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John Lyle Belden and Wendy Carson

Theatre Bulletin

Indianapolis

FREE

No. 0005 – August 22, 2019 – Page 1

INDYFRINGE: The Reviews

Edited; see full reviews online at www.playswithjohnandwendy.com

Here's what we had to say

about performances we saw at the 15th annual Indianapolis Theatre Fringe Festival, running through Sunday. Read more at our website; get info and tickets at theirs: www.IndyFringe.org.

– John and Wendy

The Adventures of Crazy Jane & Red-Haired Annie

@ District Theater

Laura Packer weaves these new fairy tales with the skill of a spider, transporting us to a time when just sitting at the feet of a storyteller was the greatest feeling in the world.

Adventures While Black in Great Britain

@ ComedySportz

Les Kurkendaal-Barrett tells how he accompanied husband John to England for a funeral and to meet the family. Les lays out all the eccentricities in his fascinating and friendly storytelling style.

And Then They Came For Me

@ IndyFringe Theatre

Carmel High School students present this Holocaust drama, a companion piece to "The Diary of Anne Frank," as it relates the stories of people who knew her, including footage of interviews with survivors.

Behind Every Great Mariska Hargitay is a Great Kurt Fitzpatrick

@ District Theater

An excellent storyteller, Fitzpatrick reflects on his unusual path to quasi-stardom in entertaining fashion, telling how being a background extra is sort of like sex-work.

BRAIN-O-RAMA

@ ComedySportz

"Psychic comedian" Kevin Burke demonstrates his "telepathetic" powers in various ways, including playing Russian roulette with staple guns. Whether the tricks work or not, you will laugh -- a lot.

Class Dismissed

@ ComedySportz

Sugar Creek Players Youth Troupe take on the challenge of Senior year of high school and a mountain of concerns over planning for the future. Help support them as they quest for answers.

The Cookie Dough Show

@ ComedySportz

Fringe shows are often full of half-baked ideas. Emerging Artists Theatre Indy presents several, in various flavors, so you are sure to find at least one you like -- topped off with a brilliant piece by Paige Scott.

The Day Penny Drowned

@ District Theater

Tragic title, but it's a comedy, with delightful performances. A successful playwright and her husband are on a romantic getaway, but her family proceeds to force their way into her plans.

Fairy Godmother & Associates

@ IndyFringe Theatre

Even fairy tale characters have to make a living, especially with the (Big Bad) wolf at the door. Lisa K. Anderson delights as the ever optimistic Godmother, her spunky demeanor keeps the show light as a feather.

Fallen from the Toybox

@ District Theater

Comedy and musical virtuosos The Fourth Wall return to IndyFringe with pieces inspired by childhood play, including works choreographed to kids' drawings, and a game of hide and seek.

FootLose

@ ComedySportz

ComedySportz cast members mock the classic coming-of-age film that brought us Kevin Bacon's Angry-Dance, with the help of audience suggestions, including made-up dance moves.

Game of Crows ...Father Ned!

@ The Oasis

The wacky gang from Perpendicular island find themselves involved in the filming of a popular epic TV series. Also, there is a Bingo card on the back of your program that can win you a prize after the show.

Generations

@ District Theater

This Crossroads Dance show is arranged as a trip through time, through America's history, especially the music of various 20th century eras. Helpful notes in the program help us follow the progress.

Is Your Brain Still Cooking?

@ District Theater

On a game show, two quirky retirees are quizzed on their recollections of the good old days, bringing on genuine feelings of nostalgia. This is the latest from the mind and memories of Garret Mathews.

Iron in Your Future

(First weekend only)

"Adult Onset Athlete" Mindy Pfeffer goes from triathlon enthusiast to the dreaded Iron Man. Sharing the experience in this one-woman show is a great workout in humor and inspiration.

It Gets Bitter, The Ron Popp Story

@ ComedySportz

Popp deftly guides us through stories of his childhood, dating life, gay marriage, and love of the theater. With homey insights, sharp tongue and witty cynicism, he manages to keep us laughing.

Jan of All Trades

@ ComedySportz

In what Jan Shirley Ann calls her "autobiocomedy," the stand-up and seminarian presents a clean family-friendly show. She tells charming funny stories of her unusual family and life's road that led her here.

Jeannette Rankin:

Champion of Persistence

@ District Theater

J. Emily Peabody puts irresistible energy into her portrayal of Rankin, a suffragette and activist who served in Congress, making a history lesson feel more like a rally.

Journey to Hell

@ District Theater

The Indianapolis Men's Chorus gives us a rousing night of hard rocking anthems that will get your fists pumping and have you singing along. The singing is spectacular, and the choreography is quite impressive.

Lady LIVES

@ District Theater

The immortal Billie Holiday, who passed from us in 1959, makes an appearance in Indianapolis today, mixing in some more contemporary hits. Monica Cantrell channels "Lady Day" perfectly.

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The Last Man

@ Firehouse

This sci-fi drama starts out strong, taking us down a path of eerie possibilities featuring tech that is only a couple of breakthroughs away, and temporal tinkering that acknowledges “time travel” has its limits.

Les Chanteuses

@ District Theater

Magic Thread Cabaret brings us a tribute to some of the most legendary Divas of our day, giving us three local ladies whose talents are a brilliant match to the beloved songs they are presenting.

A Life of Sorrow: The Life and Times of Carter Stanley

@ Firehouse

Historian Gary Reid portrays the Bluegrass pioneer in a performance that’s more storytelling than concert, a show for anyone with an interest in the roots of “roots” music.

The Madwomen’s Late-Nite Cabaret

@ IndyFringe Theatre

Lizzie Borden is at the piano, while Eve, Typhoid Mary, Medea and others perform songs revealing aspects of these historical icons, more misunderstood than evil. These women deserve to be heard.

Make Me A Match

@ The Oasis

A story of love and empowerment taking place on a TV dating show, with wacky contestants and a jerk for a host. This #MeToo musical is better than a lot of what’s actually on television, and more fun.

Nharcolepsy

(First weekend only)

Gustave’s Grandmother told him stories of the Yeti and he promised her to search for the elusive creature. The strange, sad journey he takes with his assistant, Nhar, is detailed in story, song, and dance.

Not Dead Yet

@ IndyFringe Theatre

A retired actress causes a stir when a Twitter joke about her alleged demise goes viral. A nice show in which “ladies of a certain age” are written with dignity and respect, and more than just caricatures.

Orgasmo Adulto Escapes from the Zoo

@ The Oasis

Despite the bizarre title, and being produced by avant garde NoExit, this show is delightfully accessible to the average audience, presenting works of European satirists Dario Fo and Franca Rame.

Phantom of Fountain Square

@ The Oasis

Set in a fascinating part of downtown Indy, where a family’s attempt to start a restaurant stirs the antics of a mysterious entity. Great performances in a new play with a lot of potential.

Pretty Face: An American Dream

(First weekend only)

Amanda Huotari presents the fateful tale of one Miss Tiffany Trump, the President’s daughter who no one remembers, peppered with actual quotes and vignettes from the past.

The Reluctant Mind Reader

(First weekend only)

Brendon Ware was cursed with the ability to read minds. Because he enjoys lying, we have to just take his word for it; nevertheless he will make sure we all suffer for it – laughing the whole time.

Schoolhouse Rock LIVE, Fringe Edition

@ The Oasis

The energetic and highly-talented teens of CYT Indy present the stage show performing the various educational shorts you (or your parents) likely grew up with back in the days of Saturday morning cartoons.

Tasty Bits: The Magic and Stories of Taylor Martin

@ Firehouse

Local magician Martin has accumulated a lot of interesting experiences, which he relates, along with a few illusions. Some stories are different at each performance.

A Thousand Words

@ District Theater

C. Neil Parsons, musician and member of The Fourth Wall comic ensemble, presents a serious and moving tribute to his father, an infantryman in Vietnam tapped by the Army to take photographs of the war.

Vinny the Pooh

@ IndyFringe Theatre

The beloved characters of the 50 Hectare Forest have been forced into a life of crime in order to remain a “family.” Spot-on performances present appropriate versions of the characters with familiar aspects intact.

Vixen DeVille Revealed

(First weekend only)

In a burlesque show like no other, Cat LaCohie teaches an audience member how to walk on glass, then through her life’s story, shows us all lessons in personal bravery.

VolleyBrawl

@ IndyFringe Theatre

Welcome to the 2019 Championships of this extremely underground blood sport. The whole show overflows with silliness and 80’s references abound. Musical numbers are tight and enjoyable.

What They Said About Love

(First weekend only)

Actor Steven Budd gives us a look into his personal journey of self-discovery regarding his ability to understand love and relationships, interspersed with clips of various couples relating their own stories.

YAS, Twain

@ District Theater

Zach & Zack’s latest historical farce, a look into the life and times of Mark (or maybe Shania) Twain, enacted by a diverse cast, gives you an unusual insight into highlights and lowlights of Twain’s story.

We can also vouch for:

Through past years we have seen **Act A Foo’ Improv Crew**, and they just get better every time. They will be at The Oasis Saturday and Sunday.

During the recent DivaFest, we enjoyed the charming and hilarious **aMUSED**, in which a grieving Greek Muse “haunts” an apartment. Now at the IndyFringe Theatre.

Apologies to the shows we couldn’t get to. Also, note there are a few that are second-weekend only; we hung out with **Jordan Allen** last weekend, and it looks like his mentalist show will be fun.

SEE OTHER SIDE FOR MORE REVIEWS