

Edinburgh Festival Fringe

2016 REVIEW: No Horizon *****



No Horizon – a Fringe show of Broadway scale and ambition

Before the first reviews are in and the word-of-mouth has started, the buzz for Andy Platt and Max Reid's musical *No Horizon* has attracted a good little crowd to previews at the Cow Barn at the Underbelly Med Quad. Chris Evans has declared *No Horizon* "a Yorkshire *Les Mis*", and Elaine Paige has been playing songs from the show on Radio 2.

The conception of *No Horizon* began when Platt had a chance conversation with a friend about Nicholas Saunderson, a blind Yorkshireman and an 18th century mathematician and visionary. Saunderson hailed from not far from where Platt lives, and he couldn't believe he hadn't heard the story. He decided to do something about it.

The passion behind this project is evident in every aspect of this production. From the songs to the costuming to the choreography, it is quite something to experience a show of Broadway scale and ambition somehow squeezed into the intimate setting of the Cow Barn.

Samuel Reid as Saunderson spent hours studying footage to accurately replicate the mannerisms of a person who is blind, and is able to convey the sense of a character who is blind while performing the stage directions required of a musical leading man. He is ably supported by a full cast and chorus who hit all the right notes.

Musical characters who could be one-dimensional, like antagonist Reverend Fox, are invested with depth by the quality of the writing and performances. Particular praise is

due to George Griffiths as Joshua Dunn and his supporting cast of student ne'er-do-wells, who inject a welcome dash of tomfoolery into Nicholas's necessarily intense tale.

The creators of *No Horizon* have ambitions to tour the show nationally, and this production deserves to move them closer to that goal.

In the meantime, it's a pleasure to be among the first to see an epic story of succeeding against the odds at this year's Fringe.

No Horizon, Underbelly Med Quad (Venue 302), 6-15 and 17-27 Aug | 17:00-18:25 £10/£9 (Concs)