

greatest Composer in the World was brilliant. In a series of blackouts the composer proposes, miniscule vignettes. It's an old old song, but on the last one he strums once a guitar then rears up and in one blow demolishes the guitar. The whole audience jumps and chokes on gurgled laughter. And Kerry Davidson as his client who commissioned the song ("That was the most beautiful song I've ever heard!" "I know.") his muse, and his true love—a houseplant—well, Kerry wouldn't be boring if you encased her in concrete. Hell, everybody those two nights is gorgeous.

Oto Mask are the biggest revelation for me in a weekend of belly-clutching revelations. The number of times I've whined there is no decent mask work going on in this city, I am now obliged to shut my face. Like Fox's show, a gothic comedy that demands it be done at least once more for Christmas somewhere, anywhere, hell you do it at my place. I live alone with my set of photographs and some fish, but they have excellent attention spans for goldfish and I've trained them to clap. A brilliant start for a promising venture, and Andrew McNee's hair alone deserves its own TV special.

I could go on and on. Seventeenth Floor's sweet little number about two people trapped down by their humdrum if frantic meetings each other for the first time in a lovers suicide pact on the train tracks is to be reworked, I believe, and shown again.

Oh, the thing I didn't like? Aw, fuck it, whatever. Why spoil a perfect weekend with criticism? Next year will be the seventh under *The Gun*. Dear Reader, I am going to find you to see this next time 'round.

UNTED PLAYS AT the Waterfront theatre, inspired by Japanese anime. I'm not familiar with the stylistic language of anime, but I recognise Urban Ink Productions are trying to create a physical interpretation of its bits. The set is constructed with a bridge going through the audience so the characters can be in "close-up", and there are scenes in series of tableaux much like *Murai* in the cartoons. Without quite the physical skills to make it so dazzling, the presented philosophy and poetry create a nearance of depth with only a few line-

marks to make out what the story is. Roughly, it's about a girl who's seduced by a bad baddie, a near god, or a God, and she, though a great character, can't be saved or at least helped by a nerdy wet sidekick of the evil god. I've got it all wrong. Some things, Well, ok, no easy ride here, it's not my brain. And I tried, really I tried, lest anyone think this show is over-the-top and pretentious, and my show far makes it seem so, to their credit, Urban Ink make it quite funny in the end. I know perfectly well how they pull it off, they have a ball with their scenes are kitsch knowing knock-off hero costumes. All the bits are a clever experiment in performance, with its tongue too deep in the first time round.

Last week, mea poopa, mea frigida. Vincent Gale was the co-star of *Paul* in Vancouver Playhouse's *Pockets*, not Alan Brodie, who is a lighting designer. My apologies to Whattami, on crack?

Waterfront Theatre Under the Gun was at the Vancouver Convention Centre, check out what else they got going at www.underthegun.bc.ca Loads of stuff, they have a packed season.

by Urban Ink Productions at the Waterfront Theatre 9th, tix and info at 604 257 0366

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VISUAL ART

LIVE BIENNIAL OF PERFORMANCE ART

LIVE Biennial of Performance Art is a monumental, international-standard festival of possibly the most marginalised of art forms. While there are still larger events of this nature in Europe, none are growing as fast as Vancouver's, and the stature and quality of artists from Vancouver and around the world performing for such a young festival is nothing short of stupendous. Dick Avern, Andre Stitt, Hester Reeve, Rodney Graham, Kristine Stiles, Julianna Barabas, Boris Nieslony who founded the Black Market International. The list goes on. Vancouver desperately needs a serious consideration of cutting edge theory and practice, something with a bit of meat for the brain. We don't even have a museum of modern art like other so-called "world class" cities. Artropolis? Uh huh. The LIVE Biennial will fill a huge gap in the local scene. Originally a creation of the Grunt Gallery, LIVE has become its own evolving, expanding entity, and David Yonge, a local artist of matching repute has been handed the directorship.

DW: This is a pretty stellar line-up you've got here.

David Yonge: Yeah! This has been in the works now for almost a year and a half.

TCW: These are some big names. Did you approach them or they you?

DY: Most of the international stars were approached by the galleries, who also paid for or organised the funding to bring these people over. I organised the schedule to ensure there were never two performances going on at the same time. Also, getting people like Andre Stitt from the UK—

TCW: Yeah, yeah! This is huge!

DY: I know! Getting him to take a month out of his schedule to do this is pretty amazing. The festival is not entirely platform-based, either. There's stuff going on people won't necessarily see unless they happen to bump into it on the street. So that's going to be very interesting.

TCW: I'm not sure I quite understand the theme: Performance Art and the Academy. Is this sort of a gag on the fact that performance art is so marginalised within the general arts community?

DY: [Laughing] Sort of, yeah. Performance art is so ephemeral, it's ignored in the classroom in Vancouver. Talk in academic circles tends to be a bit derogatory. It's sometimes seen as just really bad theatre. And some of the stuff going on in the seventies—like Chris Burden shooting himself—contributed to that. But to have an institution like the Vancouver Art Gallery acting as a fountainhead, having them host these talks, means folks will hopefully start looking at performance art in a more serious way.

TCW: And your plans are ambitious. You're aiming to become the biggest such festival in the world.

DY: This is only our third time out. We have that potential, because six weeks gives us a lot of room to move and our funding keeps doubling every time. Galleries keep putting in more interest and money. I was just in Germany talking with folks there and they could not believe we have six weeks to work with and enough material to fill it.

Terminal City Weekly will be covering one artist a week (there is just too much going on to give comprehensive coverage in this space) but check out the website www.livevancouver.bc.ca and choke on your own amazement.

ALAN HINDLE