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Fringe & Purge

BLOGS

Digests from the Capital Fringe Festival

Posts Tagged 'Magnum Opus'

Hip Shot: 'Magnum Opus'

Posted by **Brian Reed** on Jul. 11, 2009, at 4:50 am

Magnum Opus

Warehouse – Mainstage

Remaining

Performances:

Sunday, July 12 at 4:15 p.m.

Thursday, July 16 at 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 18 at 2 p.m.

p.m.

Saturday, July 25 at 8:30 p.m.

They say: "Robert, a struggling playwright, undertakes a Faustian



bargain of inspiration in return for his sanity. Driven by his desire to please his wife Claire and succeed as a writer, he risks his life in return for his *Magnum Opus*."

Brian's take: When he was a kid, my little brother refused to eat eggs. And I remember one morning when, despite his protestations, my mother kept on cajoling him to take a bite — just one bite — until finally he explained, "I like eggs, I just don't like the taste!"

That's pretty much how I'd describe my feelings about *Magnum Opus*, a new opera by the Alterna Opera company. It's a predictably well-made tragedy: You've got your struggling playwright, his casually flirtatious wife, the composer charming her into casual flirtation, and a pair of muses (though they behave more like sirens) whispering some nefarious solutions in the playwright's ear.

The real playwright should've summoned a few siren-muses for himself, because while the show does contain plenty of your daily vitamins and minerals, it leaves you wanting some flavor. Likewise with the performers, who belt a respectable original score but enlist the rest of their bodies — i.e. limbs and facial muscles — with much less vigor than they do their diaphragms.

Not that *Magnum Opus* doesn't manage to be pleasing. The cast is invested enough — in its own laconic way — the orchestra tight enough, the production polished enough to make for an enjoyable time. Does it live up to its namesake? Not quite. Maybe if they retitled it "A Highly

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FRINGE NEWS ROUNDUP

Going Out Gurus - '4.48

Psychosis': The Bitter End

[voices.washingtonpost.com](#)

WaPo's Going Out Gurus say Sarah Kane's "4.48 Psychosis" is "a harrowing piece of writing from the mind of a talented but deeply depressed woman"

Two Hours Traffic: The Tempest at Capital Fringe

[twohourstraffic.blogspot.com](#) | July 12, 2009

Two Hours Traffic says "The Tempest" had songs that "were absolutely beautiful and did not take away from the story at all"

Let's Sing Gospel 101!

[dctheatrescene.com](#)

"Let's Sing Gospel 101!" gets reviewed by DC Theatre Scene

'Magnum Opus': Song and Dance of Death

[voices.washingtonpost.com](#) | July 10, 2009

WaPo's Going Out Gurus review "Magnum Opus"

Fringe First: Sanctuary Theatre and Bag Lady

[examiner.com](#) | July 9, 2009

Examiner.com interviews Elizabeth Bruce of Sanctuary Theatre on its revival of "Bag Lady"

More Fringe Roundup Links

RECENT COMMENTS

[A Producer on Sunday Open Thread:](#)

FringeFan, I have friends and colleagues in Open Circle Theatre, a DC-based professional theatre com...

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Palatable 60 Minutes." But as one specter of a character realizes, after his own maddening brush with the muses, notes on a sheet of composition might resemble raindrops on a window or, depending on your state of mind, flies on a carcass. *Magnum Opus* manages to do both.

See it if: That last metaphor does it for ya.

Skip it if: You really should be at home writing instead.

Tags: [libretto](#), [Magnum Opus](#), [muse](#), [musical](#), [Opera](#), [orchestra](#)
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[purger on Sunday Open Thread: @FringeFan](#) In response to your question for Producer, I'd say who the hell cares if companies perform...

[FringeFan on Sunday Open Thread:](#) Producer, while I respect your concern regarding access for performers and audience members with dis...

[Corey Wegwert on Hip Shot: 'Dust of Babylon':](#) See this review: <http://dctheatrescene.com/2009/07/07/of-babylon/> Seems like Mr. Demers provide...

[A Producer on Sunday Open Thread:](#) To clarify - I can deal with the crumbly walls, semi-functional AC. I can almost deal with my sound ...

FRINGE WEBSITES

- [CapFringe Facebook Group](#)
- [Capital Fringe Festival](#)
- [Fringe Photo Gallery](#)

Best of D.C. 2009



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THIS WEEK



The Issue of Jul. 9 - 15, 2009

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