

issue seven october - november 2007

WAITING IN THE WINGS



Welcome to issue seven, also known as the birthday issue! We're one year old! Within we'll be looking back over the past year as well as reviewing recent theatrical goodness and recommending what you go and see over the next few months.

-Liz & Katie xx

REVIEW

Ross Noble – Noblism
Opera House, Manchester
October 2007

Yes! a standup review. That too you by surprise didn't it! We like to mix it up a bit!

Anyway, I was very excited about going to see him. His unique blend of audience banter and surreal stories makes him one of my favourite stand ups. He appears to run onto the stage with no clue about what he's going to say, hoping that there are a few nutters in the audience for him to chat to. And on the Friday night of the Manchester leg of the tour there more than just a few.

His set, a giant inflatable model of his head and arms, suggests his budget is growing every tour implying it's not just Manchester in that his dates sell out.

It's difficult to take any of his material out of context for you to find funny. Suffice to say the speed with which he improvises even in the fantasy realms in which he exists warrants huge merit.

A brilliant night out and a good few hours of laughter. I'm certainly going to see Ross Noble again and you should too!

- Katie

REVIEW

Rhinoceros
Royal Court
October 2007

When I saw this show, my cheap ticket got upgraded to a top priced stalls seat and I was rather smug, until I realised it was an education matinee and I was now situated in the middle of several school groups. Noooooooo! Kids! My worst nightmare! Please, teachers if you're going to take a group of kids to the theatre teach them how to behave first!

Anyway, onto the review! In a small town, the locals are worried when rhinoceroses start to appear and trample the town. Think of the rhinoceroses as any minority group though and the play takes on a deeper meaning.

The whole cast give splendid performances. Benedict Cumberbatch gives a wonderfully impressive performance (as always!) as Berenger, who tries to detach himself from the madness around him. Jasper Britton also gave a strong performance as Jean and Zawe Ashton's performance as Berenger's girl Daisy was also a stand out. The Rhinoceroses themselves also deserve a mention!

Another hit from the RC, definitely worth a watch and with the amazingly low ticket prices (ranging from just 10p!!!) you can't afford to miss it!

-Liz

REVIEW

Henry V

Royal Exchange, Manchester

September, 2007

I wondered how many people would think that the new play at The Exchange was called Henry V. With the 'V' being his last initial. Anyway you and I both know that the V is a five and this in one of Shakespeare's History plays about King Henry the fifth!

Choral chanting and a fantastic performance from Gerard Murphy as 'The Chorus' got the play off really well, 'O for a muse of fire' a speech which actually states 'it's only a play use your imagination!' Elliott Cowan as 'The Warlike Harry' came on in a suit and red tie, (and more than a hint of Blair.) he is convinced to go to war with France.

The production was mounted on a large metal framework with a hydraulic lifted platform with water underneath (a lot of which got splashed onto us!) The water, the smoke and the noise made you believe you were in the trenches with these men who you could only just see or hear.

The ensemble performance was intrinsic to its success. No one doubts Shakespeare can be very hard to follow. I try and let the story come to me instead of piecing together the meaning and subtext behind each line.

I studied this play way back in 2002, but only now has it come to life. Every school child should be allowed to see Shakespeare come to life on stage and maybe then they would not resent the written work.

- Katie

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

Our first issue was us finding our feet, it was compact to say the least, but it paved the way for future issues. By issue two, we had grown slightly with plenty more reviews included. Issue three was rather mammoth and included our first interviews with Michael Legge, Michael Camp and Justin McDonald as well as our very self-indulgent 'The History Boys' special! Adam Paul Harvey and Rory Jennings were interrogated in issue four and our MySpace page was introduced. Issue five was dubbed "the tour edition" – where our four London shows in three days were reviewed and three stars of the shows (Julie Atherton, Clare Foster and Steven Webb) were interviewed. Interviewed in issue six were Cassidy Janson and Lara Pulver, this issue did come out two months later than planned as time seemed to somehow get away from us! And that brings up right up to date. Let's hope this next year will be as fun-filled!

REVIEW

Masque of the Red Death

Battersea Arts Centre

October 2007

Another amazing physical production from Punchdrunk. In this promenade performance several of Edgar Allan Poe's short gothic tales are acted out in the huge building. You are free to wander around the building exploring the maze of rooms at your own pace and pick up bits of the stories here and there. Or if you choose to, you can spend the whole evening following just one character. The beauty of this production is that you get out what you put in. The only way to truly experience this properly is alone, even if this does mean sever scary one-on-one experiences with cast members in dark corridors.

The only downside is that it is impossible to experience everything in just one viewing, and even if you went back several times the chances of seeing everything are still low.

The whole run is now sold out, but sell your soul to get a ticket, you won't regret it!

-Liz

REVIEW

**The Triumph of Love
Royal Exchange, Manchester
May, 2007**

I never reviewed this at the time, but had to get this out of my system!

It was NOT a triumph.
It was a bad play, badly acted.
Why the Exchange put it on I will never know.
Why the actors appeared to have rehearsed in separate rooms I shall never discover.
Why the lady behind me thought it was wonderfully clever eludes me.
Why the local critics said it was complex is beyond me.
And why was it hailed as Joe Orton type play!
If you want a Joe Orton play do one!

- Katie

A YEAR ON....

Well. It's been a year. I can't say whether it was a good or bad year as I have no other others to compare it to but it certainly was fun. It had it's downsides but a lot of upsides too. And so much has changed. WitW committee meetings used to take place in a little café by Oxford Road Station in Manchester, now it takes place in the Royal Exchange Theatre, The Manchester Art Gallery and even at the National Theatre – we're going up in the world!

To think it was over a year ago I received a lazy email from Liz suggesting the idea and now a year on I've done and seen so many things because of WitW. Steven Webb in a dress, Julian Rhind Tutt's underpants and Rafe Spall being very angry on his phone outside The Royal Court.

But so many lovely things too... I feel a song coming on.

So to finish this orgy of self gratification I want to thank Liz who officially rocks and will be in a lot of trouble if she edits this bit out because without her I wouldn't have done any of the things I have this year!

Here's to another WitW year.

- Katie

It's certainly been an interesting year, and I have Katie to thank for that, as this venture certainly wouldn't have happened without her! We've seen some wonderful plays and amazing performances, but also some absolutely terrible ones too, which only make us appreciate the great ones more! From our first trip together to London to see 'The Maids' and 'Southwark Fair' before WitW was born to the planning of our next trip in November to see 'Avenue Q' (again!) and some WitW favorites in 'Dealer's Choice', not to mention uncountable theatre trips up north, every moment has been so much fun.

We are so grateful for the actors who have taken the time to participate in interview for the magazine; we really can't thank you guys enough! And thanks to everyone who has gone to the trouble of reading the magazine over the year

So here's to another year!

-Liz

ONES TO WATCH

These are our recommendations for what to catch over the next few months...

- 'Masque of the Red Death' at the Battersea Arts Centre.
 - 'Rhinoceros' at the Royal Court
 - 'The History Boys' on another UK tour then back to the Wyndham's Theatre in London.
 - The RSC's production of 'The Comedy of Errors' on it's UK tour.
 - The National Theatre's production of 'Chatroom/Citizenship' on tour throughout the UK.
 - 'War Horse' at the National Theatre.
 - And don't forget to book for 'Christmas in New York' which will be on at London's Lyric Theatre on Sunday 9th December and will star a whole host of our favourite musical theatre stars.
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That's it, the birthday issue is over! Join us next time for more interviews, reviews and news!