creates the first five minutes of a show, including commentary about what is happening in the audience. (Aug 23)	?	2006	?
19	Nosferatu (*****) A musical about a married man in a rigid town who sells the house next to his the vampire Nosferatu. The young cast carries off this tale in winning fashion. All leads have fine voices, and their stylized acting as music box robots makes the story all the creepier. (Aug 22)	?	2006	?
20	The Unsinkable Clerk (*****) A shy clerk with a precise routine for every day is suddenly transported into the middle of an ocean where he meets Jonah inside the whale. This play abounds with whimsy as the pair share adventures in the whale, on board a doomed cruise ship, and on an island paradise. The facial contortions and demeanor of the clerk reminded me of Wallace of Wallace and Grommet. (Aug 25)	?	2006	?

21	Rose (*****) Fiona York plays the role of a Jewish woman whose life takes her from Russia to the Warsaw Ghetto to the Exodus to Atlantic City to Miami to Israel. There are poignant moments at each stop as we hear of the Jewish community and her family. This is not a black and white portrait, but a life of many shades of gray. At one point she channels her beloved first husband, and then finally understands her mundane second husband. (Aug 26)	?	2006	?
22	The Hamlet Project (*****) This small, young company successfully condenses Shakespeare's play about a prince who must deal with the assassination of his father by his uncle. I found it fascinating to watch as two actors shared the role of Hamlet by perfectly alternating lines. Their constant back and forth was a great metaphor for the conflicted Hamlet. As usual, Ophelia's death scene is the only drag on the play. (Aug 25)	?	2006	?
23	Other People (****) A witty comedy about two flatmates growing apart as one heads on to marriage, and the other stands still, except in his work as a human statue. The script complements the quips about English history, Paul McCartney, and video games bandied between the two longtime friends, with their bittersweet observations about their personal lives. The maturing man manages to be sincere about his love for his girlfriend while still playing a video game with his pal. The stunted man rang true with his adolescent obsession with inside jokes and trivia. (Aug 6)	?	2006	?
24	The Government Inspector (****) The corrupt officials of a remote town mistake a penniless aristocrat for an inspector for the Russian Czar, and fond over him. The large gap-year cast did a remarkable job with all aspects of this play. As the play unfolded, I imagined what the Czar thought when it was presented to him! (Aug 18)	?	2006	?

25	Into the Hoods (****) The tales of Rapuntzel, Little Red Riding Hood, Jack and the Beanstalk, and Cinderella are set in the hip-hop world of an inner city apartment tower. Initially there is a sameness to the hip-hop dancing, but about a third of the way in the cast starts to really explore the possibilities, including a nice quiet piece. This is one of the few times that the use of a large back screen for videos and scenery worked well. (Aug 24)	?	2006	?
26	Story Shakespeare: The Tempest (****) With the help of two magical creatures, an exiled king maroons his enemies on the island he controls. The large, young cast does a superb job of adapting the play to one hour. One of the many highlights was seeing the monster Calaban played by two people at once. (Aug 19)	?	2006	?
27	Neville's Island (****) During a teamwork exercise, four businessmen become marooned on an island in a lake. Although they are caricatures, the mix of an unstable Christian ornithologist, a softhearted leader, a witty sarcastic complainer, and precise accountant provides the basis of many funny and touching moments. (Aug 26)	?	2006	?
28	Clinically Famous (****) A woman portrays a former soap opera star describing her career from want to be to beloved household name to patient in a clinic for celebrities. Her observations of each stage had a fine mix of comedy, drama, and insight. She learns the cost of fame when her role is changed from good wife to an evil betrayed wife, and the public turns against her in real life. (Aug 22)	?	2006	?
29	The Oxford Gargoyles – Jazz A Cappella (****) What can I say? I love good A Cappella, and these singers had the voices and song selection to win my heart. (Aug 19)	?	2006	?

30	Jack the Lad (****) While one actor portrays a male prostitute telling his life's story, another portrays each of his clients. The tale is told with many ingenious references to Jack and the Beanstalk, including a set of keys with hollow beans with contents that lead him to the house of a giant pimp. I know it sounds hokey, but fairy tale is well hidden under the gritty realism of the son of a poor single mother surviving in a harsh world. (Aug 24)	?	2006	?
31	Killing Time (****) A married woman gives a good Samaritan a ride to his home, and then discovers he has a dark side. This intriguing thriller has many plot twists as the couple proceeds from supposed seduction to criminal conspiracy. Unhappily, the last event was predictable. More importantly, when viewed in the context of the final plot twist, many of the actions of the woman do not jibe with her final characterization. (Aug 26)	?	2006	?
32	Carbon Fever (****) Two men are trapped in grocery store when four feet of carbon covers the Earth. Though beer, Pringles, and sanitation issues are common topics, this tale is not as vulgar as it sounds. These fellows are trapped, and they don't forget it. (Aug 24)	?	2006	?
33	Blues Brothers Banned at the Fringe (****) Jake and Elwood take the stage with a horn section and two back-up singers. I got what I expected—high energy blues with enough shenagins to keep the audience loose in their seats. When the bass player took the mike, I suddenly realized what a really good voice would sound like in that context. The one problem with the show was once they got people out of their seats dancing, they would occasionally use riffs that were undanceable and dampen the spirit of the crowd. (Aug 19)	?	2006	?

34	Past Half Remembered (****) Four musician/actors and the lead recap the life of a centarian Russian woman using a mix of music, acting, and serio-comic physical theater. Besides her courtship and marriage, both World Wars and the Bolshevik revolution all have serious impact on her and her husband. The touch is light, but at 1945 I was scared we had only seen half of what would have been an overlong play, but my fears were unwarranted since it ended shortly. (Aug 16)	?	2006	?
35	Lolita (****) Nabakov's play about a pedophile who becomes obsessed with his stepdaughter. I found both leads played their complex parts well: the pedophile was both restrained and yet sexually obsessed, and Lolita was both manipulative and yet hurt. Only the drama teacher seemed out of place with his almost campy performance. Since my wife is a therapist who deals with child abusers, I was surprised to see Lolita so well adjusted in her later marriage. (Aug 20)	?	2006	?
36	Waiting for Romeo (****) In a war torn city, a woman who hasn't left her flat for a year, and her pregnant sister must suddenly deal with a roguish sniper. The story is well drawn as each pairing of the trio is explored. The only fault I could find is that the rogue was inconsistent in his ability to con his victims. (Aug 23)	?	2006	?
37	Marlon Brando's Corset (****) The dysfunctional cast of a popular medical TV show deal with the scriptwriter's criticism in a variety of ways, including murder. Though the cast is stereotypical with blonde bimbo, witless hunk, jealous second banana, and smart actress, most of their interactions are fun. The scriptwriter's witty lines and quips are the highlights, while the part after the murder becomes broader, and less interesting. (Aug 16)	?	2006	?
38	The Allotment (****) A middle-aged horticultural therapy grad student brings four recent immigrants together to rehabilitate a garden plot as therapy. All five characters are well etched, and except for the student, each is unpredictable. (Aug 10)	?	2006	?

39	Lies Have Been Told (****) A one-man show with Philip York portraying Robert Maxwell, the British publishing tycoon who died mysteriously after having been found to have cooked the books. The forceful York does a fine job of blustering through this tale of a teenage Czech Jew that fled and then fought the Nazis, and later parlayed his good looks, charm, and multi-lingualism into a publishing empire built on loans. Along the way, he explores the need for more (arising from childhood hunger), and the anti-Semitic prejudice that Maxwell felt throughout his adult life. My only complaint was that York chose to where a football (soccer) uniform for the last act to symbolize Maxwell's efforts to fit in with the British. I suppose the point was that it was silly for Maxwell to try to fit in, but I just found that it weakened the impersonization. (Aug 6)	?	2006	?
40	Dominic Holland Stands Up (****) Dominic's stand-up routine is a mix of describing life as the father of four, and wry observations about life in England in general. He began with a nice 10-minute riff based on the heat of the room and the fact that there were two kids in the front row. I appreciate comedians that are clever enough to work with the moment without resorting to sex and swearing. (Aug 5)	?	2006	?
41	My Name is Rachel Corrie (****) A powerful true story of an idealistic young American woman who is bulldozed to death by the Israelis while trying to intervene for the Palestinians in Gaza. Her performance is spot on throughout, and her tales told from the Gaza completely engrossing. However, I gave it four stars because the first part of the story, set in America, seemed rather slow. This, combined with "Girl Blog from Iraq" (*****), made for quite a day to ponder the plight of the innocent people being hurt by America and its proxies. (Aug 10)	?	2006	?

42	Andy's Promise (****) A high school senior promises his brother on his mother's life that he will not lie for a week. When he lies to his disabled sister, the story takes an intriguing turn as his mother suddenly has a stroke. Though what I saw was quite good, I wish they did not have to shorten the play; they left many aspects incompletely explored. (Aug 6)	?	2006	?
43	Lippy Bissoms (****) Poetry from four middle aged women from Crieff, Scotland addressing the topics of money, travel, celebrations, family, and sex. This will not be to everyone tastes, but I found myself saying "huh" after many of the poems. Not the "huh" of "what?", but the "huh" of something resonating in my soul. Between many poems, they use a nice device of each describing their ideal man in one sentence using the same word in different ways. BTW, "bissoms" is a Scottish word that only roughly translates as gossips. (Aug 7)	?	2006	?
44	Dickens and Twain : Crossing the Pond (****) Two actors portray Charles Dickens and Mark Twain discussing their lectures when they performed in each other's country. Virtually all of the script is excerpts from their own writing with the elegance of Dickens and the quips of Twain much in evidence. It was fascinating to hear of their century old observations about the visited countries; America is rough but generous for Dickens, and England was beautiful and civilized for Twain. (Aug 11)	?	2006	?
45	The Syringa Tree (****) A white woman tells of her life in the countryside of South Africa from 1962 to now, with the majority of time spent when she was six years old. The play brings to life apartheid in the most personal terms. The actress does a marvelous job of portraying the people of her life, particularly her maid. (Aug 25)	?	2006	?

46	Farewell to the Tooth Fairy (****) 72-year-old comedian Lynn Ruth Miller describes events from her life. I found the stories heartwarming. I particularly enjoyed her story of how she befriended a poor boy with stinking fish sandwiches, and then went on to find that he was a great dancer (and vote-rigger). (Aug 14)	?	2006	?
47	Normal (****) Based on a true story in 1932, a young defense lawyer has a series of conversations with a serial killer in Dusseldorf to determine if he is sane. The unrepentant killer ensnares the lawyer as he good naturedly describes his life from abusive father to murder at 9 to dysfunctional marriage to his the last of his 42 attempted murders. The whole tale is engrossing, and argues that evil can be normal. Only a fantastical killing by the lawyer weakens the play. (Aug 11)	?	2006	?
48	Turning Trix (****) The lives of a young shaking drunk and his poetic drunken protector change with the arrival of a soft hearted prostitute and illness. I found the selective use of rhyming between characters a novel and winning theatric device. The three primary actors were all strong. (Aug 13)	?	2006	?
49	Clean Alternatives (****) The president of a small company is offered money to keep her company afloat just so her competitors don't run afoul of the pollution laws. The writing is fast and witty with big business the target a most barbs. However, the plot does wander a bit astray a bit, and some of the writing seems to be there to show the prowess of the playwright. (Aug 28)	?	2006	?
50	Delicious (****) A marvelous pianist and two female singers deliver popular songs ranging from "Tunisia" to "No Business Like Show Business." I was surprised by their many whimsical costumes. They followed the tradition of pseudo-competition and banter leading up to "Together". They had fine voices for both their solos and duets. (Aug 8)	?	2006	?

51	The Black Jew Dialogues (****) A Black and a Jew explore the differences and similarities of their ethnic history in America. Their style is light and comedic, while videos provide more serious content occasionally. This is a wonderful blend of content and humor. (Aug 22)	?	2006	?
52	Bouncers –1990 remix (****) Four men portray 50 characters as they look at life from the view as bouncers at a popular late night pub. It takes a while to get to know which characters they are portraying at any given moment, but once I became acquainted with the repeated people the mix worked quite well. Not surprisingly, I found the four soliloquies by the sensitive head bouncer, Lucky Eddie, the best part of the show. (Aug 7)	?	2006	?
53	The New Standard (****) Last year, I saw Steve Lawson alone with his bass and looping machine. This year he appears with vocalist Julie McKee. Together they create an appealing soft jazz duet. She clearly has mastered looping over her own vocals. However, my favorite song was "Get Ready", in which he laid down a simple loop, and then both worked with each other. If you don't like soft jazz, then this would be a two or three star. They are only here until Aug 12th. (Aug 10)	?	2006	?
54	Paramour (****) Two young postal workers live alone on an island where they are supposed to sort all of the lost mail of the UK, but instead they read the mail, play games, and fall in love. The quirky mixture of physical theater and wit charmed me. The whole play takes place on a floor covered with hundreds of real postmarked envelopes. "I found your eyeglasses behind the sofa, but they are not the same without your eyes behind them." (Aug 16)	?	2006	?

55	Touched (****) A doctor, a distracted mother, a hairdresser, a wedding planner, a pregnant woman, and a midwife wannabe share a table at a wedding. Each has a chance to speak of their troubles, and have them nicely resolved by the end of the play. The wedding planner has the funniest part as she deals with quirky incidents throughout the wedding, including a grandfather dropping his teeth in the chocolate fondue. The mother nailed the appearance of nervous distraction. (Aug 21)	?	2006	?
56	Innocence (****) A 13-year old plays an 11-year old girl sitting in her bedroom dealing with the tragedy that has befallen her family. The innocence that such a young and talented performer can bring to the part makes this play work. The only flaw in the play is that it ignores the realities of modern police investigations. (Aug 27)	?	2006	?
57	Tossers: More Balls than Most (****) Seven jugglers show what they can do with shovels, tables, oranges, bowlers, basketballs, bicycle parts, and many other items. The show varies from singles, to duets, to all juggling with each other. I was embarrassed for the one woman in the group because she was clearly not of the same caliber as the men; when it was her turn it was always a letdown. (Aug 22)	?	2006	?
58	The Plan B Show (****) A comedy about how an evil dating service manager/mad scientist, and her female assistant that control the lives of two men. Most of the zany gags work quite well. The assistant gets the most out of her part. (Aug 14)	?	2006	?

59	Reginald D Hunter – Pride and Prejudice and Niggas (****) At the beginning of the show, this standup comic warns the audience that the title is just a joke, and irrelevant to the topics of the show. Hunter has a fine command of the English language, but still chooses to use "F****in," frequently. He has quite a few perceptive and funny routines. Highlights were his discussion of racial pejoratives, and a long story about his honorable father revealing that he had been paid to have unusual sex. (Aug 28)	?	2006	?
60	Jim Henson's Puppet Improv (****) As the name implies, this show has puppeteers doing improv comedy using muppets. They accomplish this by standing on stage manipulating the muppets with a TV camera just above their heads. While the muppets certainly lend a wonderful whimsy to the whole show, the actual improvisations were mediocre. (Aug 20)	?	2006	?
61	Get Carter (****) A very competent enforcer follows many dead ends as he investigates the suspicious death of his brother. This an attempt to make a direct translation of the pulp movie starring Michael Caine. It is remarkably faithful to the story, including its grittiness. Because of its complexity, I think that those who have seen the movie will enjoy it much more than those that have not. The set utilizes one point perspective to remarkable effect. As usual, I sat in the front row, and end up spattered with some very stray blood! (Aug 17)	?	2006	?
62	Shakespeare for Breakfast (****) A traditional show for the Fringe that takes Shakespeare's prose and adds modern twists. "Taming of the Shrew" provides the basic plot for the all female cast, but they speak lines derived from many of his plays. The audience loved it, and, despite only catching some of the references, I found it quite clever and fun. (Aug 8)	?	2006	?

63	Diva for the Role of Dostoevsky's Wife (****) In the present day, a retired actress meets a younger man in a nursing home who thinks he is Dostoevsky. Together they explore a play about Dostoevsky and his wife. The story is intriguing, and the acting superb. (Aug 9)	?	2006	?
64	Urinetown (****) A musical about how an extended drought leads to a water conservation corporation having laws enacted that requires people to use the company's pay toilets. The whole thing is done tongue-in-cheek, with many funny asides by the narrator/cop. Unhappily, the cast had only a couple of good voices—a common problem with Fringe musicals. (Aug 13)	?	2006	?
65	My Dearest Byron (****) Lord Byron found sex and solace in his sister's love, and then married for money. While the acting of both brother and sister was superb, it is hard for me enjoy listening to a whiny self-centered man for an hour. I felt like I was watching the Kenneth Williams play set in an earlier time. (Aug 18)	?	2006	?
66	Desperate Improvisations (****) An artistic director gathers three writers together to write a new play. Utilizing the director's own life as a touchstone, the drag queen performing artist, mystery writer, and an American Sci-Fi student in turn create a play that shifts back and forth based on their own theatric biases. The abrupt changes keep the play interesting. (Aug 13)	?	2006	?
67	The Iliad (****) Three actors take this epic and cut it down to one hour. They did a remarkable job playing many characters, and providing the necessary exposition to fairly faithfully dramatize the giant story. They wisely decided to just cover the first half. (Aug 24)	?	2006	?

68	Pigeon Man Apocalypse (****) After an abusive childhood, a disturbed man seals himself in a space where he lives on pigeons and rainwater. Among other things the man relates his dealings with his parents, and an aborted love affair. The actor executes a perfect blend of a madman and storyteller. (Aug 23)	?	2006	?
69	Animal Farm (****) One man plays all the animals in Orwell's story about a communist revolution that slowly goes wrong. The actor does a fine job of differentiating between the many characters. The play is faithful to the book, but its two hours wore me out. (Aug 28)	?	2006	?
70	Under Ice (****) A middle-aged businessman is disenchanted with the new personal effectiveness training of his company. The lead is superbly written, but the constant business-speak from the other two actors is mind numbing for him and the audience. Though I was awake throughout, I found many around me nodding off. (Aug 19)	?	2006	?
71	Audience (***) This play has a director providing a running commentary as the onstage audience faces the real audience and supposedly watches his play. Seemingly all the possible events happen on this one night from latecomers that cannot find the right seats to contagious coughing to serious scenes misinterpreted as funny. The large cast provides room to portray a wide variety of situations. The one flaw was that the play did not end in a discernible fashion; the fake audience just drifted offstage during their intermission, while the real audience had no idea that the play was finished. (Aug 27)	?	2006	?
72	Life Sucks … and then you Die (***) Ray Jessel, a 70-something composer, plays a set of funny ditties. Most are quite funny, including one in the style of Noel Coward. (Aug 27)	?	2006	?

73	The China Vase (***) A platoon deals with cowardice in World War I, and then a similar platoon deals with the abuse a prisoner during the recent Iraqi war. The two acts explored different aspects of the necessity of group cohesiveness and discipline. Despite its topicality, the play never really grabbed me. (Aug 28)	?	2006	?
74	White Open Spaces (***) Five actors deliver seven monologues about race relations in the lily white county of Shropshire: a Black woman at a wedding, a restaurant owner refusing a Traveler, an old man rejecting development, a cleaning woman hearing of a Black marrying a White, a Pakistani confronted by a landowner, a Black interrogated about the whereabouts of his White girlfriend, and a woman mistreating a Black. Five of the stories are quite strong. (Aug 21)	?	2006	?
75	Another Country (***) In the 1920s, one house of a public school must deal with the suicide of a young member. As an American teacher, I always find it interesting to see the inner workings of the English public school system with its hierarchies, hazing, and homosexuality. The well-crafted characters did not disappoint. My problem lay in not being able to understand what they were saying because some actors spoke too fast and/or softly. (Aug 20)	?	2006	?
76	What I Heard about Iraq (***) Six actors recite quotes from prominent American Republicans and Tony Blair that track the story of the invasion of Iraq. While there is a certain satisfaction in hearing the politicians get tripped up, particularly Donald Rumsfeld, that is as far as this play goes. We already know they were wrong and stupid. It seems to me that the only point of this play is to allow the audience to feel smug. (Aug 24)	?	2006	?

77	Hillary Agonistes (***) In 2009, President Hillary Clinton must deal with 65 million people in the world mysteriously disappearing in one instant, leaving their clothes behind. The crux of the play is to whether Hillary will treat the event as the Rapture which leads to Armageddon. The premise, Hillary, and her press assistant are great. However, the concept that impeachment could start in a few days is farfetched, as is the lack of deference given the President by her subordinates. (Aug 26)	?	2006	?
78	John Hegley Elevenses (***) A likeable Brit reads and sings his doggerel at 11 each morning. The fare is light, but just right to start your day. (Aug 10)	?	2006	?
79	A British Guide To World Religions (***) The pair provide a pleasant mix of jokes, quotes, and basic information of the major religions from Hinduism to Scientology. Don't go to expecting endless humor, but all in all the experience is quite fulfilling. (Aug 7)	?	2006	?
80	Midnight Carousel (***) This cabaret of different acts each night from across the Fringe has Dusty Limits as the compere. When Dusty is on the stage, all will have a good time. The only other regular acts are two burlesque women. They did a marvelous fan dance, and a less successful balloon strip. The invited acts vary from great to mediocre at best. (Aug 9)	?	2006	?
81	Kyogen – Raw and Uncooked (***) With audience help, a young Japanese man creates a three person play in the Japanese Kyogen style. He frequently pauses to teach the audience this art form as well as comparing it to No theater. His friendly demeanor made the experience fun for all. (Aug 9)	?	2006	?
82	Klepto (***) A likable former kleptomaniac tells his life's story utilizing poetry and stand-up. From child abuse without pathos to publishing his own book using stolen materials his winning personality made the whole tale quite enjoyable. (Aug 9)	?	2006	?

83	ASAP (***) A man and woman review their lives after a car accident kills their spouses. The men were best buddies, and the women were sisters so there are a lot of pairings shown as well as many group events. The whole play is consistently enjoyable, except for some superfluous cavorting/dancing. (Aug 17)	?	2006	?
84	Danny's Wake (***) A teacher and a plumber are the only people that show up to watch over a 32-year old man's casket for the night, and spend the night talking about their marriages, and correcting false share memories. The play starts rather slowly, but then has a good second half, except for an unnecessary epilogue. A highlight is a section where the plumber explains the sources of the nicknames for all of their school chums. (Aug 17)	?	2006	?
85	Wasted (***) The story of a real couple that tortured and murdered five children in the 1960s. The fact that this is based on "The Crime of the Century," makes each aspect all the more chilling. When the unrepentant man describes his first experience with torturing a cat, I came to understand and yet hate him. (Aug 21)	?	2006	?
86	Sit (***) Three men use physical theater to provide the history of the chair, and then develop many sketches with chairs as their focus. The sketches are quite uneven, though the range of uses of chairs in sketches is impressive. They do have one of the few high quality videos that I have ever seen at the Fringe; it covers the history of chairs in the 20th century using doctored film clips. (Aug 17)	?	2006	?
87	It's A Girl (***) This revue has five disparate women banding together to deal with their pregnancies and the proposed development of a nuclear waste site in their town. The vignettes cover pre-natal classes, uncaring obstinate doctors, caring obstinate husbands, methods of protest, and a childbirth on stage with a play-by-play announcer. (Aug 6)	?	2006	?

88	Immortal (***) A circus in which the audience stands at all times and is herded around the big top to allow aerialists to perform above them. Much of the time antic performers move among the crowd. The novelty of the experience was great, but since there were no grandstands all acts had to be based on performing above the crowd. Even high quality aerial acts get boring when there is virtually no break. (Aug 25)	?	2006	?
89	The Art of Disappearance (***) This piece interweaves the life cycle of two raindrops with the story of a hairdresser and her long lost fisherman lover. The dance of the raindrops is much the stronger of these only tangentially related stories. I delighted in seeing the dancers convey the initial pitter-patter of rain as well as their intermingling and parting as they flow down a river. (Aug 20)	?	2006	?
90	Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead (***) We see the quirky lives of the two inconsequential friends of Hamlet that accompanied him to England, and then killed there. The two leads were great as they dealt with 195 consecutive heads, and played the Question Game at breakneck speed. I must admit that I would have enjoyed this more, and probably given it a higher rating, but I was tired. (Aug 26)	?	2006	?
91	David O'Doherty is my name. (***) David's stand-up routine is fairly typical for a single twenty-something man. He does write and perform songs on small Casio keyboards. Some of the songs are quite funny, while others have little to offer. I should add that I was suffering from jet lag, and may have enjoyed him more later in my visit. (Aug 5)	?	2006	?

92	Think Pink! (***) Thirteen Oxford women sing a cappella. I had already heard the Out of the Blue and Oxford Gargoyles a cappella groups, and was surprised when I found this group lacking. Only one soloist had enough volume to rise above the chorus. Without more bass and/or percussion, the upbeat songs just do not have the energy of the other two groups. (Aug 27)	?	2006	?
93	Twilight Los Angeles: 1992 (***) More than a dozen actors perform the words of people involved the event surrounding the 1992 riots after the four police officers were found innocent of beating Rodney King. Though the presentation is chronological, there still seems an aimlessness to it. I found it way too long, with a few characters completely superfluous. (Aug 12)	?	2006	?
94	Bed Bound (***) While they are stuck in a bedroom, an Irish daughter with polio trys to converse with her furniture salesman father(?). The father's description of his murderous single-minded rise from poor stock boy to owner of six furniture stores is always riveting. The noise from two large ventilating fans combined with her quiet, thick brogue made they daughter's lines unintelligible in the beginning. By the time she started to speak louder, we had lost interest in her more confusing tale. (Aug 11)	?	2006	?
95	Bach-Bukowski (***) Willem van Ekeren plays selections from Bach's Well Tempered Clavier while reciting the poems of beat poet Charles Bukowski in a bluesy voice. I felt quite sophisticated, but could not understand the Belgian in parts of the more chaotic poems. The phrase "mutilated minutes" for time spent working really caught my ear. (Aug 14)	?	2006	?

96	Africa's Heartbeat (***) Twenty-five Ugandan and Kenyan children join ten Ugandan adults to produce for African dance and songs. Seemed like everyone in the audience loved this. All demonstrated a wonderful enthusiasm. I just couldn't get it out of my head that a group of Black children were shipped away from their homes for the entertainment of a White audience. That was my problem, not theirs. Mind you, the money from the tour goes to help 6,000 people. (Aug 14)	?	2006	?
97	Danceforms (***) I found my enjoyment of these ten dances caused me to reflect on what appeals to me in general. The bell curve was at work. "Morning", a duet about repeated morning sex and satiation, was clear, short, and not unnecessarily repetitive. In the other dance of note, a man donned a shirt with ten-foot sleeves that he proceeded to manipulate like flowing ribbons. The balance of the dances had occasional beauty and innovation, but leaned toward the uninspiring mundane with usually similar music. (Aug 11)	?	2006	?
98	Struwwelpeter (***) Five clowns adapt eight of Hoffmann's brutal fairy tales. Most teach a moral by a child suffering a horrible death caused by their naughty actions. The choice of clowns and occasional black light provided just the right tone of these bizarre stories. (Aug 10)	?	2006	?
99	Two to Tangle (***) Two mimes take a couple from courtship to married life to a flooded home. I cannot remember seeing such an extended mimed story. Part of its attraction is its uniqueness. (Aug 9)	?	2006	?
100	Crime and Punishment (***) In Czarist Russia, a poor man murders a pawnbroker while he and the crime's investigator share the same woman. The play has all the darkness of the novel, but the coincidence that permits the investigator to solve the crime weakens the story. (Aug 25)	?	2006	?

101	Eclipse (***) Though the acting was pretty good from these secondary school students, this dark story of an interloper among young people watching an eclipse was difficult to understand as a whole. Riddles remained unanswered, and rituals appeared from nowhere. (Aug 8)	?	2006	?
102	When To Run (***) One actress portrays four women for whom running becomes an important part of their life. We learn of the lives of a 15 year old track star, an obsessed married runner, a lifestyle guru, and a dog walker. Since the actress made no costume changes, and the older women's characterizations were only subtly different, it was initially challenging to figure out who she was portraying as she changed characters every few minutes. (Aug 8)	?	2006	?
103	Talk Radio (***) We step into a talk-radio station, and while watching one host interact with his callers, we learn of his life from his colleagues. There is plenty of room here for diatribes by the host, but the disjoint between his consistent abuse of his audience and their adoration of him seems a bit unreal. The story is quite dated in its references to events, and portrayal of the host as having liberal views when conservatives now dominate the airwaves. I do admire how the actor could interact perfectly with pre-recorded callers. (Aug 24)	?	2006	?
104	Voices in the Dark (***) A young eloping couple takes refuge in barn, and then the story turns very dark when another couple comes upon them. The elopers are sweet but inconsequential, while the latter couple has more meat. The unlikely coincidence that the elopers would be in the barn at such an inopportune time severely weakens the play. (Aug 21)	?	2006	?
105	The Pier Glass (***) In the early 19th century, a theater company arrives in a town that has a young heiress under house arrest by her stepmother. The costumes were among the best I have seen, however the production as whole fell flat.	?	2006	?

106	The 'It' Girls (***) Much to their uncle/father's consternation two teenage girls reject two suitable businessmen suitors, and become enamored with two flowery rogues. The conceit of the play is that styles of English used vary: the father in standard English, the girls in Jane Austin prose, the businessmen in hip-hop slang, and the rogues in Austin prose with malaprops. While this device is fun, the plot is slight. (Aug 18)	?	2006	?
107	Slap! (***) A famous rigid German hairdresser, an innovative English make-up artist, and her star struck assistant sit in a trailer in a bog waiting to work on a rock band for an MTV video. Much of the material comes from the fact that the hairdresser and artist were chums in cosmetology school, but had a falling out. This is light comedy fare with little substance. (Aug 22)	?	2006	?
108	Strange Games (***) Three clowns provide an uneven mix of stories. Some are wonderfully fun, while others are ponderous and dull. During one of the better stories, I was distracted by how the large swan puppet had a large hole in it and was quite dirty. On the other hand, the shabbiness of a Christmas tree created from an umbrella skeleton and trash was integral part of its sweetness. (Aug 9)	?	2006	?
109	Strong Native Women (***) Three Native American women present dances and stories of famous Native American women. While their relentless solemness added some gravity to their show, it also highlighted a weakness of the show. Almost all of the stories deal with their interactions with their White conquerors. These strong women are defined only by their sorrow, and never by their joys—they are totems that lack depth. (Aug 12)	?	2006	?
110	My Brother's Keeper (***) The last two Jews in Afghanistan under the Taliban hate each other. Though initially interesting, their petty vehemence and vengeance is wearying after a while, and the moralistic ending too predictable. (Aug 9)	?	2006	?

111	Finding Marina (***) This unusual play transforms Romeo and Juliet into a myth of war torn Sri Lanka using a mix of children and adults from that island. The audience covers more than a mile as it walks from scene to torch lit scene of dance and story within the Botanical Gardens. It is worth the unique experience, but despite wearing an upper long john my California body was still cold in August! (Aug 15)	?	2006	?
112	NewsRevue 2006 (***) Last year I gave this comedy revue five stars. So what happened? This year there were more songs, and fewer sketches than last year. More importantly, there was a lot more material that only Brits could understand. So, it may well be worth five stars for Brits, but the ratings are based on my enjoyment. (Aug 28)	?	2006	?
113	With a Song in My Heart (***) Three women and three men sing medleys of Richard Rodgers songs. I have always loved the Rogers and Hart collaborations, and was reminded that his work with Oscar Hammerstein was ground breaking. While the songs are wonderful, only two of the voices could do them justice. (Aug 19)	?	2006	?
114	Love the Radio Edit (***) Two women and two men lip-synch and act to short sections of popular songs to tell a love story. I embarrassed to say that I did not realize that this is one long story; I perceived it as a set of separate stories. In any case, since the songs are all hits, the audience cannot help but have a good time. Having made a novelty tape composed of parts of songs when I was six, I could not help but notice that the songs could have been re-ordered to better effect. (Aug 13)	?	2006	?
115	Young Macbeth (***) A young cast tackles Shakespeare's play in one hour. The basic story and key lines are there, but the only memorable parts are too loud music between scenes, and a screechy witch. (Aug 21)	?	2006	?

116	Pisspots and Portraits (***) Six actors explore more than a dozen works of art from Michaelangelo's David to Warhol's Marilyn. This uneven piece feels like classic Fringe with some inspired accessible scenes mixed with other scenes that seem to have little point except as acting exercises. (Aug 20)	?	2006	?
117	Purgatory (***) Yeats short play about a man who continues to feels a familial taint even twenty years after killing his father. The story starts slowly, and does not pick up much speed. There was some beauty in the language of the disturbed man as he belittles his parents and himself. (Aug 24)	?	2006	?
118	Duels (***) As the title indicates, this is a series of scenes involving various forms of combat. Unhappily it is obvious that these are actors, and not trained martial artists. I did find the first story about combat in a video game using ballet the best of the lot. (Aug 18)	?	2006	?
119	Bat Boy: The Musical (***) A teenage boy with fangs is found in a cave quickly learns to speak, but is viewed as a threat by the townspeople in a dying West Virginia town. This overlong campy musical has some funny parts, but poor voices and tuneless songs abound. The songs particularly grated, after listening to the works of Richard Rodgers over the weekend. (Aug 20)	?	2006	?
120	Think No Evil of Us: My Life with Kenneth Williams (***) This one-man show is half an impersonation of the wit Kenneth Williams by David Benson, and half vignettes from Benson's life. I know nothing of Williams, and found little pleasure in watching Benson portray Williams as an unpleasant self-centered elitist with few redeeming qualities. On the other hand, I found Benson's autobiographical sketches alternately funny and touching. (Aug 17)	?	2006	?

121	Can't Pay? Won't Pay! (**) In Italy, a wife must hide from her husband the fact that she was one of the shoppers who rebel at high inflation and loot a grocery store. This is fine farce, complete with people climbing in windows and women pregnant with stolen vegetables. I had real trouble suspending my disbelief when seeing lumpy vegetables under a blouse being thought of as a pregnancy. (Aug 27)	?	2006	?
122	Sequinned Suits and Platform Boots (**) In the 1970's, a young man discovers glam rock, and attempts to form his own band. The play is a mix of glam rock songs, teen sexual ambivalence, campy parents, a genie, and a whole lot more. Though there is a plot thread, the whole mixture lacks focus. (Aug 19)	?	2006	?
123	Doctor Faustus (**) Doctor Faustus trades his soul for 24 years of his every wish being granted. This play doesn't work because Faust displays no interest in the things for which he traded. When he is granted Helen of Troy there is no passion to be seen. Never do we see any motivation for him to make the hideous bargain. (Aug 19)	?	2006	?
124	Ketzal (**) Seven bald topless dancers portray the life story of a birdman. Though I had a general idea of progress, I never felt sure. As with other dance pieces, I found most of music monotonous; in this case it was atmospheric sounds rather than music. The one highlight is at the end where they fill stage with an inch of water, and then flounce, slide, and splatter around in it. I must admit that during the boring scenes I tried to figure out if one particularly flat-chested dancer was a man or woman. By the end, both my companion and I were just tired. (Aug 23)	?	2006	?

125	Fish Story (**) Three people leave a safe house in the countryside after spending five years cut-off from civilization. At least that is suppose to be the premise. The problem is that their knowledge of the world is erratic. They don't understand what roads and cars are, but they do understand stores, radios, and packaging. I just could never understand the people. As with "Tylwyth Teg," my companion thought the play wonderful. (Aug 23)	?	2006	?
126	The Tylwyth Teg (**) Three fairies try to contend with industrial development by swapping babies with a woman. This physical theater piece has some interesting parts, including a changing silhouette panel, but was too slow and sometimes incomprehensible. I should note that my companion loved it. (Aug 22)	?	2006	?
127	Frankenstein (**) A seemingly complete telling of the story of Frankenstein, including the doctor's aborted creation of the monster's bride to be. At one and a half hours, the stilted play wore me out. It did get me interested in reading the book, just so I could know what was the real original story. (Aug 18?)	?	2006	?
128	Rabbit (**) This has a powerful man and his wife visiting their daughter and meeting her heroin addict boyfriend for the first time. I liked the first scene with the daughter and boyfriend dealing with the impending visit. However, because her smooth young body betrayed her role, I was really put-off by the wife suddenly stripping to a bra and panties; vamping would have been better for me. (Aug 14)	?	2006	?
129	A Slice O'Minelli (**) Rick Skye impersonates Liza Minelli. He puts his all into the songs, and does a fair imitation of her voice. However, despite wearing Liza's costumes and makeup, this good sized man just does not look like her, and cannot dance. At the end of the show, he plays a clip with the slim vivacious Liza in "Happy Endings", which reinforced my opinion that he should ditch the drag, and do it straight. I should note that the older folk in the show loved it. (Aug 9)	?	2006	?

130	Confessions of a Paralyzed Porn Star (**) Accompanied by a pianist, an actress with the same name as a successful porn star sings songs about her own life. She is clearly a clever lyricist, but most of the songs are tinged with anger/violence and are too loud for my tastes. She did have one song in the style of Joni Mitchell that had beautiful music and evocative lyrics. (Aug 8)	?	2006	?
131	The Powder Room (**) Like last year's student burlesque show, despite pasties, bumps, and grinds, this show seems naughty but not sexy. The students give it their all, but it seems they couldn't decide whether to go for camp or make it an homage. A murder on stage was neither. (Aug 7)	?	2006	?
132	Parasites (**) A haughty professor from another university comes to inspect the parasitology department whose primary professor is now a drunk. The first scene, which is between the drunk and the young head of his department, is quite entertaining. The later scenes twist into silliness that pale by comparison. (Aug 7)	?	2006	?
133	American Vaudeville (**) Two men trace a vaudeville comedy duo from 1910 to 1927 by mixing vaudeville acts with events from the duos lives. In most cases the men display few skills that would qualify them for a real vaudeville show. Both during the acts and during the real life scenes, the entire play proceeds at a glacial pace—the antithesis of fast paced vaudeville. (Aug 22)	?	2006	?

134	Vaudeville Cabaret Club (**) The third cabaret of my visit had your standard host, and visiting acts. The Tasmanian host had a good singing voice, and was quite personable. Nonetheless, cabaret shows depend on their acts. The first few acts were very good, but the rest were pretty forgettable. The Liquid Druid who manipulated up to seven clear orange size balls was amazing! They seemed float across his hands and arms. At the other end of the scale was a woman who thought it would be incredibly amusing for her to put ice cubes in her dress to simulate a nipple. (Aug 14)	?	2006	?
135	For Every Passion Something (**) This is a somewhat odd selection of scenes from Shakespeare plays. Though I love Shakespeare, and the students did an adequate job, I could see no rhyme, nor reason to their selections. (Aug 11)	?	2006	?
136	No Obvious Trauma (**) A catatonic woman is treated by two physicians. Another play that put me to sleep. The only highlight was the use of two puppets to recreate the past, and communicate. (Aug 21)	?	2006	?
137	So Simple (**) This begins with a woman dancing, and shortly adds a male partner. Though there are some nice movements, there is a general sameness to the music and work. (Aug 21)	?	2006	?
138	Scapin the Cheat (**) Moliere's farce about two wastrel sons trying to convince their mothers to give their permission and money. The highlights are the scamp servants that scheme to help their masters. They decided to play directly to the audience in a very broad style. This dulled the impact of true farcical elements for me. (Aug 12)	?	2006	?
139	Little Red Riding Hood (**) Two men and two women try to stretch the tale into fifty minutes. While it was interesting to see the actors take turns in the lead roles of their genders, the story is just too slight to support fifty minutes. (Aug 19)	?	2006	?

140	Easy Targets (**) Four forgettable monologues by four actors provide targets for the knotted socks thrown by the audience. In America, the audience pays for the socks in fund raisers, but at the Fringe crates of socks are supplied for free. Despite inciting performances, the older folks only half-heartedly participated, while the younger folks threw repeatedly and with gusto. It made me wonder what issues they had. After the performance, the young had a war among themselves :) (Aug 9)	?	2006	?
141	Accidentally Waiting To Happen (**) Three young women are involved in a car accident deal with it in three different ways. One obsesses over remembering her now dead sister, one fears the outside world, and one leaves the world of sanity and becomes homeless. All three are always on stage, but the tale is told by rotating through each individual's bizarre life with minimal interactions with the other two. While the offstage pianist played somewhat interesting improv situational music, the pacing as a whole is quite slow. I noticed that others in the audience were looking at their watches when the play was only half through. (Aug 11)	?	2006	?
142	Girl in a Box (**) A 17-year old man invited to a small seaside town disrupts the lives of a 25-year old brother and a 28-year old sister. A burlesque queen provides some delightful entertainment in the many interludes. This tale of abuse has its moments, but is too disjoint because of the many scene changes using the shower-curtained room (box). (Aug 8)	?	2006	?
143	Victims of Freedom (**) A short slice of life play that has a family harboring terrorists and then find themselves terrorized when they are discovered by government mercenaries. While the play depicts torture and rape, there seems little point to the play as a whole, except to say that innocent people are hurt in wars on terrorists. (Aug 26)	?	2006	?

144	Paradox (**) An anthropologist explains to a TV presenter how a modern family can be divided into three species (kids, parents, and grandparents) and then compares them with videos of Neanderthals. To give an idea of the level of humor, the grandparents had Stinkus in their species name. The videos just had actors in gorilla masks cavorting around a stream, and added nothing to the little that was there already. (Aug 12)	?	2006	?
145	Picking Holes in the Mist (**) Four new strawberry pickers end up in a pub, and learn about themselves. I found that I had little interest in their problems. The only interesting character was the pub owner who spoke in malapropisms. (Aug 9)	?	2006	?
146	WASP (**) Steve Martin's short play about a family of WASPs in middle America has some funny bits, but seems to go nowhere. (Aug 8)	?	2006	?
147	Diary of a Nobody (**) Rodney Bowes, a star of the 60's(?) Britcom "Likely Lads", portrays a Victorian clerk reading from his diary covering a year of seemingly inconsequential events. Those that know him, and/or read the book found the show wonderful. Without the benefit of either, I found him to be a confused actor that forgot his place in a script that only occasionally held the interest of my jet-lagged mind. (Aug 5)	?	2006	?
148	Doom Riders – The Four Noels (**) Three men spoof gothic horror movies by portraying a triad trying to raise an evil god with a human sacrifice. There were good spirits throughout, but my jet lag really kicked in, and I nodded off during parts. (Aug 5)	?	2006	?
149	Songs My Granny Frowned At (**) A male singer with a decent voice and a pianist perform ditties that they wrote. Most of the songs rambled, and, in the end, I might have guessed that they were written while the pair were on LSD. (Aug 28)	?	2006	?

150	Gizmo Love (**) A studio scriptwriter is assigned to fix a heartfelt script written by an eleven-year old boy while two gangsters make sure they do a good job. The performances by the scriptwriter and one of the gangsters were top-notch, but I dozed from jet lag, and couldn't comprehend what was going on towards the end. (Aug 5)	?	2006	?
151	American Football (**) A black comedy in which a long haired teenager joins the Marines, cuts the head off an Iraqi, and ends up in Leavenworth Military suffering the abuses of Abu Ghraib. There is bad taste throughout, including a talking severed head that is used as a ball. (Aug 13)	?	2006	?
152	Skin of the Moon (**) This was a cross between Rocky Horror and 2,000,000 B.C. Despite the best efforts of the talented, and sexy, supporting cast, they could not overcome preview snafus and the shortcomings of the writer/director/lead. In most cases, his attempts at audience participation fell flat, or worse. In particular, he chose to grab a disabled man's crutches and then stage a race with another cast member. After a woman with a crutch left during the performance, he said that she should F*** Off! I would have given this one star, but I presume that at least the technical snafus will be remedied. (Aug 5)	?	2006	?
153	The Road (**) (Not posted to edfringe.com to protect feelings) These four dance pieces performed by American high school students made me aware of the high quality of the other dance shows at the Fringe. The first two pieces felt like recitals where each student was asked to demonstrate that they could perform basic dance movements. There was little flow, and I could not ignore all the shaking during poses. The last two pieces did have a few moments of interesting choreography, and at least a couple of the dancers appeared competent and at ease. (Aug 23)	?	2006	?

154	Provocative Cinema (*) All of these three short films are flawed, though there are some worthwhile aspects. There is a beautifully lit seduction scene, and a horrific scene of an actor being suffocated by wrapping his head in cellophane. (Aug 24)	?	2006	?
155	Tea Before Honour (*) At morning tea on an estate, a young woman properly guesses her hostesses' age, but is challenged to a duel for the perceived slight nonetheless. The sound is poor, and the young woman displayed little fencing training. (Aug 19)	?	2006	?
156	(I am) Nobody's Lunch (*) A cabaret based on interviews with random regular folk about events since 2003. I do not know what was wrong, but I just could not stay for awake for this, despite it being 3 in the afternoon. The fellow next to me also nodded off. Each time I awoke, I would hear a lousy song, or an incredibly uninteresting monologue. (Aug 15)	?	2006	?
157	Cabaret of Menace (*) This "…bold, adventurous" revue has nothing to recommend it to a tired fellow at midnight. I kept looking for something funny, or even comprehensible, and failed. However, if you are a night owl actress, like my companion, you may find this Cambridge student production to your taste. (Aug 24)	?	2006	?
158	Assassins (*) (not posted to edfringe.com because play has ended) This musical about the nine American presidential assassins failed on many levels. The large company has only one singer with range and volume, the design concept is weak and overlong, and the music and lyrics are utterly forgettable. I cannot think of a bright spot, except that there was a pin-up of Jodi Foster shown during John Hinckley's scene. (Aug 11)	?	2006	?

159	The Gun Show (*) A late night show with interviews, a band, and visiting acts. The band was not designed for a seated audience, one act was obviously drunk, and the host could not even feed questions to an improv comedian. The best act was a magician at the end. (Aug 13)	?	2006	?
160	The Decline of the Scunthorpe Textile Industry (*) (not posted to edfringe.com because play has ended) Five real public school boys chat at school and go to a pub. Written by one of the cast, the play is sophomoric throughout, and not to my taste. However, it was fun to see that the young girls in the audience loved it. (Aug 12)	?	2006	?
161	What's the Question (no stars) The playwright starts with the hackneyed subject of TV game show, and produces virtually nothing funny. I think I chuckled twice, and smiled three times in an hour. I am truly amazed at the level of bad acting, and bad writing. With just a few tweaks this show could become a hilarious campy play about how not to produce a play about TV game shows. I suppose it is not surprising that this is the same company that produced "Two Blokes in Search of a Pub," the only other no star play I have seen. (Aug 25)	?	2006	?
162	Two Blokes in Search of a Pub (no stars) After their local pub is closed, two young men set out to find the perfect pub, and deal with a homicidal neighbor and producer along the way. I had been warned that this was worthless, but I had told one of the cast members that I would see it. Unhappily, the warning was accurate. There is nothing here, and the cast and playwright appear to know that from the outset. To give you an idea, the best of laugh of the evening came for a chair that was half covered in aluminum foil. (Aug 8)	?	2006	?

1	Holly's Hot Spot: (*****) Singer/songwriter Holly Penfield, backed by a jazz quartet, takes over the whole room with her combination of sometime sexy, sometime campy, and always great singing. Most of the audience gets a little personal attention from her during the show, and if you really want to have fun sit in the front row! My actor friend suggested that aspiring entertainers should come to the show just to see how to really work a room. In the interest of full disclosure, and fond memories, I should note that I shared a drink with her father after the show. His family grew up about five miles from me in the San Francisco Bay Area, though I did not know her. (Aug 16)	?	2005	?
2	The Reduced Shakespeare Company – All the Great Movies (Abridged): (*****) The movie references fly fast and furious in this zany review as these three men play a screenwriter, actor, and director making an independent film. Members of the audience are even brought up on stage for a crowd seen. Sit in the front row if you want to really get involved! (Aug 18)	?	2005	?
3	The Picante Quartet: (*****) Two classical guitarists, including a champion, an electric guitarist, and an upright bass, play jazz and classical like there is no tomorrow. These young men are virtuosos who know how to have fun. Young and old loved this group. (Aug 19)	?	2005	?
4	The Fourth Wall: This is another show about how the outside world intrudes on the lives of a theater company producing a new play. The preface describing Stanislavski's fourth wall between the actor and his audience focused me on the great acting as the pedophilic subplot slowly ravages the company. I hope the playwright of "Life in Show/Sunday Morning at the Centre of the World" had a chance to see this. (Aug 29)	?	2005	?

5	Galileo: This portrays the life of Galileo from the time of his first use of the telescope, until the secret release of his final book on astronomy. The use of puppets and outsized clawlike hands for the Grand Inquisitor worked very well. I felt I came to really understand the man, including his many foibles. The play provided an insightful slice of the time in which he had to live and investigate. What a wonderful way to end my Fringe experience! (Aug 29)	?	2005	?
6	Out of the Blue: (*****) Acappella from a13 Oxford men. Their choice of a dozen tunes from their 42-song repertoire varies with each show. The mix of beats and voices for the songs gets rousing applause after each song. (Aug 8)	?	2005	?
7	Go Go Burlesco : (*****) At the start, the mistress of ceremonies warns that this will be about nudity, sex, and nudity. This show lives up to its introduction. While it provides examples of many of the classic striptease routines, it does so with an air of fun that allows it to escape the tawdry. You will find a dance of veils, French maids, fan dancers, and even a hula hooping Swan Lake swan, all accompanied by an extraordinary accordionist. A couple of ribald Sound of Music tunes by the emcee in a perfect Julie Andrews accent were high points. Besides the fine singing of the emcee, there is a good mix of comedy to break-up the stripping. I should note that there is complete frontal nudity, but no simulated sex. (Aug 6)	?	2005	?
8	Basic Training: (*****) A one-man autobiography of a Black recruit who finds his niche as entertainer and truck loader in the U.S. Air Force Top Blues traveling troupe. Kahlil Ashanti assumes the characters of a wide variety of people in his life. He nails them all, from an abusive stepfather, to a loud and fast talking drill sergeant, to an effeminate singer. His sincerity is apparent, particularly when describing his Make-A-Wish conversation with a terminal 7-year old girl. (Aug 15)	?	2005	?

9	Chinese State Circus: (*****) This circus provided many acts that I had not seen in the U.S. Balancing poles, contortionists, vase balancing, and slack wire acts were all new to me. The martial arts acts were unimpressive, but, all in all, the whole was impressive. Don't bother with ringside tickets (I had them), but do ensure that you are seated in the centered section. (Aug 27)	?	2005	?
10	Venezuela Viva: A Flamenco Fantasy (*****) Twelve female dancers and eleven musicians provide a dance chronology of Venezuela from Moorish belly-dancing to Salsa, many in a flamenco motif. The variety, dancing, and music are all excellent. The video in the background provides super-titles for some songs, but also proves distracting during some dances. (Aug 18)	?	2005	?
11	The Mystery of Chung Ling Soo: (*****) This play about the rise and fall of a magician's act in the 1910's, based on a true story, had a captivating blend of simulation and word painting. Each performer had to play a number of parts, from magician assistants to newspapermen to even the Kaiser, and all worked well. (Aug 7)	?	2005	?
12	Balagan: (*****) This a mix of music performance and circus acts. The music by a violinist, bassists, drums, and three horn players, is worth the price of admission. The circus acts include a male/female duet of gymnasts, a clown, a hula-hooping woman, and small/normal man duet of gymnasts. Everything about the show was professional. (Aug 26)	?	2005	?
13	Guardians: (*****) This has two alternating monologues: one by the woman who held the leash in Abu Ghraib, and one by a gay tabloid reporter who uses that story to his own ends. Both stories held my attention throughout. (Aug 18)	?	2005	?
14	The Wrong Man: (*****) This powerful play looks at the events surrounding an IRA murder, with a reluctant accomplice as the focus. Wives, the Royal Ulster Constabulary, and the IRA are all imperfect, and precisely etched. (Aug 15)	?	2005	?

15	School Ties: (*****) Another musical about high school performed by four high school girls. After my dreadful experience with Teechers, I entered the theater with trepidation. But the first song, including its four-part harmony, just blew me away. This is a tour de force by the four young women. They nailed every song, and annunciated so clearly that even my Yankee ears could understand every word. They easily shifted among their distinct roles as four girls, four boys, and a school full of teachers. The only faults to be found are the poor lyrics of two solo ballads towards the end. All in all, what a pleasant surprise at the end of the day! (Aug 21)	?	2005	?
16	Swift: (*****) This show has an actor portraying the satirist Jonathan Swift at the end of his life. I am a sucker for historical plays, and this one did not disappoint. The script has just the right mix of Swift's writings and facts about his life. (Aug 29)	?	2005	?
17	Abnormally Funny People: (*****) Two short people, a wheelchair bound woman, a blind man, and a deaf man present wonderful comedy mostly based on their own abnormalities. The comedy is neither in your face, nor based on pity. Rather, it is based on the situations in which these people find themselves. (Aug 27)	?	2005	?
18	All Wear Bowlers: (*****) This two man physical comedy has some really great moments. At the beginning we see what appears to be a 1920's silent movie projected on a wall that has two men walking on a country road. One of them runs straight at the camera, and then in a flash of light he is on the floor in front of us! From then on the actors continue to walk in and out of the movie, keeping perfect time with their appearance in the movie. Later they do all sorts of physical comedy, including creating crossing their limbs to create a phantom third person, and a classic tipping ladder routine. There are a few less inventive parts, such as mouthed eggs, but on the whole this was wonderful. (Aug 25)	?	2005	?

19	Guy Browning's Small Talk: (*****) Mr. Browning is a newspaper and radio humorist whose gentle observations about men and women demonstrate how an entertainer can get laughs without abuse or swearing. In this show, I was singled out to have an "interesting" conversation with my neighbor to demonstrate the proper way to interrupt. As with Jason Byrne, I felt the ribbing was good spirited. (Aug 15)	?	2005	?
20	David Strassman: (*****) This ventriloquist uses a classic dummy, two teddy bears, a beaver, and female robot to great effect. Almost all of the humor is dummy-centric, and works well. My habit of sitting in the front row made for a strange experience since I could always see his mouth move. (Aug 18)	?	2005	?
21	Losing Unity: (*****) Two women portray the lives of the aristocratic Mitford sisters that chose different political paths in the 1930's, one Fascist, and Communist. Unity, the Fascist, actually had more than 100 visits with Hitler. As usual, I love well told true stories. This is a well written play, with each scene contributing to the understanding of the sisters and their choices. (Aug 27)	?	2005	?
22	Jason Byrne: (*****) The fellow clearly relishes doing improv based on audience characteristics. As the lone American in the crowd he repeatedly made good fun of my being slow at raising my hand when he asked if there were any Americans in the crowd. While poking fun at three 16-year old boys in the front row, he made sure that they were not the butt of his jokes, but rather the source of inspiration for digressions about adolescent boys' lives. He also had a few interesting set pieces about his wife, 5-year old son, and parents. Though there was a misogynist tilt and frequent cursing to many of his riffs, his spontaneity proved winning. (Aug 6)	?	2005	?
23	Step into Africa: (*****) An African dance company of 12 young women and one man provide pieces ranging from tribal to ballet to hip-hop. I found their joy and the diversity very pleasing. (Aug 14)	?	2005	?

24	Birth of the Cool: (*****) I was just in the mood for this combination of Beat poetry and Cool Jazz from the 1950's. The poet told of the lives of Ginsberg, Kerouac, and Cassady, as well as performing their poems. The musicians played clean Miles, Bird, and others. I was transported back to San Francisco of the late1950's. (Aug 24)	?	2005	?
25	Twilight of the Gods: (*****) This has a raging argument between the ghost of Richard Wagner and his true life friend Friedrich Nietzche who is in an insane asylum. Besides the fine acting, I enjoyed learning of the lives of these two figures as they argue about Shoepenhauer, and Wagner's betrayal of Jews and Nietzche. (Aug 14)	?	2005	?
26	A Midsummer Night's Dream from the East: (*****) A Korean company produced a version of Shakespeare's comedy using traditional Korean storytelling methods with only infrequent English dialogue. They had switched some of the roles, and I was a little rusty on the play, so it took me a while to get on track with the story. Once I figured out who was who, I had a marvelous time. Their facial makeup, and dance/fights were particularly wonderful. (Aug 28)	?	2005	?
27	A Shut Up Comedy from Japan: (*****) The whole audience was wowed by the mimed two-part physical comedy of these two men, but I feel that they could have done more with their talents. The first part is a series of sight gags using simple props. The second part is a retelling to the Rocky boxing story, including a hilarious bout with Michael Jackson. I would have given it four stars, but I am afraid I may be getting a little jaded so I gave it five stars based on the audience reaction. (Aug 17)	?	2005	?

28	An Oak Tree: (****) This is a contrived play in which the writer/director, Tim Crouch, plays a hypnotist who has accidentally killed a girl with his car, and an actor, who has not seen the script, plays the father of the girl seeking help from the hypnotist. The story itself was good enough to not need the contrivance. It was interesting to watch the actor, Jason Thorpe, deal with the stress of performing while receiving occasional secret direction through earplugs. In the middle of the play, the director asked Jason if he had any questions so far. It was clear from his questions that the stress had not permitted Jason the time to assimilate the whole of the story. I had two criticisms of this play. First, it was unnecessarily set a year in the future, which had no impact on the plot, but did confuse Jason, and me. Second, in describing his role to Jason, Crouch only described his outward appearance, and did not provide an occupation. I realize that Crouch was trying to leave this open for the actor to devise, but in such a stressful situation a little more guidance would have permitted the actor create a whole person. (Aug 28)	?	2005	?
29	East Coast Chicken Supper: (****) This tells of the day when a young man returns to his two best mates that are outcast drug dealers in a Scottish town. There is a lot going on in this play: from cooking lessons to repairing damaged interpersonal ties. This won a Fringe First, but I just couldn't give it 5 stars because the ending has no roots in the play. (Aug 19)	?	2005	?
30	Les Liaisons Dangereuses: (****) This presentation kept me engrossed from the start. The two leads were outstanding in their wickedness and shrouded caring. I do wish the director had omitted the superfluous Nazi / Free French motifs though. (Aug 11)	?	2005	?

31	Brighter Side of Alzheimers: (****) A one-woman semi-operatic tale of the life of woman abused as a child, and whose mother is transformed into happy, loving person with the onset of Alzheimers. The actress was a jazz singer most of her life, and brings that talent, as well as fine dramatic movements, to the story. I hung around with the director and actress for a day, and so it is hard to just give this four stars, but it did seem a little overlong. (Aug 12)	?	2005	?
32	Angry Young Man: (****) Four actors simultaneously portray the travails of a Russian surgeon who immigrates to Britain. It was and interesting effect, though occasionally confusing, to see how each of the four was used for the other characters the surgeon met. (Aug 18)	?	2005	?
33	Snoopy: (****) A musical that has great lyrics, but often-mediocre music. Initially I found some of the young voices a bit weak, but as the play progressed I found that they suited their roles well. The young cast throws everything at this with even a tap dancing number. There is even a clear showstopper, "Don't Be Anything Less Than Everything You Can Be" with its patty-cake routine. "Just One Person" brought tears to my eyes with its sentiment of mutual support. A nearby six-year-old girl appeared enchanted with the play until becoming tired in the last ten minutes. (Aug 7)	?	2005	?
34	Romeo & Juliet – Deceased! With Tom Stoppard's The 15-minute Hamlet: (****) Take the dead characters of Romeo and Juliet, add the love potion from Midsummer's Night Dream, mix in very good young voices singing hit songs from the 60's and 70's, and you get a wonderful musical comedy. The director wisely avoids the pitfall of unsynchronized dancing by limiting the choreography to the three-person chorus. The only thing preventing this from receiving five stars is the Stoppard play beforehand. The company chose Stoppard to draw an audience, but the abbreviated work has little wit beyond its fast pacing. (Aug 16)	?	2005	?

35	Starting Here, Starting Now: (****) This is a musical revue of mostly love songs by one songwriting team. I found both the lyrics and music consistently polished. The trio of two women and a man blend well in all combinations. The man has a Matthew Broderick charm and voice. However, one woman has the voice, looks, and vivacity to cast a bit of shadow when combined with the other two. (Aug 7)	?	2005	?
36	NewsRevue 24/7: (****) This is a sketch show of topical political satire. Since much of the humor relied on a better knowledge of British pop culture, I relied on some friends to help me rate this. I understood about three quarters of the jokes. Of those, about three quarters worked. For the second time in my stay, I found the Brits thinking that Laura Bush is the brains behind George. I spoke with some people afterwards, and that appears to be the consensus. How strange? In the U.S., we would assign that role to Vice President Dick Cheney. (Aug 29)	?	2005	?
37	How I Learned to Drive: (****) This was the first of two back-to-back plays I saw that dealt with pedophilia. In hindsight, this relates the subtle effects of an initial pedophilic experience by a young girl. Because the tale is told mostly in reverse order, the true message does not become clear until the last scenes. The caring, ingratiating style of the molesting uncle adds greatly to the story. (Aug 26)	?	2005	?
38	Night-Light: (****) Two women together use movement to portray a little girl, and, occasionally, her mother. I have rarely seen dance/movement between just two women. The way they intertwined as the child was, at times, enthralling. There were times that I was a little confused about whether they portraying the mother or girl. (Aug 20)	?	2005	?
39	N.F.W: (****) The lives of four young women at the edge of their lives: a garage attendant, her controlling sister, a junky, and an indigent schizophrenic. Though occasionally a little preachy, the lives seemed real. Some of the lines had quite affect on me. (Aug 9)	?	2005	?

40	The Altruists: (****) A farce about the hypocrisy of people that support left wing causes. The characters are well chosen to reveal the many levels of hypocrisy. I enjoyed it a lot, and I am a bleeding heart liberal. (Aug 11)	?	2005	?
41	Acetylene: (****) Eight teenaged men show the strength, balance, and stamina when they break-dance to twelve songs. Though I was quite impressed with their handstands and twirling, the bulk of the performance relied on a fairly narrow repertoire of steps. Thankfully, the choreographer provided some different steps in three of the pieces. I think I would have enjoyed it more if there had been interspersed some slower work. However, the continual frenetic pace certainly highlighted the stamina and strength that is the hallmark of young men. (Aug 28)	?	2005	?
42	Table Manners (****) This is a series of vignettes about working in a restaurant to illustrate the work life of hospitality workers. The writing does a good job of balancing humor and exposition while exploring the tensions between waiters and both the public and the chefs. For the last act, the playwright used a TV game show setting. While this did provide an easy way to convey some information, I think that the play would have been better if he had stayed with the original restaurant setting. (Aug 11)	?	2005	?
43	Me and Marlene: (****) This is a one-woman show on the life of Marlene Dietrich. This is a tricky one to rate. When I spoke to those in the audience who knew of Marelene, they consistently said that they would give it five stars. I think that those people who know little or nothing of her would still find the show quite worthwhile—she was an amazing woman, and the actress does a fine job depicting her life. (Aug 11)	?	2005	?
44	Hook, Line, and Sinker: (****) This play has two estranged stepbrothers dealing with the death of one's father while on a fishing trip. It has a great balance of comedy and drama. (Aug 13)	?	2005	?

45	The Tragedy of Richard, Duke of York: (****) I found this abridged version of Shakespeare's play quite winning. I was pleased that the players would occasionally step outside the play to explain germane historical aspects to provide context. I had never seen this play, and found it interesting to discover the background of Richard III. The main flaw was that the sound effects were too loud to allow me to hear the actors at times. (Aug 27)	?	2005	?
46	The Importance of Being Turbann'd: (****) A drawing room comedy of manners about the collision of traditional Sikh culture and the lives of modern southern Asians revolving around an arranged marriage. From rigid lecherous grandfather, to prejudiced liberal father, to drinking promiscuous grandsons, this play works well as each of the three generations reveals its values, and foibles. The ending is a classic full cast fight. (Aug 21)	?	2005	?
47	Oxford Imps: (****) One fellow guides the audience in producing topics from which he requests six other Oxford students to produce improvisations. Great fun! (Aug 11)	?	2005	?
48	Boston Marriage: (****) This is a mix of drama and a comedy of manners that has a mistress dealing with the request to be a beard for her former lesbian lover. Mamet's script harkens to Wilde and Coward with its wit and precision. An oft-abused maid provides comic relief as well as important plot points. All three of the actresses were well chosen and performed perfectly. (Aug 20)	?	2005	?

49	Ubu: (****) This is a fantastical satire about three extremely depraved people taking power in "Scotchland." This is one of the rare plays at the Fringe that had a program in which the director expressed his thoughts about the play. What a godsend! He warns that the core of the satire is their despicableness. All the deadly sins were there, particularly gluttony, in all their glory. The audience even got to throw cherry tomatoes at the deposed king. By the end the stage was a total mess from their eating, and "beheading" of fruits. (Aug 28)	?	2005	?
50	The Lifeblood: (****) The story of Mary, Queen of Scots, last few days. As a former history teacher, I found this interesting to learn of her privations, betrayals, and trial presentations. (Aug 25)	?	2005	?
51	The Exonerated: (****) Eight actors sit on chairs facing the audience and read the words of six people that were found innocent after spending time on death row. I am a sucker for true stories, and here are six. (Aug 23)	?	2005	?
52	Pip Utton – Adolf: (****) Utton portrays Adolf Hitler, including his last speech to his followers in his bunker in Berlin. I had always wanted to know what Hitler was saying to rouse the crowds so, and here I found out. I can now see how his repeated claim that "Everything I did was for the good of the German people. How can that be wrong?" would resonate with many people. The parallels with our current demagogues are scary. (Aug 20)	?	2005	?

53	The Rap Canterbury Tales: (****) The one-man show is premised on a fan that stows away on a bus of a traveling show of rappers. Each of four rappers, including the fan, provides one of the tales of the Canterbury tales in rap. It is much better than it sounds. I had the pleasure of sitting next to a young woman who was going to teach the Canterbury Tales to 16-18 year olds next term. I enjoyed having her revel in the play next to me. Because of technical difficulties, music only played for the first tale. I hope to read the Tales in the next couple of weeks and return. (Aug 8)	?	2005	?
54	Later Showers: (****) This one-man play describes the life of a 22-year old poet whose father died when he was twelve. Though he assumes the characters of the poet's family for short stretches, the bulk of the time is devoted to the poet's observations about his life. The evocative word pictures painted by the poet character are beautiful, although a bit rushed in places. (Aug 17)	?	2005	?
55	Will Smith: (****) If self-deprecating humor is to your taste, then Will is the comic for you. With a combination of a videos and interwoven tales he describes how a too nice and too sincere Jersey boy with an ever present umbrella can, amongst other humiliations, lose a girl friend to a brash Outlaw singer, and antagonize his hero, the singer Fish, through his sycophancy. In the end he presents a wonderfully weird music video that summarizes his travails. (Aug 6)	?	2005	?

56	Laurel and Laurel: (****) Bob Kingdom portrays Stan Laurel of Laurel and Hardy. I tend to like one person biographies, and this is no exception. Laurel was the brains of the duo, while Hardy spent the afternoons golfing. Things did not turn out well because they had no royalties in their contracts, strictly wages. Much of their work was copied/stolen by Abbot and Costello, Jerry Lewis, and Peter Sellers. Laurel's phone number was even in the phone book. When Peter Sellers discovered this, he stopped calling for advice on what was funny. I would have given this five stars except that the chronological jumping around made the tale unnecessarily confusing. (Aug 25)	?	2005	?
57	Caesar Twins: (****) These two 25-year old gymnasts are incredibly strong and handsome. They have four or five tableaus separated by singing by a leggy assistant, and accompanied by a horn player. When they are using that strength to do hand stands, headstands, and ribbon iron crosses they are wonderful to watch. It is amazing to see them do such things without even the need to breathe through their mouths. However, in the two scenes imitating martial arts games, and Marx Brothers mirroring their lack of precision becomes quite evident. (Aug 6)	?	2005	?
58	Robert Dubac's The Male Intellect: an oxymoron. (****) Robert's mantra is that the genders are "equally different." This show explores what it is about him, as a generic man, and his recently departed fiancé, as a generic woman, that explains why she left him two weeks ago. With the basic question being, "What do women want?" He makes sly observations about books, unwritten rules, and different ways of thinking that I found quite funny and perceptive. Both genders receive their just barbs, but men come out the worse for it. His partial answers and final solutions ring true. See the show to discover them! (Aug 9)	?	2005	?

59	Roses & Morphine: (****) A three-person fantasy of interpreting memory set in a psychological library complete with a Librarian. On another day, I may have given this abstract play only two stars, but this just hit me in an ineffable way. The young actress playing the Librarian seemed much older than her years. The set of four moveable bookshelves with drawers is noteworthy. (Aug 13)	?	2005	?
60	The Good Thief: (****) A one man show centering on an Irish thug whose attempted intimidation of a crime boss goes horribly wrong. The actor plays the protagonist perfectly. This is a simpleminded man who knows his role in life well, and accepts himself for what he is. The content is appropriately violent, but may be too strong for many. There is too much effort manipulating the three props, two boxes and a table, into cars and staircases. It is like the director was saying "See what I can create with just these three props." A single box would have worked better. (Aug 21)	?	2005	?
61	!Runners – The Return: (****) This has an interesting take on theater. A therapist's chair is surround by the audience. The therapist then deals with the audience as if it was a group therapy session. Some of the audience are actually actors, but it is not until well into the play that I could discern who they were. The play has to have a few slow parts where the real audience is interviewed to make the charade work. There are a couple of twists along the way that keep this quite interesting. (Aug 26)	?	2005	?
62	Where's the Power – A Rap Opera: (****) Three men and a woman dance to portray the conflicts that arise from the disparity of power in society. Their choice of chairs as the measure of power provide useful symbols for Chairista rebels and a game of musical chairs. The first piece was my favorite, when three dancers danced in synch, while the fourth provided his subtle variations. (Aug 12)	?	2005	?

63	Corpus Christi: (****) I saw this play about the earthier side of Christ's life at midnight! Despite the hour, the cast did fine job of portraying the twelve disciples, and a wimpy, sexually ambivalent Christ. The disclaimers at the beginning and end were appropriate, though unneeded in my case. It was quite a surprise to have Christ jump off the stage and across two rows of seats to personally ask me to shout Halleuah! The crucifixion and remaining empty cross are still powerful for me. (Aug 28)	?	2005	?
64	Snapshot: (****) This is an autobiographical story of a woman dealing with her life as the daughter of a white woman and a Black man who quickly leaves his family after returning from the Vietnam War. The photos that often served as the backdrop for the story were from her family album. Seeing her family from pregnant mother and stylish singer father through to a man with an empty stare contributed to the power of the story. I shared this with an actress/playwright and a director from another show. The actress found it a bit long, but I found it engrossing, and fought back tears at one point. (Aug 9)	?	2005	?
65	Twelfth Night – The 1960's San Francisco Psychedelic Musical : (****) Twelfth Night with 1960's music injected wherever possible. The voices were good, and the selection for music was appropriate to the character's state. They even got in all of the basic plot points between the many songs. (Aug 24)	?	2005	?
66	Weapons of Laugh Destruction: (****) Though I had a four star good time with these five comedians, much of that was because of the camaraderie of the small audience, and my home near San Francisco. Of note was a 71-3/4 year old, Ruth, who based her comedy purely on being elderly. (Aug 28)	?	2005	?

67	Imogen: (****) Two actors, and one dummy controlled by two puppeteers explore how the loss of a child affects a man who clearly loves life and his family. There is sense of South American magic theater with a crow puppet symbolizing death. (Aug 13)	?	2005	?
68	Enola: (****) This tells two stories: the development and use of the first atomic bomb, and the life story of Enola Gay, the woman for whom the bomber was named. Both have poignant endings. Years ago I had painted shadows of people on sidewalks in Sacramento in commemoration of Hiroshima. I learned that the real "shadows" in Hiroshima were caused by dust collecting on the fat of people impaled on walls. The Kansas town that built the B-29, was a true company town, with a perfect grid of streets that oppressed its citizens with its rigidity and sameness. (Aug 26)	?	2005	?
69	AmerWrecka: (****) The four college students killed at Kent State protesting the Vietnam War are assigned as guardian angels of four disparate New Yorkers to create a nationally known protest against George Bush's policies. I loved the polemics, the 60's music, and the conception of the protest. However, the interactions with God as Elvis, and two drill sergeant angels really detracted from the play. (Aug 19)	?	2005	?
70	Golden Prospects: (****) A pitch perfect melodrama complete with mustachioed villain engaged the hissing, booing, and cheering audience. It was Dudley Do Right come alive. The story was a little overlong, and the Brits missed some comical references to the history and geography of Los Angeles. (Aug 21)	?	2005	?

71	The Race: (****) This is a dance piece about coping with the birth of a man's first child. The first half of this was great, but the second half did not match it for originality. Their use of a treadmill, rolling tables, and rolling chairs was wonderful to watch. Of particular note is a door size cutout in the curtain that moved. They used this as a sliding window onto an evolving party that had babies starting to appear in people's arms. (Aug 22)	?	2005	?
72	The Invasion Handbook: (****) Two Nazi spies await paratroopers among six other diners in a boarding house on the English coast. Each of the characters has a significant part to play, though the retired colonel of the Boer War has the most fun. (Aug 14)	?	2005	?
73	Ian Kendall's Magic Show: (****) Ian provides pleasant patter between routine magic tricks involving ropes, cards, coins, and money. As a kid who had a magic show, including a top hat full of my mom's scarves, I found this a nice break from the other things I have been seeing. I was brought up on stage and participated in a rope trick, spiked plinth trick, a ball trick, and a money trick! (Aug 20)	?	2005	?
74	Bass: The Final Frontier: (****) Steve Lawson is a virtuoso bass player who uses two echo machines to lay down bass lines that he then plays over. His chats between the songs are great fun. When he leaves the machines off, and stops twiddling with their dials, his true virtuosity really shines. (Aug 12)	?	2005	?
75	Guy Pratt – My Bass and Other Animals: (****) Guy provides humorous anecdotes and short bass riffs from his long career. He starts with childhood, works through the Australian hit band Ice House, and his time with Pink Floyd, Madonna, and even Michael Jackson. I think a fan of the musicians of the 1970's and 1980's would give this five stars, but some of the celebrity references were lost on me. (Aug 16)	?	2005	?

76	Come Again – The World of Peter Cook and Dudley Moore: (***) The play portrays the interactions of Peter Cook and Dudley Moore from 1960 and Beyond the Fringe until the movie '10'. The erudite Cook constantly put down Moore. By the end, Cook was drinking heavily and Moore had a successful solo Hollywood career. I think that Brits who watched the Moore/Cook team rise to stardom in the 1960's would give this a higher rating. (Aug 24)	?	2005	?
77	Being Gertrude Stein: (***) A one woman portrayal of Stein speaking about her life in 1930(?). I certainly got a flavor for Ms. Stein's elitism and poetry. The problem with this act is that was only 40 minutest long, when I expected an hour. I felt I was teased with what I saw. (Aug 27)	?	2005	?
78	The Hospital: (***) This dance piece tells of the lives of three nurses in an empty hospital during a war. It is strange how I feel that I can understand the whole even though there were parts that I did not understand. They walked that fine line between reason and insanity. (Aug 22)	?	2005	?
79	Life in Show/Sunday Morning at the Centre of the World: (***) A theater company prepares a play about a real nineteenth century actress' rights in the 1800's while dealing with fears of rape, and an accused rape by one its actors. The play they are practicing seemed quite interesting to me. The modern day script that overlaid it, including poorly shot videos, provided some counterpoints, but was, on the whole, much weaker. By comparison, one of the last plays I saw, #4, "The Fourth Wall", handles the same general plotting exquisitely. (Aug 28)	?	2005	?

80	Steven Berkoff - Shakespeare's Villains: (***) The renowned actor provides an essay about the villains as well as life as a Shakespearean actor. I enjoyed the exposition, but his portrayals were way too hammy for my taste. On only two occasions did he take a part seriously. Otherwise, he was in full pantomime mode complete with tongue wagging and sight gags. What a waste of talent. (Aug 20)	?	2005	?
81	Shakespeare for Breakfast: (***) The leads of Julius Caesar, MacBeth, Taming of the Shrew, Romeo and Juliet, Two Gentlemen of Verona meet in a forest camp for a TV Survivor's game. True to Shakespearean form, a lot of them end up dead. For Brits, this pantomime is worth 5 stars, but, as an American, I missed all the fun of the many pop culture references. (Aug 14)	?	2005	?
82	Sleepwalk: (***) I placed this play higher than I might because of the message. This is clearly a play to be presented to adolescents to warn them of thinking that leads to suicide. While preachy in places, the play presents many of its arguments in very entertaining ways. The doctor with whom I shared this play, and I, particularly liked the way they used a buffed up Amygdala (part of the brain, for those without a background in brain physiology) character to represent the uncontrolled negative emotions with which a teen literally has to wrestle. (Aug 8)	?	2005	?
83	Art of Travel: (***) A dance piece based on the book of the same name (which I have not read) about how travel leads to consciousness raising. The initial dance is a bit off putting because of the seemingly obscure video of a truck parking in the background. (I later learned that the videos alluded to images from the book.) The two women and a man provide an entertaining range of interpretations of Indian dance. I found it interesting to compare the subtle differences when the two women performed the same steps; one was sharp while the other slightly softer. The highlight was an early piece on the joys of a new romance. (Aug 7)	?	2005	?

84	Turn to Face the Change: (***) A romantic comedy about a depressed late-night talk show host who rediscovers romance through a personals ad. There were many funny lines that fell flat for lack of audience. The host and his love interest's mother are well developed, but the lover lacks explanation – she is too good to be in need of a personal ad. (Aug 17)	?	2005	?
85	The Booth Variations: (***) An actor tells of the life of the renowned American actor Edwin Booth, brother of the assassin of President Lincoln. He started acting when he had to replace his father as Hamlet in a traveling show, mimicking every move that he had learned while watching from the wings. The Civil War is brought to life with a portrayal of the photographer Matthew Brady. The historical notes were interesting. (Aug 24)	?	2005	?
86	Happiness, how much do it cost?: (***) A seemingly autobiographical play about the numerous emigrations of a tall Yugoslavian. He played basketball for Yugoslavia, then was a stable boy and movie villain in his beloved Italy, then back to Yugoslavia, then mowed park grass in Canada, and then married and divorced in London. It is a sad tale of a life with little purpose or happiness. (Aug 29)	?	2005	?
87	Beautiful Child: (***) The second of back-to-back plays I saw about pedophilia. This one has a young art teacher seeking sanctuary in his parent's home after falling in love with an eight year old student. Unlike "How I Learned to Drive", this story has two other relationships presented which muddy the power of the story. (Aug 26)	?	2005	?
88	Heaven Eyes: (***) This is a fairy tale of orphans whose river raft lodges on an island whose inhabitants are Grampa, and a girl named Heaven Eyes. The tale of trying to find ones past is touching. (Aug 25)	?	2005	?

89	Box of Noise: (***) A troubled woman becomes a TV that harshly changes to channels that are sometimes her life and sometimes others. Many of the channels are disturbing, and almost all are engrossing. This is another example where the whole is less than the sum of its parts. (Aug 19)	?	2005	?
90	Trad: (***) An Irishman and his 100 year old son review their lives. I dozed during this, but found parts interesting. (Aug 23)	?	2005	?
91	The Real Inspector Hound: (***) A Tom Stoppard farce with two theater critics suddenly becoming part of the murder mystery they are watching. The plot is appropriately zany, but the lines provide little of interest to me. (Aug 21)	?	2005	?
92	I am Star Trek: (***) This revue is a biography of Gene Rodenberry, the creator/producer of Star Trek, from the creation of the first TV series through to the opening of the Las Vegas theme park. As a trekkie, I found it interesting to learn of the darker side of the man. The songs are quite forgettable, and this is definitely only for those who know the original TV show. Still, I am glad I went. (Aug 18)	?	2005	?
93	Otherwise Engaged: (***) At a wedding, five women meet in the ladies room and deal with strains of an inappropriate pregnancy. The ramifications and revelations kept my attention, with a big twist at the end. (Aug 13)	?	2005	?
94	13 O'Clock: (***) Two women use physical comedy to tell the story of one woman's fantastical story of writing a script. While some of the physical comedy was fresh, particularly using multiple fold down bibs for quick costume changes, the story itself was muddled. (Aug 27)	?	2005	?

95	The Grill Chef: (***) Three twenty-something performers explore the trials and tribulations of finding and keeping unrewarding jobs early in life. The young adults in the audience found the pieces quite funny. The older crowd, including me, found it somewhat depressing to think of prospect of unfulfilling work for low pay with horrible bosses. It helps explain why so many young people get drunk every night here. (Aug 21)	?	2005	?
96	Le Cid: (***) A play in French about a woman whose fiancé kills her father defending his father's honor. Although I understand about ten words in French, the synopsis provided a reasonable guide to the action. The costumes were beautiful. The tone varied from tragedy to comedy with a bit of farce thrown in to confuse me. (Aug 15)	?	2005	?
97	Haci Guigo: 8.15: (***) An Italian performance piece telling the story of the Holocaust and the Manhattan Project. Some of the parts were quite interesting, while others meant nothing to me. (Aug 22)	?	2005	?
98	Your Life in Their Hands: (***) Two women provide sketches of normal people dealing with inept people in positions of power such as attorneys, doctors, and even ultrasound technicians. The wry humor is fine, but there are too many long blackouts between the sketches. In particular, there was one sketch that was shorter than the blackout before it. There would have been more time for comedy, and more entertaining, had they simply changed costumes quickly on stage. (Aug 16)	?	2005	?
99	Being Earnest: It's Rather Important: (***) This play within a play is a shortened version of Oscar Wilde's play with an interlude of the actors dealing the difficulties of putting on the play. Wilde is great, and the enthusiasm of the cast is evident. (Aug 15)	?	2005	?

100	The Coming of Golf: (***) I chose this because my stepsons love P.G. Wodehouse. The play is a series of humorous vignettes centered on golf obsession, from Celtic times as well as the early twentieth century. The fare is light and friendly. (Aug 9)	?	2005	?
101	Seb Lime: (***) With the help of a demon, a self-centered handsome fellow gets to correct a sexual mistake that had horrible consequences. Seb is a rogue, and my own sense of honor never allowed me to identify with a man that seems to choose remorse for a lark. The acting was fine; I just didn't find the outcome satisfying. A change in the final scene would have made this much more satisfying fare. (Aug 8)	?	2005	?
102	Twelfth Night (C Electric): (***) A fun and fine edition of this play. The use of picture frames for the doorways worked quite well. (Aug 10)	?	2005	?
103	True Genius: (***) A 17-year old boy must confront his delusions about his father who died when he was three. One 10-second, 2" mistake in make-up made the second part of the play quite confusing. The director told me that the make-up had been an issue before, so I am a little concerned that they have not addressed this critical facet of the story. The play has too many scene changes that require redressing the stage. Better set design would reduce the amount of dark time on the stage. (Aug 10)	?	2005	?
104	Subverse (Show B): (***) This is a political revue composed of five sketches and one poem. Most of the sketches are over the top, particularly those that are fictional TV shows. I found it refreshing the way the poem points out the insidious power of "the clever people," instead of blaming political straw man. In the interest of full disclosure, and fond memories, I must state that I had a drink with the company after the show.	?	2005	?

105	The Kourageous Kiplingers – without a net! : (***) This is a good hearted homage to Borsht Belt vaudeville, with a singer and her sadsack husband accompanying on a ukulele. The one liners are straight from that era. I don't know whether this is high camp or low humor, but we in the audience had a wonderful time. (Aug 15)	?	2005	?
106	Catch-22: (***) A tale of a bomber pilot in WWII who wants to quit flying because everyone is trying to kill him, but the paradoxes of military rules prevent him. I read the book in high school, and thought the movie would be unintelligible to someone who had not. Incidentally, Heller wrote it as Catch-18, but just before the book's release Stalag-18 came out, and he changed it to the oft-cited Catch-22. The play provides more connections between events, but still appears to provide too little character background to make its conceits to the book work. There are just too many characters without adequate justification of their behaviors. (Aug 8)	?	2005	?
107	Madam I'm Adam: (***) A man deals with the consequences of building a time machine in the late 1800's. I chose this play because I always like stories about time travel, and I often give a computer programming assignment to build a palindrome detector. This has a well thought out mix of live action, puppetry, and video effects. The story is a bit confusing as, I suppose, time travel should be. Had the acting been less broad, this would be more satisfying. (Aug 20)	?	2005	?
108	The Ennio Morricone Experience: (***) A quintet plays the music of Ennio Moricone, who wrote the music for Leone's spaghetti westerns. Music is probably the wrong word. Soundtracks would be better. Besides trumpet, vibraphone, drums, bass, and keyboards they use a ton of sound effects gadgets and silly instruments to emulate a movie. They even have a solo with a man playing a pimento can "guitar". It is all done in fun, though the musicianship is spot on. (Aug 22)	?	2005	?

109	Wetmarsh College: (***) This light comic opera about the unwillingness of the dons of a college to break tradition, and hire a female professor, probably deserves just two stars. It is just that as a lecturer at an American university, I like to see plays about the English system. This has the classic silliness of English pantomimes. (Aug 10)	?	2005	?
110	Ride the Punani: (***) A one woman show portraying a day in the life of an unsuccessful twentysomething woman. Though I found much of what she said interesting, there were too many other distractions. She wore a bustier that revealed much of her ample bosom, even though she was suppose to be at work for much of the play. Even more distracting, was the constantly changing slideshow in the background. To make matters even worse, some of the slides even had aphorisms and personal letters that were particularly hard to ignore. (Aug 29)	?	2005	?
111	Tropea Couch Potatoes Paradise: (***) A dance piece that has a couple in a video changing TV channels that the performers then perform. Some of the channels are quite good, but others have little to offer. (Aug 22)	?	2005	?
112	Burlesk's Little Bo Peepshow: (**) The Oxford men and women have created a burlesque show with can-cans, slightly bawdy humor, and stripteases without nudity. I have no problem with the lack of nudity, but I guess they are just unwillingly to tap into the sexuality that is at the heart of burlesque. One act epitomizes this. A Mary Poppins lookalike appears, but rather than slowly stripping into a more revealing costume, she disappears behind a screen and quickly throws her clothes over it, and then is revealed in a nurses mini-smock. It seems that company does not realize that it is the getting there that is most of the fun in stripping. (Aug 19)	?	2005	?

113	Some Explicit Polaroids: (***) This play explores how a recently released attempted murderer re-integrates into his world after spending years in prison. He still has lots of idealistic anger when dealing with his former girl friend, victim, and a trio of desperate souls. The play explores many issues including AIDs, political idealism, and sexual abuse. I realize now that one major problem I had with the play was because the company had not updated the script. The lead mentions that he was put away in 1984, so I supposed that 20 years had passed, and that he was suppose to be 40 years old. But the lead and his former associates did not look, nor act, like middle aged people. Had this date been corrected, much of the play would have made much more sense. (Aug 19)	?	2005	?
114	Duck Variations: (**) As the title indicates, ducks are mentioned in every scene as two old New Yorkers sit on a park bench and discuss life. It seems like the playwright, David Mamet, set a self-imposed challenge to write as many scenes involving two old men and ducks as he could. Turns out that the whole is less than the sum of its parts. (Aug 17)	?	2005	?
115	Soul II (**) This is a flamenco troupe that just did not grab me. Most of the musicians looked bored. I think the show would have greatly benefited from either a program or an emcee to provide an explanation of the dances. With the proper interpreter, this could have earned four stars. For a five star show, albeit not all traditional flamenco, see Venezuela Viva. (Aug 17)	?	2005	?
116	Sixty-two Tickety Boo: (**) This very short, 35 minutes, has four women discussing their lives during one night at a bingo parlour. The show is fast paced and has a few good quips, but simply runs its course. (Aug 13)	?	2005	?

117	MacBeth – the hour. (**) Unhappily my jet lag kicked in just as this show started. Normally I drink a coke before listening to Shakespeare, instead I had had my lunchtime Guinness. Nonetheless, when I wasn't dozing I found the scenes well selected and the acting fine. It would be hard to beat the playwright. Of note was the use of 18" x 6' wood rectangles that served as a variety of sets and props—tables, steps, doors, and clamoring sounds of war. (Aug 7)	?	2005	?
118	A Servant to Two Masters: (**) My first play of the trip. Patterned on the Shakespeare Italian comedies with a woman masquerading as a man, this was a pleasant but uneven play. The initial premise lacked some explanation and made it difficult for my tired mind to sort out the roles. After a frenetic first scene, the play settled into a more reasonable pace that suited the material. Befitting the title, the Servant had the best lines and most fun. All in all a good start for one of many "young" plays I will be seeing. (Aug 7)	?	2005	?
119	Subverse (Show A): (**) This show contained eight political pieces ranging from poetry to TV show sketches. Unhappily, few of the pieces were very satisfying. Some were overlong, and others just seemed to have no point. The couple that convinced me to see this show with them said that they had seen Show B, and found it much better. (Aug 11)	?	2005	?
120	The Thing and I: (**) This is the story of how a singer gets a part because her secret admirer/piano player murders her competition. While the singer has an average voice, the piano player's has become much worse since I saw him in "Gangrene and Grapes". "Gangrene and Grapes" is a continuation of this story. I found that many of the songs did not fit the needs of the situation and plot. Though there are two notable upbeat songs at the end, the rest of their selections were more of non-melodic Sondheim variety than tuneful Porter. (Aug 29)	?	2005	?

121	Improvedy: (**) Four men and a woman do improv based on audience suggestions. Though there was an occasional witticism, these comedians pale in comparison to the Oxford Imps. (Aug 16)	?	2005	?
122	Velvet Laughter: (**) Scott Capurro is a gay man from San Francisco who chooses topics that many would avoid. While his jokes on the sexual side of being gay work well, he has a tin ear for other arenas. In particular, he attempted to have fun with child molestation. After 40 minutes, he clearly had run out of material, and resorted to making fun of the audience. (Aug 13)	?	2005	?
123	The Pipe Manufacturer's Blue Book: (**) A violent killer overtakes a household of precise reasoning. The precision of the speech within the household mesmerized me, but the extreme violence and appearance of a constable are gratuitous. In fact, three of the six characters could be cut without loss of plot. (Aug 14)	?	2005	?
124	Valentine's Day: (**) A slight tale about an isolated romantic young man who has a series of sexual misadventures. While the actor is fine and some of the vignettes were well told, the story as a whole seemed weak. (Aug 10)	?	2005	?
125	The Treasure of the Puta Madre: (**) This is really a whimsical radio play of a pirate presented in a theater. There is little acting, just reading of lines. The premise that the storyteller, a young woman would be treated as a parrot, including sitting on the pirate captain's shoulder, just did not work for me. (Aug 26)	?	2005	?
126	The Albert Einstein Experience: (**) Four men trying to explain Einstein's major theories at the level of pub talk? Sort of works, and has its fun moments, but the task is a bit more than they, or anyone, could handle. (Aug 9)	?	2005	?

127	How to Build a Time Machine: (**) A one-man show that tries to explain quantum physics using chicken-wire, corrugated boxes, and electrical wire. Like the Albert Einstein Experience, this has its cute moments, but has set itself an overambitious goal.	?	2005	?
128	Guys and Dolls: (**) Unfortunately, musicals, unlike normal plays, have ideals with which to judge them: notes must be hit, and a group should dance synchronously. Though they clearly tried hard, they missed their notes and their marks too often. A good high school production of which their parents could be proud. I was also unhappy that they cut "I've Got a Horse Right Here" despite playing it in the overture. (Aug 10)	?	2005	?
129	Korczak: (**) This musical is based on the true story of a master story teller that ran a Jewish orphanage before and during World War II, including the Warsaw ghetto and Auschwitz. While the story is undeniably heart wrenching, I had real problems understanding the singing. The music haunting, but repetitive. (Aug 12)	?	2005	?
130	The Road to Pisa: (**) As the name suggests this is a takeoff on the Bob Hope/Bing Crosby "Road to …" movies. Though the plot parallels the plots of those movies, the gags aren't very good, and no one has a voice close to Bings. (Aug 25)	?	2005	?
131	The Bicycle Men: (**) This play has a bicyclist finding himself in a French town in need of having his bicycle repaired. There just isn't much here.	?	2005	?
132	Gangrene and Grapes: (**) A one-man revue about an escaped insane asylum inmate who had murdered a singer's rivals. I found it strange that while his poems were well written, and his musicianship fine, his songs were lousy. He just could not combine his two talents. (Aug 19)	?	2005	?

133	The Red Shoes: (**) I would have benefited greatly from knowing this story beforehand. This patchwork of the original Hans Christian Andersen story and a modern day interpretation was just too confusing for me. The woman next to me thought it was "amazing". (Aug 11)	?	2005	?
134	Teechers: (**) A musical about a drama teacher's first year at a troubled British high school. As a teacher, I am predisposed to plays set in schools. However, this has an unimaginative script, and not a particularly talented cast. (Aug 19)	?	2005	?
135	Murder We Wrote: (**) In this the audience tries to determine the murderer of the presenter of a kiddy TV show. The audience had some fun, but there really wasn't much here. (Aug 11)	?	2005	?
136	The Ladyboys of Bangkok: (*) This show has 13 Thai men appear in drag and lip synch and dance to popular songs. The audience loved it, while I found it very disappointing that they did not sing themselves. Seeing men dressed in drag is nothing new to me, and hardly fun. I felt sorry for the obviously bored and tired performers. (Aug 26)	?	2005	?
137	Absence and Presence: (*) This a autobiographical mimed piece about losing ones father. The somber music, and long pauses of nothing moving, had me dozing. However, he received a standing ovation from many. I think many could identify with his grief and loss of a loved one. I am lucky enough to have not lost anyone to an untimely death. (Aug 22)	?	2005	?
138	Steve Furst: (*) I must first admit that some of the jokes relied on cultural knowledge of which I am ignorant. Nonetheless, this series of five skits sandwiched between six video chapters of the same incompetent stuntman, seemed to leave most of the audience underwhelmed. Furst creates potentially interesting characters, but their stories and jokes are perfunctory, with the stuntman being the most predictable and least funny. (Aug 6)	?	2005	?

139	Ants with Feelings: (*) Four comedians with about ten minutes of good material between them tried to fill an hour. Each, in turn, had the bad habit of introducing each new topic by polling the audience. Since none have more than one or two jokes on a given topic, this meant we were constantly being polled, rather than hearing comedy. (Aug 29)	?	2005	?
140	I've Stuttered so I'll F-F-Finish: (*) Jaik Campbell is a really nice guy who no longer stutters much, but whose mind can't seem to get on track for comedy. His videos were banal, and, as he admitted, his attempts at interacting with the audience just don't work. (Aug 29)	?	2005	?
141	Yeehad! The Musical!: (*) With this one, I paid the price of not reading the synopsis beforehand. This musical about T Bone Pickens disguising himself as an Arab and detonating a strap-on nuclear bomb in the parking lot of a Korean grocery store in Los Angeles, has bad taste, few good voices, and few good songs. After the London bombings, I should have avoided a play with this premise because it is particularly disgusting to me. (Aug 15?)	?	2005	?
142	My Pyramids: (*) A one woman characterization of the soldier that held the leash of the prisoner pyramid in Abu Ghraib. She is portrayed as an ignorant bigot accustom to abusing people both in her personal and military life. The play just criticizes her, and offers no enlightening insights. (Aug 12)	?	2005	?
143	Lilita: (*) According to the program Lillith was the woman created by God before Eve and left Eden immortal. Though she appears in the play, the balance has to do with a mix of Red Riding Hood and child molestation. The latter is such a important subject, and so poorly handled by this play that it poisons my response. (Aug 12)	?	2005	?

144	Angelo Tsarouchas – The World's a Whore: (*) A fat Canadian comic of Greek descent whose humor centers on obesity, Greeks, and Canadians. Though we started 15 minutes late, he decided to end on time. Thank goodness. 45 minutes of swearing, and an occasional good joke was enough for me. (Aug 25)	?	2005	?
145	Priorite A Gauche – Remastered: (*) Two Brits masquerade as a French musical group. Their songs lack wit, and their patter is inconsequential. (Aug 24)	?	2005	?
146	Strangers: (no stars) A French troupe that uses mime and occasional gibberish in a very uneven attempt to explore the interactions of strangers. They do have a nice prop of a 3' high screen that is occasionally raised 3' above the floor. This permits us to see just stockinged legs with different shoes used to differentiate the characters. I also liked a skit using the screen that has a prostrate bum trying to grab a fallen coin while a street sweeper thwarts him. (Aug 7)	?	2005	?
147	Give Up! Start Over!: (no stars) Great acting by a young woman confronted with the difference between reality and reality TV. The concept was just too abstract for by dozing mind. (Aug 8)	?	2005	?
148	The Reggie Watts Tangent: (no stars) Though he can imitate a beat box, there was almost nothing funny during the entire hour. (Aug 24)	?	2005	?
149	Into The Closet: (no stars) Six people in a closet doing very little for six minutes for 4.5 pounds. Just a waste of money.	?	2005	?
150	The Lesson: (no stars) A 21-year old "professor" "teaches" his pupil arithmetic by abusing her mercilessly, and finally killing her. Other than a short guitar solo by the professor, this play offers nothing. (Aug 13)	?	2005	?

151	F***ing Asylum Seekers: (no stars) This absurdist comedy about a soccer watching yob whose council flat is taken over by a family of Slavic asylum seekers just has nothing to recommend it. It is another example of a play that wastes time on a video to no effect. I should note that this London company, Act Provocateur International, has ten plays at the Fringe. Avoid them! I have also seen Valentine's Day. According to others, the company considers it their job to challenge the audience. In my view, they are fine actors that are deluded in their belief that they can write. (Aug 10)	?	2005	?