



OFF the Record

Issue #2 - June 17th, 2006

Audience Reviews

The Man Who Went to Work One Day and Got Eaten by a Bear (Gruppo Rubato)

I enjoyed the first part of the play. Good interaction between the office characters. Tight delivery of humorous lines. The absurdity of the bear at the office works. Not so fond of the second part. Didn't see a lot of point to it. Tries to be too serious.

The Man Who Went to Work One Day and Got Eaten by a Bear (Gruppo Rubato)

Very funny show. Great performers tackling sharp satirical material.

-Charles Mifiland



Schedule Changes

Please note that the shows **Audible** (Arts Court Library) and **Mozart's Back** (Arts Court Theatre) have been withdrawn from the Fringe festival and the first three shows of **The Opposite of Infinity** are being rescheduled.

So Kiss Me Already Herschel Gertz!

(Amy Salloway)

The story of a girl who doesn't fit in at the conservative Jewish summer camp she has been sent to by her mother. Amy Salloway is entirely engaging as several quirky characters who are all endearing. The style is funny and smart. The writing is vivid in its attention to detail, drawing the viewer into the character's agonies and sharing in her joys. A great play.

-Melissa Gruber

Am I Talking Too Much?

(Adam M)

Excellent Show. Good venue and a great Performance. Adam really gets you thinking while making you laugh at the same time. A++. Would go again.

-Rebecca Fayne

Am I Talking Too Much?

(Adam M)

Very raw, real life, Entertaining, ballsy and blue. We do find out it has a message at the end. Don't go see it if you want the artsy-fart experience.

Am I Talking Too Much?

(Adam M)

Who knew Adam was so hilarious! I just wanted to give him a hug after the show until I realized the whole point was that I shouldn't want to give him one. Brilliant, honest, hilarious.

More reviews on reverse

Thank you to the following Fringe Sponsors:



Forbitten Paradise

(Skinny Jo Productions)

Great delivery of lines. Total film noir, hard boiled feel. Lighting effects helped set the story. Overall, entertaining and thoughtful.

Forbitten Paradise

(Skinny Jo Productions)

About two script-writers from Toronto hoping to make it big in Hollywood, this show has a nice, film noir texture that is established neatly through costumes and simple, but effective set pieces. The main characters in the film remain on hand throughout the play to act out the script in its various incarnations as it's being written, which is clever. The play keeps itself going and never let me get bored (which can be tricky). Good job!

-Melissa Gruber



You Too Can Be A Critic

Did you discover a hidden gem? Find out that the play everyone wants to see is a fraud?? Let people know by writing your own review. You can find Off the Record forms and drop-boxes at each venue with which to spill the beans or send them to mgruber11@hotmail.com.

Prefer to be a gossip columnist? Feel free to write in your crazy stories as well.

We may edit for spelling, swears and occasionally, length.

The History of the Ottawa Fringe

by Bryony Etherington

It all began in the fall of 1996 when two local thespians, Jon Alexander Jr. & Kishwar Iqbal, sat at Nickel's Diner in the Byward market discussing the local theatre scene. With summer just behind them and regular work resuming for theatre artists they wondered what could be done about the inevitable summer lag. At the time, the closest summer theatre festival was the Manotick Fringe Festival, which was geared mostly towards producing children's theatre. To be able to work year-round local artists were forced to leave home and seek work elsewhere. Cities like Toronto and Vancouver were alluring to emerging *and* established theatre workers alike, not only for the constant supply of work but also for the opportunities they offered for amateur artists. Local venues were too risky to rent for companies that didn't have a patron base and most experimental theatre was unlikely to be picked up by the mainstream theatres in town.

Rather than let that get them down, Jon and Kish found a solution and set out to produce the first ever Ottawa Fringe Festival. A Halloween costume party at the Great Canadian Theatre Company served as the official launch and established an important partnership with that company that would continue for years to come. Shortly after, Jon and Kish, who were both working full time, enlisted the help of actor William Beddow. Together the three men sought out partnerships with established theatres. The National Arts Centre provided use of what would later become the 4th

Stage, Arts Court provided affordable office space, and the University of Ottawa negotiated a deal that would benefit generations of young artists to come: exchange of their theatre and studio spaces for the creation of a bursary fund for theatre students.

These initial successes allowed more to follow. After months of hard work, sleepless nights and above all determination the Ottawa Fringe Festival made its debut. Forty theatre companies performed that year with twenty more on the waiting list-a turnout that far exceeded the expectations of the festivals founders. Local artwork was displayed and local bands came out to perform in the first Courtyard. Altogether the first Fringe was a huge success for all artists.

Since that festival, ten fruitful years ago, the Ottawa Fringe has doubled in financial ability, drawn many companies back annually and, most importantly, has provided a springboard for new work. This year you can find *Frida K*, a show that debuted at the Toronto Fringe, on stage at the National Arts Centre. You can also see regular Ottawa Fringers Screwed & Clued perform *Zombies: A Love Story* at the Arts Court Theatre. Just a few examples of what the Ottawa Fringe Festival has done for the local theatre community.

Ask the founding fathers, whose torch has been passed to the latest producer Kevin Waghorn, what the 10th anniversary means to them and you will find a great amount of pride, not for themselves but for the Festival and all its participants who have nurtured it and allowed it to continue so successfully. "I'm glad to pass the torch to people who find the festival to be as important as I do. I'm pleased to be an advisor, but happier to see the festival has found a life of its own" -Jon Alexander Jr.