

Theater Is Easy
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A Fringe Festival Best Bet

BOTTOM LINE: If you enjoy sophisticated theatre but are a sucker for cheap humor delivered with Vaudeville precision (not to mention Burlesque Burlesque Burlesque!!), you do NOT want to miss Shine: A Burlesque Musical.

I had not prepared myself much with research on this piece before going, figuring that the Fringe has a wide range of good and bad to see and I'm a gambler. But on opening night I hit the big time as a big winner with Shine: A Burlesque Musical.

Simple and quick summary: Shine (the character, played by Cass King) owns a relic of a theatre that has been around since the 1800s and has hosted a wide range of famous performers and artists. However, it's present day and she's a soaking-in-alcohol alcoholic who can't afford the place or to pay her performers who are also her family. In walks money to help "produce" the show that's gonna save the theatre and through a continuous battle for control of the rehearsal process, everything falls apart right up to opening night. Yeah, that about covers it without giving too much away - because I do NOT want to give too much away. Why would I rob you of the joy and fun of this brilliantly cheeky show with tons of merit?

Shine has classic cheap and bad jokes, each told totally without apology and cracked at you like a whip you should have been expecting. The writing is clearly from a smart team who loves burlesque and the simple things in theatre that have held audiences hearts since the inception of Vaudeville. Even though there are some transitional problems, I couldn't help but forgive every one as I was sitting on the edge of my seat to just see what turned up next.

The show is brilliant: brilliant performances, amazingly classy dancing (as well as bawdy as hell while tasteful enough for a theatre audience), badass vocal performances and all around stellar and crisp acting. It has unmeasured potential and for my money it could easily be on Broadway in the near future. Sure, there are those issues that all new shows have, but they are small and easily fixable. The show currently stands on excellent ground and the Fringe is a perfect way to feature this production. I, myself, am crossing my fingers that it gets seen by as many people as possible and is picked up as a Fringe favorite. Who knows, maybe the right money will walk in and I'll get to say I saw it back when.

Go see it. Just do. If you can stand a little flesh and a lot of great presence. You'll thank me.
Original article at:

<http://www.theasy.com/Reviews/FringeFestival/shineaburlesquemusical.php>