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Dispatches from The Fringe - The Showstoppers live up to their name.

August 17, 2012

8:33 PM MST

The Showstoppers

Rating: ★★★★★

Forget Broadway. Forget the West End. If you're looking for an amazing night of musical theatre and comedy, look no further than the wonderfully entertaining *The Showstoppers*.

What's the show about? What's its style of music? Is it funny, dramatic, tragic? That's all left entirely up to the audience to decide. This talented group of improvisational performers take the audience's suggestions and construct a working musical on stage right before your eyes.

Featuring some of the best improvisational performers around, including Adam Meggido, Ruth Bratt and, taking a break from her trailer-trash alter ego Loretta Maine, the delightful Pippa Evans, the show delivers a roller coaster ride that never loses momentum. The improvised musical, *Havana 5.0*, is a case in point where musical theatre conventions are flipped seven different ways till Sunday. A detective story set in Cuba about a missing set of monkey balls with the obligatory love complication, it showcased an amazing Sondheim tribute, a head nod towards *Evita*, and a big finale where all wrongs are righted in hysterical fashion.

The Showstoppers gives quite a few musical productions currently on offer a serious run for their money. Taking improv and musical theatre and pushing them to their limits, *The Showstoppers* is innovative, original and hilariously funny. And every night is a different show. So go see it. Several times.

The Showstoppers plays nightly at The Gilded Balloon till August 26th (apart from August 23rd). Doors open at 11.00 p.m. Tickets range from £11.50 to £12.50

There are also family matinees on the 20th at 1.30 p.m., and 21st at 6.30 p.m.

Chris O'Rourke



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