

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2016 – Worbey and Farrell – Rhapsody*****



Raw talent might be sufficient in a Fringe act, but even with core ability in the first place, you have to practice hard to make anything out of it.

Worbey and Farrell are two hugely talented pianists, but they do work five or six hours every day practising every part of their complicated routines.

This show is a bit like watching the gymnastics from Rio. There is choreography, the athletes have repeated their routines over and over, and the end result is quite simply magical.

But these are not just two men playing a Steinway. They are entertaining, amusing and very lovely people.

Steven Worbey and Kevin Farrell live in Edinburgh and have done for about 12 years. They are often on the road, most recently in Korea (the South you know!) and have also worked as entertainers on board Cunard's liners, so being in Edinburgh is regarded as a welcome holiday.

They are self-deprecating (calling themselves the Ant and Dec of entertainment) but undeservedly so. The Edinburgh Reporter chatted to them after a show at George Square Theatre.

[The Edinburgh Reporter chats to Worbey and Farrell](#) from [Phyllis Stephen](#) on [Vimeo](#).

They eat in Bar Napoli and Howies when they are in town. They

walk their dog on the beach at Portobello. They have played at The King's Theatre in their play and have sold out The Playhouse. But that appears to keep their feet on the ground:

"We never take anything for granted. In the past we would be playing to empty theatres and learned to deal with it. You can have a full house and not a very good audience of course!

"They look after you on the cruise ships. You just go on do your show and the rest of the time you are just pampered!

"We met at the Royal College of Music and we always got on very, very well. Then one day we got locked in a flat and started playing duets on two pianos. Then we decided to play on one piano and do it rather differently from other people.

"We have a nice grand piano at home and do all our arranging on that."

They are accomplished, polished and probably worthy of a slightly later slot in the Fringe programme. They are on at the George Square Theatre at 5.30pm and if that makes you think they are just another teatime act, then you are wrong. This is an art form in itself with all the keys of the grand piano getting a deal of attention with four hands flying across them.

The big screen at the back of the stage shows off their dexterity and musicianship to effect (although one woman on a cruise wondered how they had got a piece of film which kept time with them....)

A fabulous show for anyone who loves just about any kind of music. The rhapsody is explained as a piece of music which can appear improvised, and of course their repertoire includes Bohemian Rhapsody and Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue. But there is a bit of Beethoven and an adapted Rimsky Korsakov and a couple of tunes you might recognise as TV themes.

Quite simply I do not know how anyone could play the piano better. These are the best pianists in town.

August 16-28 at 5.30pm at George Square Theatre

[Tickets here.](#) and CDs and DVDs (and flash drives too – the latest thing don't you know!) are on sale afterwards.