



EYE WEEKLY

BEST OF THE FRINGE 44

THE BALLOON TREE ★★★

Written by Phoebe Gilman. Directed by Andrew Lamb. July 13, 12:45pm; July 16, 3:30pm.

The four actors in this lively, lovely adaptation of the charming children's book by Phoebe Gilman bring a wealth of talent and resourcefulness to their 10 collective roles. (Almost every character was named when audience members were asked about their favourites.) Clever costumes, light touches of humour and effective set elements add to the enjoyment of this sweet tale about a princess on a quest to save her father's kingdom from being taken over by the evil archduke. The duke is loud and mean, but not overly frightening. Buoyant and colourful, this play is highly recommended for three to eight-year-olds. **LS & CD**

fringe wrap-up

By JON KAPLAN and GLENN SUMI

We're thankful that there wasn't much rain during the Fringe, or 30-plus temperatures until its last few days.

And, yeah, the Glen Morris Theatre, which had some strong productions, was air conditioned between shows, but three minutes into a well-attended production you'd barely remember being cool when you sat down. Guess the scarcity of venues means it has to be used every year.

Again the festival hit an all-time attendance high, with more than 47,000 tickets sold and a box office of over \$340,000, all of which goes back to the companies.

If you missed some of the most popular shows, they're being held over in **The Best Of The Fringe**, presented by the Diesel Playhouse and the Fringe, and sponsored by NOW. You can catch shows running in rep for two weeks, through July 30.

Among the productions are *Swiss Family Guy* Robinson, *Real Time*, *Giant Killer Shark: The Musical*, *Desperate Housepets*, *The Burning Bush*, *Humans Anonymous*, *The Unfortunate Misadventures Of Masha Galinski* and *It Was Kit*. For more info check out www.dieselplayhouse.com.

Here's NOW's annual list of Fringe highlights.

OUTSTANDING NEW PLAYS

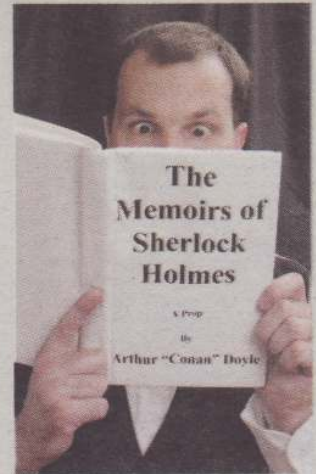
The Catering Queen; *AutoShow*

OUTSTANDING PRODUCTIONS

AutoShow; *Crook Back Dicky*; *The Lab*; *The Unfortunate Misadventures Of Masha Galinski*; Antoine Feval; *Zombies*; *Jesus Christ: The Lost Years*; *Real Time*; *Flamenco Con Fusion 2*

OUTSTANDING PRODUCTIONS FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

The Balloon Tree; *The Tale Of Pigling Bland*



Chris Gibbs and Antoine Feval came out on top during the Fringe.

OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCES

Tracey Power (*Living Shadows*); Erin Shields (*The Unfortunate Misadventures Of Masha Galinski*); Françoise Balthazar (*Richard 3, Queens 4*); Chris Gibbs (Antoine Feval); Aaron Knight (*Three Billy Goats Gruff*); Ryan Gladstone and Katherine Sanders (*Jesus Christ: The Lost Years*); Caitlin Howden and Dan Jeannotte (*Real Time*)

OUTSTANDING ENSEMBLES

It Was Kit; an undershirt; *The Catering Queen*; *Amerika*; *Art Is A Cupboard*; *The AutoShow*; *Humans Anonymous*; *SplasH2O*; *Minotaur*

OUTSTANDING DIRECTION

Andrew Lamb (*The Balloon Tree*; *Desperate Housepets*); Andrea Donaldson (*The Unfortunate Misadventures of Masha Galinski*); Bruce Horak (*Jesus Christ: The Lost Years*); Geoffrey Pounsett (*Art Is A Cupboard*); Tim Campbell (*Humans Anonymous*); Murray Utas (*Real Time*)

OUTSTANDING DESIGN

J.P. Robichaud (*The Lab*); Monique Stewart (*The Balloon Tree*)
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