



The best-realised and most enjoyable daytime show that I saw at this year's Street of Brighton. After the exhausting search for a satisfying show, it was a relief to be able to sit down on the grass of Brighton's Pavilion Gardens and enjoy a well-crafted, well-performed, funny and engaging street theatre show.

The best of the bunch were Desperate Men's *The Miracle Show* and The Boilerhouse/Metalvoice collaboration *360°* (Three-Six Hundred Seconds), both reviewed elsewhere in this magazine.

Radiotter - Creation to Cassation was a disappointment. When I reviewed their 2003 production, *Dreams and Demons*, I tipped Radiotter as a young company to watch, with their ability to create interesting visual imagery and an obvious talent for making fantastical – in all senses of the word – costumes and sets. The missing element then was a sense of performance – who or what is holding the space? Unfortunately, two years on, nothing has changed. A beautiful setting, Queens Park late evening; gorgeous lanterns by the lake; strange and beautiful creatures in sculptural dress, bedecked with leaves; an odd IgU-type large pod thing with waving tendrils; an ominous and enveloping soundscape – yes, all the elements – but what? We arrive, we watch, we wait, we go home. No shape to the piece, no dramatic unfolding, no sense of a meaningful shared experience, I'm afraid.

Bangditors (formerly Scherzerian Allies) - The Guardian Angels continued the company's obsession with terrorising audiences with motor vehicles – they have now graduated from a Citroen 2CV to a Fire Engine manned by an anarchic crew who seem more keen on fire-starting than fire-fighting. There's plenty of bangs and whistles – and a bit of Full Monty meets Village People play-acting with the firemen stereotype – but it feels a little tame than the last show. I have it on reliable evidence that when previously performed 'we're

who leave most of their situation-led comic street theatre competitors at the starting gate. Butch men dressed as angels are usually good for a laugh – viz. Artizan's Cupids; for example – and I was amused by the new Larkin's *About - Electroglide Angels*, which twirl and glide Dali-like through the streets and are only slightly less other-worldly.

Of the static shows, there were a few gags but a good few disappointments. **Faceless - Puppet Café** had gentle charm and very nicely-crafted puppets and masks, but lacked an engaging narrative. The *Circle du Silence/Ragress Trouve* collaboration *Blinding Lives*, on the other hand, had lots of narrative, being a reminiscence theatre piece based on an inter-weaving collection of stories from local communities in Normandy and Sussex. Each story was told in a rather lovely sort of wooden open-sided confessional booth, with the simplest of props (a teapot, an umbrella) as accompaniment. I really wanted to like this – but somehow wasn't as engaged as I should have been. Perhaps there are some shows that really do need the intimate holding space that an indoor venue provides? **Nike Martini** (of Martinez and Fabregas) has a new venture: *3 Monkey Productions*. The premiere of *The Shop* gave us the blueprint for a very successful street show – but is not quite there yet. It's the classic three-man clown set-up; here, barbers with no customers who spend the day listening to the local radio station. The predictable games with brooms, mugs and gowns turn more surreal as they get drawn into a ludicrous War of the Worlds radio-news scenario. The slapstick physical comedy is lacking in pace at times (the show needs some serious cutting and tidying – snip,

CIRCOMEDIA

Centre For Contemporary Circus & Physical Performance

REVIEWS

Autumn 2005 Short Courses in Physical Theatre

Leo Bassi - Provocative Performance 29 - 30 Oct
A unique opportunity to work with the great European theatre provocateur, Leo Bassi, known for his daring provocations and political rallies.

Working With Risk 19 - 20 Nov
risk-maker, award-winning street comedian. This weekend explores three risks – personal, physical, emotional – and how to create and extend performance.

Being Worse Than You Are 3 - 4 Dec
led as a teacher and director of physical theatre, co-founder of Trestle Theatre Company

and *Told By An Idiot*. On stage any skill and any defect can be used to your advantage, this course concentrates on your defects and teaches you to exploit them.

For information on clinics / courses or any of Circomedia's activities please call 0117 947 7298 or email info@circomedia.com

www.circomedia.com

was a relief to be able to sit down on the grass of Brighton's Pavilion Gardens and enjoy a well-crafted, well-performed, funny and engaging street theatre show. Please can we have some more, sir?

Bash Street Theatre's Frankenstein - A Comic Tale of Magic and Adventure, which has come a long way since I first saw it at the Garden of Delights in Manchester 2004. The action has been tightened up, so that we now have a well-paced mock-melodrama that brings the Frankenstein story into the context of a Victorian travelling sideshow. The centrepiece of the set is a sort of Concordeous Potts inventor's windmill that buzzes, whirs and whizzes. There's real magic – a sworn-up Zig-Zag lady (the lovely and nimble Jojo Pickering) and a sword-pierced Human Pin cushion (the delightful and equally nimble Simon Pullum). These two play all the characters except for the hair-tossing Goth Dr Frankenstein (Russell Hurd). There's oodles of exciting action and seckloads of grotesque humour – small children and adults alike were delighted by the sawing off of an audience member's leg to provide a body part for the fiendish Dr F. After the exhausting search for a satisfying show, it