

Review: Funny Girl the Musical *****



She has been described as 'the greatest theatre star of her generation' and there's no denying television, film and stage star Sheridan Smith is one of the most gifted actors this country has produced in decades.

Just a few weeks ago millions watched her brilliant performance in the television drama *Moorside*, based on the true story of Shannon Matthews. This week Sheridan is treading the boards in Edinburgh as the star of the hit musical *Funny Girl*, the true story of Fanny Brice, an American singer, dancer, comedian and actress who made a name for herself in the early part of the 20th century. Broadway impresario Florenz Ziegfeld invited Brice to join his Ziegfeld Follies company in 1910 and the rest, as they say, is history.

Funny Girl tells Brice's story and focuses on her career as well as her marriage to Nicky Arnstein (superbly played by former Popstars contestant Darius Campbell) The film of the same name made a star of Hollywood legend Barbara Streisand in 1968.

Sheridan Smith gives a quite breath-taking performance full of energy, wit and drama. A fine supporting cast, including Jennifer Harding, Myra Sands, Joshua Lay and Zoe Ann Brown, provide admirable support. It's a show which doesn't have a weakness – even allowing for an audience member's mobile phone going off in the middle of the second part of the show – and the memorable performance of Smith will live long in the memory of those who saw it.

Be prepared to laugh out loud but also for your heart strings

to be tugged as Fanny strives to save her marriage and her career.

The standing ovation from a packed Edinburgh Playhouse was fully deserved and nearly brought a tear to this reporter's eye.

Funny Girl runs at Edinburgh's Playhouse until Saturday 22nd April. If you only see one show this year, make it this one. You'll have an evening to remember! Tickets available [here](#)

Edinburgh Reporter rating – ***** (five stars in every way!)