

Fringe Preview & Review – Imperial Fizz

✘ The World premiere of Imperial Fizz, a surreal intoxicating comedy from Scotsman Fringe First-winning New York playwright Brian Parks – starring Olivier Award nominated Issy van Randwyck and Fringe regular David Calvitto – will be staged at Assembly Theatre, George Street, from Thursday 5 (preview) to Monday 30 August as part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2010.

A seemingly carefree, martini swilling 1930's movie style couple, upper class and clearly part of the haute social scene, down cocktails and exchange witty banter and pointed barbs as they sing and dance to melodies transmitting from a classic RCA radio.

As they jigger and joust their way to the ultimate nightcap, something is not quite right. Ominous static replaces the radio's period ditties and weird rumbles of thunder encroach from a surrounding darkness. There's no time to worry. An eminent guest is due to arrive and the libations had better be perfect. Fill the ice bucket and fix another drink!

The man and the woman dive into comically absurd cross-examinations of each other and an unexpected cast of characters who bear witness to events that have shaped their lives and elaborate marriage: the ordinary and the extraordinary; the marital and the extramarital.

Imperial Fizz is a snappy and quick-witted chamber comedy with echoes of Coward and Beckett and a curious mix of the surreal, funny, and the dark.

As long as the cocktails are absolutely right, what could possibly go wrong...? Well lots as it turns out! First of all one's partner walks right across the stage to get to his

seat....not that this put the professionals off. And these two – they were indeed professional – and slick! The amount of learning which must have gone into this show is daunting in itself, the delivery and timing another thing all together.

For two people to receive the adoration that van Randwyck and Calvitto did at the end of a teatime show it takes a very special show indeed And this was something very special. The cocktail trolley was from another age when martinis were de rigeur at such an hour, children were obviously not in fashion but parties were.

Not to spoil it for you entirely but the costumes leave quite a lot to be desired...! If there are any downsides at all then it is simply that the Wildman Room is a little on the warm side....