

no fear of dramatic heights by *Jon Skaalen***Rating** 4 kitties

A person afraid of heights might not like this show's postcard, but the performances, script and direction (even if work-in-progress and script-in-hand, which did not bother me) provided an assured evening of theatre. Two people, one old and one young; similarities in experiencing loss and needing help to cope, but not wanting to ask. I might not buy the physics of the final scene, but the spirit driving it was terrific.

Surreal love and garbage heaps by *Fringivitis Vulgaris***Rating** 3 kitties

This is a work in progress from a group that loads their work with passion. Coffee shop strangers are "insignificant others" but they notice the changes and absences. Young love persists in being foolish, old love persists when it should fade. I look forward to seeing these actors as they hone their skills.

Don't Stop by *Kevin Drew***Rating** 4 kitties

James Craven is one of the most mesmerizing actors I've seen locally, and he and Ali Dachis and Namir Smallwood are so present in these characters and this dreamlike script it's almost spooky. A work in progress performed with scripts in hand, but with performers like these you'll believe that these people just walk around with papers in their hands. (My only concern is I hope the guy in the picture is okay.)

Moving, but behind schedule by *Gabriel Heller***Rating** 4 kitties

I really enjoyed this show. It was well-written, well-acted, funny, touching, occasionally ingenious and finally moving. The characters were realistic and empathetic. Unfortunately, the script was delivered 3 days before fringe started. This and other technical problems with the performance I saw were handled with considerable aplomb but were nonetheless there. They bothered me little, my wife a little moreso. This is a work-in-progress, albeit a potentially great one. I'd advise waiting for the last performance for maximum enjoyment.

Missed By Inches by *Reid Gagle***Rating** 4 kitties

This is a strong story, about people trying to connect. With a bit more time to work, this would have been an easy 5 kitties. Problems: The script was finished so recently that the actors needed a copy in hand. The actors sometimes provided third person narration, a distancing device not suited to this story. Perhaps a narrator character would have helped. Finally, sometimes the physical staging didn't work too well for me, such as in the climactic scene. Despite all of this, I enjoyed the piece a lot and recommend it. I just wish they'd had another month to work out the kinks.

take the jump by *Anna Reichert***Rating** 5 kitties

Though the cast was on book (due to how fresh off the presses the new script was) I didn't notice after about two minutes. There are great performances all around in this small but solid cast. There was just the right dose of humor to keep the show from slipping into 'too somber land' but had beautifully poignant moments both between actors, and in its design elements. check it out!

Script is a gravity well by *Justin Alexander***Rating** 3 kitties

As others have noted, the actors are still reading from their scripts because they were still being revised a week before performance. This, however, doesn't prove to be much of a negative: The actors turn in great performances and you quickly forget that the scripts are even present. (More disruptive was the fact that one of the actors was running late to the performance I saw due to a medical emergency, causing the playwright to step in for the first scene and a half. But that presumably won't happen again.)

So we have great performances. We also have some incredibly graceful pieces of staging. And a visually stunning set driven by layered drifts of props. Plus fantastic, evocative sound design.

But ultimately, for me, the show couldn't escape the gravity well of its script, which alternates between heavy-handed metaphor (relationships are a leap of faith!) and utter nonsense. I think the aim may have been some sort of magical realism, but it falls short of the goal.

It feels odd to say that I was entertained; that I was even moved... but the show fails. The successes are simply too intermittent, and while there are some incredibly powerful moments, the underlying foundation of the show is simply too weak.

What I will say is that there is enough material in this show which is worthy of consideration to make it a good slot-filler. But it's not something that I would recommend seeking out.

Ragged and fabulous by *Carla Mantel***Rating** 5 kitties

The edges are still rough; the actors still carry scripts, which are still in development; it's still better than 90% of what you'll see on any given theater outing.

Promising and engaging by *Florence Brammer***Rating** 4 kitties

The audience was told up front that the script had been revised after the run had opened, and it seems that more revision and workshopping are warranted. However, that said, this is a piece of gravity [no pun intended] and substance that moved me and kept me engaged throughout. The staging elements were a distractingly fussy and it would have been nice to see the actors off-book, but it was well worth a Fringe slot. A script of great beauty and thoughtfulness and top-notch, detailed performances.

I pay, you deliver by *Nick Lewandowski***Rating** 2 kitties

I have great esteem for the Playwrights' Center. As such, I trust that those associated with this work are smart and respectful enough not to sell me a "new play" when the material is really being workshopped. I could be wrong -- but I'm presuming that actors-on-book and writer-as-cast-member are artistic choices that I am intended to experience. It is then on me to embrace, to reject, to engage, to become distracted. The problem here was that the script -- excluding the conceits -- didn't do anything for me. I felt very little for these characters, and at times, I was bored. Good actors, though.

Engaging! by *Liz Floyd***Rating** 5 kitties

Very interesting. Filled with many surprises.

Can't wait for completion by *J Emily Peabody***Rating** 4 kitties

Solid acting, great mood, interesting concepts and haunting set design. Put me on your mailing list!

Well-Written AND Well-Acted by *Erica Mauter***Rating** 4 kitties

I don't happen across a lot of dramas at the Fringe that are both well-written and well-acted (and not historical in nature). This was both of those. It can only get better through the week as the actors get more comfortable with the script. There are a few... ahem... leaps and some interesting staging. Overall, I found it highly enjoyable and I'd definitely recommend it.

One Long Metaphor by *August Berkshire***Rating** 2 kitties

Do you dare to leap into a relationship? What happens if you fall? That about sums up this play, which had a few good moments, but which I can't quite recommend, though the actors/characters were likable enough. I give it a 2.5, which I round down to 2, while my partner would round it up to 3. The first night the actors were reading from the latest version of the script. It wasn't too distracting, but hopefully they'll have it memorized a bit more for future presentations.

Expectations by *Nuke Fool***Rating** 3 kitties

To start, future audiences should go into this show with the expectation of seeing a drama and not a comedy. It is a dramatic script about relationships with a few humorous lines thrown in. It is well written and very well acted. The performers do read from the script, which some audience members will find distracting. Having the right expectations going in is the key to enjoying this show.

Be Willing To Take The Leapby *Sid Solomon***Rating** 4 kitties

Before the performance, New Theatre Group artistic director Brian Balcom encouraged his opening night audience to take a cue from A STANDING LONG JUMP's publicity image and take the leap with the actors in engaging in this story.

Even presented with scripts in hand, the leap is well worth it. Compelling and unique relationships presented in a highly theatrical manner, this is an ambitious piece of new American theater played by one of the strongest casts you'll find at the Fringe.

Energy vampire by *Publius McGee***Rating** 2 kitties

Lead balloon.