

# Liam Rudden's Must See Theatre

**From Narnia to Paris, a former mining town to a hotel in Memphis, journey far and wide courtesy of Edinburgh's stages this month, where fantasy, politics, private lives and an explosive can-can await**

Eight weeks, it's a long old season for any show coming to Edinburgh these days, but if anything can put bums on seats for that length of time it's Moulin Rouge! The Musical. It reminds me of the good old days when the first UK tour of Les Miserables opened at The Playhouse in 1993 – and stayed for the best part of five months. It was followed two years later by The Phantom of the Opera, which ran for a record-breaking nine months – 23 September to 19 February, 1994. I have great memories of hosting a weekly late night Pub Quiz for the cast and crew of Phantom. Starting just before midnight and finishing around 2am, they were wild nights with a fun company. Both productions involved major get-ins and remodelling of the theatre, based on what has been done to London's Piccadilly Theatre, home of the West End production, it's sure to be a spectacular transformation. Think windmills and elephants. Moulin Rouge! (until 14 June) continues its run at The Playhouse all this month.

*Running time 2 hours 45 minutes including interval. Tickets £15-£145 [here](#).*



## Moulin Rouge

Another spectacular production coming to the city this month is *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* (13-17 May), which stops off at the Festival Theatre for a week. Get ready for the adventure of a lifetime as the West End smash-hit production invites you to step through the wardrobe and into the magical kingdom of Narnia, where a world of wonder awaits.

Join Lucy, Edmund, Susan and Peter as they meet new friends, face dangerous foes and learn the lessons of courage, sacrifice, and the power of love.

Celebrating the 75th anniversary of CS Lewis' classic novel, this acclaimed production, which became the highest grossing one week touring play in the history of the Liverpool Empire recently, is only at the Nicolson Street theatre for eight performances, so book now.

*Running Time 2 hours 15 minutes including interval. Tickets £25-£48, [here](#).*





From Narnia to a former mining town, National Theatre of Scotland's Keli (13-17 May) marks 40 years since the miners' strikes. Keli is the story of a fiery, sharp-witted teenager in what was once a mining town. Coal means little to Keli, but the mines left music in the blood of this place and its people. As the best player her brass band has ever had, music is easy for Keli – everything else is a fight. Feeling trapped by small-town life, the pressure mounts and when the chance arises to change everything, can Keli keep a lid on it all? A gripping show about community, creativity, and music, Keli is set to a live brass score by Ivor Novello winner Martin Green with each performance including an appearance from a full brass band... march on either Whitburn Band or Kingdom Brass. Who will you see?

*Running time 2 hours including 20 minute interval. Tickets here £15-£35 [here](#).*



Just sneaking into May's Must See Theatre picks by the skin of its teeth is another Lyceum production, *The Mountaintop* (31 May-21 June). It's April 3, 1968 and in room 306 of the Lorraine Motel, Memphis, it is Dr Martin Luther King Jr's last night on Earth. Exhausted from a life on the road, hoarse from testifying day after day, all he wants is a coffee and some cigarettes, then room service arrives in the form of Camae, a motel maid with the face of an angel who smokes, drinks, and curses like a sailor while giving King a run for his money.

Re-imaging the man behind the legend on the eve of his assassination and pulling away the mask of his public façade to reveal his private turmoil, discover the conflict in the life of a family man and martyr, desperate to finish what he started. Set during the height of America's Civil Rights Movement, Katori Hall's Olivier award-winning play confronts life, death and the idea of legacy and stars Caleb Roberts as Dr Martin Luther King Jr, with Shannon Hayes as Camae.

*Running time TBC. Tickets £16-£35 [here](#).*





Finally, this month, over at The Traverse and other venues around the city, the Edinburgh International Children's Festival (24 May-1 June) celebrates its 35th year with an exciting lineup of performances.

Presenting some of the world's best theatre and dance for young people and their families, this year's festival features 13 productions from seven countries and features circus, dance, puppetry and theatre.

With many of the productions chosen to appeal to both children and adults, family pleasers this year include Grown Ups and Double You, featuring adults behaving badly with hilarious consequences.

The Festival opens with Family Day on 24 May, a day packed with free pop-up performances, artist installations and activities for families in the National Museum of Scotland on Chambers Street.

Find the full programme of shows, venue list and tickets [here](#).

An exciting month then, and remember, you can keep up with all my theatre reviews, news and views on [mustseetheatre.com](http://mustseetheatre.com), give

it a visit.  
Until next month, happy theatre-going,  
Liam

