

Unsuitable by Tumble Circus: Wildly Comical, Sweaty, Physical Theatre! – Adelaide Fringe Review

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Empire Theatre at Royal Croquet Club, Thu 8 Mar.

[CIRCUS AND PHYSICAL THEATRE/COMEDY – IRL]

Tumble Circus (they're not kidding!) originates from Belfast, of all places, and co-founder Ken Evil was quick to point this curious fact out at the very start of this extraordinarily physical and higher-than-high-energy hour-long performance which, as it's at the RCC's Empire Theatre, is right there, up close and in your face. And therefore you can see the huge strain on the five (three women and two guys) gymnast-dressed members and, it must be said (and please: this is not a criticism!!!), you can actually smell them after 30 minutes or so, which only adds to the near-frenzied intensity of it all.

Beginning with a stylised but knockabout all-in brawl (to the tune of the theme from *The Green Hornet*) with a (fake?) sledgehammer that kept only just missing their heads, we're then introduced to co-creator Tina Machina, who agonises about her limelight-hogging sister Helga and then does some silk-twirling aerialist twists that could easily have been part of a Leni Riefenstahl doco. She also fights off two other members, setting a trend for the show as the gang is continually on the attack, slinging stuff and whacking each other's butts with frying pans.

A tightrope is set up and another member (when their names are announced at the end it's hard to hear them over the music, sorry!) does an amazing routine where she not only walks across it but dances and jumps too (!!!), Ken does a funny turn as an existential

clown with a fondness for groaner gags (and cigarettes), and two cops (we know they're cops because they have 'COP' written on their singlets) then do coolly sexy gymnastics to Prince's *Purple Rain*.

By this point you'd think the quintet would be exhausted or all out of wild comic inspiration, but they still manage an all-in body-climbing bit where the pain is evident but they still execute a group triple-decker, and then there's a breathlessly hilarious and exhausting highlight to the tune of Cornershop's *Brimful Of Asha* that just gets better and funnier and crazier as it goes on – and on and on – and causes an awful mess. Just like, um, life.

Almost ludicrously entertaining, Tumble Circus' *Unsuitable* left the audience almost as sweaty as the cast.

5 stars

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***Unsuitable* continues at Empire Theatre at Royal Croquet Club from 9.30pm until Sun 18 Mar.**

Book at FringeTIX on 1300 621 255 and adelaidefringe.com.au. Click [HERE](#) to purchase your tickets.