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## FRINGE & PURGE

### Hip Shot: *F#@king Up Everything*

Posted by Logan K. Young on Jul. 24, 2011 at 7:08 pm

Woolly Mammoth  
Theatre Company, 641  
D St. NW

Remaining Fringe  
Performances:  
None...but playing at Woolly  
Mammoth until Sunday,  
August 14



Running Time: 90 minutes

They say: "Can Christian Mohammed Schwartzelberg stay true to himself and still get the girl? Or will he lose her to the guy in leather pants? Set in Brooklyn's indie music scene, it's a rock musical comedy with heart. And ironic t-shirts."

Logan's Take: There's something rotten in the borough of Brooklyn—the recent, if un-anointed Ground Zero of indie rock in the very city that birthed it—and you'd be right to be suspicious of its present state. *The New York Times* might have run a moratorium on the word "hipster," but that hasn't quelled the Third Great Migration of white, liberal arts grads 'cross the East River to gentrifying neighborhoods like Bushwick, Broadway Junction, and Bed-Stuy. As with their Jamaican counterparts, music and authenticity is *de rigueur* for these Trustafarians. To wit, the sun never sets on indiedom without some blog x touting this band y as the next real thing. At first glance, the ambitions of the stage musical—even a DIY one such as this—might seem anathema to college rock's slacker *ennui*. But David Eric Davis' love letter to the culture that loves to hate itself is so well-conceived, so perfectly executed by the cast, pit,

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and crew, that even the most ironically minded hipsters couldn't help but proffer a genuine reblog.

The District's Lee August Praley stars as the ecumenical Christian Mohammed Schwartzelberg. Having studied queer theory at Bard, he's preternaturally beta and pines perpetually for the stunning Crystal Mosser's Juliana—"the only non-lesbian to earn a queer studies sheepskin from Sarah Lawrence." John Fritz, he of real-life Georgetown rockers Mass Ave., plays it close as Christian's best frenemy Jake. (Seriously, if you're sitting in the front row, be prepared for your own *Sticky Fingers* zoom-in courtesy of Jake's water-tight jeans.) I hasten to give away too much of a good thing, as half the fun here is following the bed-hopping from dive bar to open mic to, in a *Nick and Norah's* final destination *kind of way*, McCarren Pool. Never one to ruin jokes, I will say that maybe funnier is the on-stage skewering of sacred cows like Iggy Pop, Robert Smith, and in a *Manufacturing Consent sort of mood*, Noam Chomsky. As a not-too-subtle parody of Yeah Yeah Yeah frontwoman Karen O, Arielle (the vivacious Crystal Arnette) probably gets the best songs, as any tune about premature ejaculation that finds you still humming on your way out of the theater has got to be a good one. If I had but one complaint, it would be the lack of stage time for Dani Stoller's Ivy. The actor with the best pipes in the corps, Ms. Stoller hails from Brooklyn herself.

Ultimately, this show succeeds where bona fide indie-cum-Off-Off-Broadway rockers like Sufjan Stevens and Black Francis haven't—in realizing that, at the end of the PBR tallboy, P4K and West 44th aren't really that different after all. Be it Malkmus or *Mame*, both require a certain suspension of disbelief that their respective fans could ever be so woefully one-sided. That disbelief becomes dispensation here as we delight in the deconstruction of two of the most insular idioms the gangs of New York ever divined. See this show before it literally, and perhaps figuratively, sells the f#@k out. Or, worse yet, before *F#@king Up Everything* packs up the van and its pretenses, and this last exit to Brooklyn manifests west to a co-op farm outside of [Portland, Ore.](#)

See it if: You can laugh with all your organic, gluten-free belly at the punchlines you and your ilk have let yourselves become.

Skip it if: In your heart, you still don't think you're a f#@king hipster.

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F#@KING UP EVERYTHING

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Last 7 Days



## Blogs Linking to this Article

### Linked From:

**Fringe, Purged: Year of the Woman? - Fringe & Purge - Washington City Paper**

July 26th, 2011  
9:45 am

[...] Best Overall went to Marshall Paillet and A.D. Penedo's musical satire (there're two kinds of musicals nowadays, satires and Oklahoma!) Who's Your Badhdaddy?, Or How I Started the Iraq War. Its producer, Charlie Fink, was behind last year's Best Musical winner, Super Claudio Brothers, as well as the concurrent F#@king Up Everything. [...]

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