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ADELAIDE COMEDY FESTIVAL

Rhino Room

www.adelaidecomedyfestival.com

Until 5 March

Reviews by Theresa Dolman & Nikki Gaertner

The Adelaide Comedy Festival features 15 different comedians playing two rooms at the Rhino Room until March 5. The shows downstairs were introduced by 'Adelaide's Own Big Al' (presumably not the same Big Al that we have borrowed from elsewhere for previous events). His material and timing was good, but if you go to more than one show you may hear the same banter several times.

JODIE J HILL

First 'cab off the rank' was the effervescent, and heavily pregnant, Jodie J Hill. She started with stories of her childhood antics and memories of the Royal Show, and kept the laughs coming with tales of her visits to New Zealand and Queensland, and a honey-moon that didn't turn out quite as sweet as she envisaged. She also made good use of her bulging belly to encourage the well-deserved laughter, though the experiences of some of the mothers in the audience may have her wondering whether that delivery will be so amusing!

CHARLIE PICKERING

Charlie Pickering's opening laughs came while he paced around the small stage, as if looking for the funniest spot---not that he needed to. His recollections of his travels to the eccentric fishing town of Pt Lincoln and the even more bizarre mining town of Kalgoorlie were hilarious. And he had everyone enthralled as he recounted his attempts to fill a Hotmail inbox. This very funny man also gave us his thoughts on his alternative career prospects, and on God's financial arrangements. Pickering is on every day of the festival, and well worth seeing.

LAWRENCE LEUNG AND ANDREW MCCLELLAND

The last of the shows for the night was a PowerPoint presentation that explored Secret Societies Through The Ages. Though appearing for the first time as a duet, Leung and McClelland had an easy rapport, and bounced off each other like veterans. The style of their show was refreshingly different to the usual stand-up comedy. The presentation at times was reminiscent of Terry Gilliam (Monty Python) animations, and worked well to keep the laughs coming. I would tell you more, but I am sworn to secrecy. Tickets to this show will be selling fast.

These three shows were a wonderful start to the Adelaide Comedy Festival. The festival is only on until 5 March, and the venue is not huge, so book early for a good night of laughs. And dress with layers. This is not a fashion tip---the Rhino Room seems to have no control over their air-conditioning.

Shows upstairs were introduced by some local newcomers to stand up comedy who warmed up the crowd in anticipation of the main acts. On the Festival's opening night the upstairs sequence consisted of Dave Callan, Justin Hamilton and Adam Richard.

DAVE CALLAN

It's unfortunate more people weren't present at Dave Callan's opening act at the Adelaide Comedy Festival. But performing to a less than capacity crowd didn't appear to faze the well-known Irish Australian comedian as he delivered his take on Aussies, the Irish and numerous other topics that he chose to deliver his comic spin on.

Callan didn't disappoint with many of his humour filled stories and kept the crowd laughing for the duration of his hour-long show. The only punch lines not receiving as much of a reaction were those that had already been worked into his stand-up act on Rove a few nights previous, so it seemed the majority of the crowd had tuned into this performance as well.

However, Callan certainly entertained, a particular highlight being the "Yoda-Karaoke" that finished the night, so try to make it along to the Rhino Room for the 7pm show upstairs this week to join in the fun.

JUSTIN HAMILTON

The crowd poured in to see Justin Hamilton perform his act on Friday night, illustrating that the JJJ announcer is certainly a favourite amongst the younger generation in Adelaide. Despite some technical difficulties resulting in the show beginning significantly later than advertised, Justin's momentum appeared undisturbed as he travelled through his act at hundreds of miles per hour.

Hamilton's energy filtered through the crowd and they were soon eating out of his hand as he recounted stories of his past performances, family members, friends, childhood and ex-girlfriends. Justin's is one of those acts that takes every day experiences and shows them in a new and humorous light – because we've all been there too.

If opening night is any indication, this act is sure to be popular throughout the festival, so go and check out Justin any night aside from Wednesday 23/2 at the Rhino Room.

ADAM RICHARD

As he says himself, Adam will tear strips off anyone. And does he ever! With his extensive knowledge of the majority of Hollywood stars and other well known personalities (acquired through conducting personal interviews, being very "up" with the tabloids, and having seen practically any film and television series you could name – including the very, very bad ones), Adam picks everyone and everything to pieces to the great delight of the audience.

No-one is out of the firing line, not even himself, as he closely analyses the shapes and sizes, clothes, personalities and acting abilities of some well-known favourites.

This laugh-a-minute show was the definite winner of the night and a major crowd pleaser – so much so, that the crowd tried their best to keep him as long as possible as the act came to a close.

And watch out Hollywood, for Adam is going to the Oscars (as he casually dropped into a number of his stories), so he'll be out to collect more dirt for his next show!