



Theatre: Review: Bristol Festival of Puppetry: Tricycle

Shane Morgan, September 8, 2017

Walking into the Tobacco Factory Theatre for Les Sages Fous' *Tricycle*, you enter the crossroads between our world and the world of the lone rider (Jacob Brindamour), who is sitting on his tricycle, waiting to give us an insight into his city, the dark alleys and the people who inhabit his world.

Inspired, in part, by the people who roam the Canadian city of Trois-Rivières on their tricycles, collecting all sorts of materials that they keep on their trailers, *Tricycle* is reminiscent of Jean-Pierre Jeunet's *Micmacs* in both style and content.

This is a deeply personal, playful and utterly charming insight into one man's life traipsing from one base to another. The pleasure he takes in inviting his audience through a wordless retrospective of his life to date is a delight, as he introduces places and people (including one up-close-and-personal encounter with a particularly unpleasant inhabitant of his past) that have made an impact upon him.

From birth to escape into the world of independence, the man moves around the stage at a pace so as to avoid crossing paths with demons – but with enough time to share them with us. This is smart, simple storytelling with a wonderful soundtrack by Christian Laflamme, composed to underscore the man's journey.

Often surreal, always playful and nothing short of endearing, *Tricycle* does exactly what it sets out to do. A wonderful addition to the Bristol Festival of Puppetry.

*Bristol Festival of Puppetry continues until Sept 10.
For more info, visit www.bristolfestivalofpuppetry.org*

Magical opening at Figur i Fossekleiva

Les Sages Fous delivered a life trip in a bewitching hour.

By Kent Stian Håkonsen

- Magic, was the first word Adrian Langum Øyen said after witnessed the opening show of FiF. I fully agree, after seeing Les Sages Fous's latest performance that was shown on Thursday in Fossekleiva. Figur i Fossekleiva has been organized for the second year, and the artistic director Franzisca Aarflot has received quite a reputation within the genre in a short period of time.

Tricycle

Les Sages Fous are from Quebec in Canada, they have performed their performances in 27 countries. On Thursday they visited Fossekleiva with a whole new performance.

- We want to invite the audience to accompany us in the creation process. The first twenty-some performances really fine-tune a show, and we would greatly appreciate audience feedback afterwards. In short, the idea is of a man who pulls his life behind his bike in a trailer full of his dream and nightmares. Switch off your logical sense and let yourself go, was South Miller's suggestion before the performance.



The performance Tricycle lasts about an hour, where Jacob Brindamour, in perfect timing with the music, delivers a life trip without words. The show is full of symbolism and uses simple, but striking effects. Using various objects, many facets of life were shown from birth to death. Dreams and nightmares sprung from memories, which may be real or imagined, as the years are many.

Magic in Fossekleiva

"The artistic level that Franzisca Aarflot has gained at this festival is just incredibly high, so I try to absorb up as much as I can. I almost have a hard time believing that it is really happening here in Fossekleiva at Berger!" says Adrian Aksel Langum Øyen.

He was born and raised at Berger, and is himself educated in performing arts, and is most known for his role as Baste in the Good Purpose of 2016. At present, the young man is up performing in a show about the great war at the Oslo school museum.

- So, unfortunately, I do not get to see everything at the festival. But I was at the workshop on Wednesday with Les Sages Fous. There we worked with objects and body physics. Creating life in the inanimate material to make a puppet, starting with our own body.

"And seeing the performance today was just magic and how they use the simple effects to make such a bewitching world that we get drawn into is impressive," continues Adrian Aksel Langum Øyen.



Tricyckle at Tobacco Factory Theatre

Becky Condon

If, when you think of puppetry, you picture models made out of wood or Plaster of Paris, figures in pseudo-human form with moveable limbs and eyes that stare in stillness to tell a linear story – Tricyckle will challenge all of that.

Hoping to ‘break down barriers between high culture and popular art’, Québécois company Les Sages Fous bring to the Bristol Festival of Puppetry (#BFP17) a gentle show that often feels more like an art installation than a piece of theatre. Our loner protagonist contemplates life from the seat of his tricycle, trailer of junk attached, before he sets off round and round the backstreets of the city aka the stage of the Tobacco Factory Theatre, doing impressive laps in such a small space. As the hour long piece progresses, Mr Tricyclist tells his tale through that junk, transforming discarded items into an impressive cityscape and revealing its seedy nightlife, building a circus, witnessing birth and being visited by a Spider Woman, the last reminiscent of Pink Floyd in their The Wall years.

Inspired by the Tricycling collectors of junk in the city of Trois Rivieres, Sages Fous show how rubbish can metamorphose into something of beauty, how objects hold meaning and how bloody imaginative people can be. This is a charming, thoughtful work, which uses shadows to full effect. And the soundscape here is as important as the spectacle – Christian Laflamme has created his own instruments from found objects, his cacophonous score complimenting so well Jacob Brindamour’s almost clown-like on-stage presence.

Tricyckle might well be a see-twice show because, if I was able to watch it again, I would concentrate less on trying to grasp a story and instead I would simply enjoy the flow.