

HOUND DAWG

MAGAZINE

"I'M A HOUND DAWG!"

NO. 8 AUGUST 2010



EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

**CRAZY ADVENTURES WITH CHRIS WADE, LINZI
NAPIER, ARTHUR SMITH AND EMO PHILLIPS.....**

REVIEWS, PICS AND MORE



HOUND DAWG ISSUE 8

AUGUST 2010

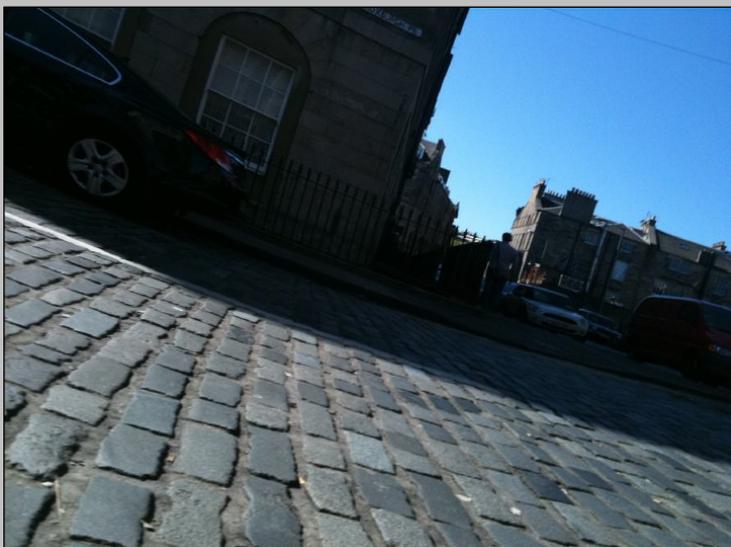
WISDOM TWINS BOOKS

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Well, Hound Dawg is back after a few months off. The hound has been in hospital after breaking his shins in a horrific corn flake incident while Chris Wade has been busy writing and swanning about like a rude lad, eating ice creams on the peer and acting like a right swine. Well, Chris Wade (me or summat) has been to the Edinburgh festival and had an amazing time. I was an Edinburgh virgin but seeing as these days I have a bit more freedom and a great gal who has a cool car, I had the fortune to visit the magical city and take in some of the weird and wonderful things it has to offer. So this issue of Hound Dawg is a little different to previous issues; no poetry this time but there is an interview with Arthur Smith and a diary of sorts, which charts mine and Linzi Napier's adventures from 13th of August to the 16th of August. I hope you enjoy it and if you don't, then you are obviously just a c*!! faced hermit.



THE EDINBURGH FESTIVAL DIARY

WORDS: CHRIS WADE

PHOTOS: LINZI NAPIER & CHRIS WADE

FRIDAY: This was the earliest I had been up in the morning in my odd little life for quite a while. Up at 7; well, I was meant to be up at 7 but, you know, it just wasn't going to happen. So Linzi was pottering about and I was gradually beginning to resemble a human being again. By 7:30 I had brought myself to a stand and was washed and ready for the drive from Leeds to Edinburgh. Well to be honest, it isn't too tough for me to get ready for a long drive because I am, and shall always remain, the passenger, whose one sole task is to change the CDs on the CD player. But I must say it is a responsibility I have never failed to fulfil. It was a great drive; lots of Ian Dury, Donovan, Kinks and ahem... Lady Gaga. The scenery on the way up was fantastic and around 11:30 we stopped for din dins. Well, not din dins, more like brunch. Well, too late for brunch actually so more like elevenses.... or summat. Anyway, for me it was a Happy Meal at McDonald's. It tasted nice but the bad part was I got a bread chest: you know when you eat bread or chips too fast and it sticks in your chest and turns you all stiff and perched up like a fucking puffin man. If you don't know what I mean and have never had the misfortune to have a bread chest, go get some Oven Chips (the worst for bread chest for sure) and put some in a slice of bread and eat it really fast. You'll be bread chested in no time.

Anyway...we arrived in Edinburgh and the excitement was apparent as soon as we got



there. The beauty of the place made Leeds look like Skid Row; the views were incredible, the buildings so beautiful. We were staying in a friend of Linzi's garden and had our tent all ready to put up. When we got to their flat in the heart of the festival frolics, down the stairs and into their basement home, we saw that a car had been put down there, a work of art apparently. Our hosts were Joneal and Stephan. Joneal is a great artist and has his own studio inside. Fantastic and fascinating chap he is. Anyway, we had to get straight off after a wine to catch Hit Me! The Life and Rhymes of Ian Dury, a play being put on at the Gilded Balloon. It was quite a trek

HIT ME!

THE LIFE & RHYMES OF IAN DURY

BY JEFF MERRIFIELD



getting there I can tell you, dodging the street performers and leaflet folk who shove their flyers into your mouth, into your hands, into your bags and down your kegs. I swear I got a couple of paper cuts from over enthusiastic (and desperate) students. Anyway, we found the place and got a nice front row seat.

Hit Me is a two man show and it's fucking fantastic you cunt, which is how Dury himself would describe it, if you went by the portrayal of him in this potty mouthed but very powerful play. Mark White (a terrific and experienced stage actor) plays Ian Dury, and he plays him so well, you actually get a little bit weird when he looks at you from the stage from time to time, as it is so often like seeing the real Dury; the limp, the face, the hair, the gravelly cockney tones, the boots, the whole manner. Let's face it, he WAS Ian Dury. Now I still haven't seen the Andy Serkis Sex, Drugs and Rock n' Roll film (despite being a huge fan of Ian Dury) but if he tops Mark's performance I would be very shocked.

In Hound Dawg Issue One, Norman Watt Roy, bassist for the Blockheads, showed his dissatisfaction with the said film but also made a passing reference to this very play, Hit Me. He told me how hurtful it was to see himself kind of written out of both productions and how in Hit Me many of the tales mentioned were put into conversation form, with all people involved kind of deleted from the anecdotes. For me, this approach worked in Hit Me! It was basically a

conversation between Ian and his minder Spider, played with aggressive commitment by actor John Darcy, who must have the record for saying cunt the most in one hour on stage. He was fantastic as the loyal but tough ex crook, and the relationship between both men was, although strained, extremely funny and in the end, touching. One of the only downsides to the play is the rather lazy way of Ian telling us, the viewer, of his past. It seemed so Wikipediaish, as if the writer had copy and pasted the biographical details and simply put them into the script. That aside, the interaction between the two men was brilliantly well played and their recollection of various true and genuinely funny anecdotes (or antidotes as Spider called them) was a continuing delight. I didn't much care for the ending mind you; with a white, winged angel Ian appearing down the aisle and diving into a rendition of There Ain't Half Been Some Clever Bastards. Yes, it was tongue in cheek but it was also out of context. That said, it was a fantastic play and I recommend it to any one interested in the great man.

After that we went to that ridiculous purple cow thing, udder whatsitsname and had a huge hot dog while contemplating what to do with our evening. We decided to book tickets for Emo Phillips, the great American comedian, who was playing all month at the festival. "Great tip for a stalker," as Emo himself said. We queued up for our tickets and got involved in some rather bizarre chat with

some comedians about ginger hair. In the end, we got our Emo tickets – the last two available. Then we saw Paolo Nutini in the street, walking about with his chums and he was so incredibly brown. In fact, he had a brown jacket on and he was the same colour as it. TIP: Never wear a jacket the same colour as your skin, it just makes you look a like a completely fabric made man, or a puppet or summat. I was also accosted by an actress who looked stoned off her face and was telling me to come to her play about the Marquis de Sade. Well I think she was an actress, I am not too sure now.

That evening was spent with the great artist Joneal and his Irish friend Robin, a musician who lived nearby and much Brandy and music was had. It was relaxing stuff until a local weirdo turned up, but that's another story. Then we had to pitch up our tent. Well, pop it up. It was easy really. We left it up for the two nights after as well, and Linzi swears a cat pissed in it while we were on our daily adventures. Me, I'm not so sure. I think it was me in the night who did the pissing. (NOTE: I do not piss my self). Anyway, some other weird things happened but I can't really write them in here, they're too disturbing.

SATURDAY: A far from relaxed night's sleep was had. We were awoken and kept on guard by a pissed up drunk in the alley round the side of the garden who was being sick what sounded like a gallon of vomit. He then fell into a bin and passed out. He was later heard recovering to his feet and leaving the alley, hopefully to his home if he had one.

I can't really recall what we did through the day on Saturday. I think we went shopping.... ah yes, we did!! We went to the market and had some pizza. I bought a Hugh Cornwell record and got Linzi a nice ring. There were a lot of weird blokes around. One was the drunkest looking oaf I had ever seen,



stumbling around the market stalls with his eyes closed and wobbling about the place. There was also a man who bent right over the record boxes, as if he was about to rifle thoroughly through them with relentless enthusiasm, but would only look at one and go along to the next box. We found his behaviour strangely hypnotic and enviable. He looked to be having so much fun, bless the little weird hermit. Then we went to the museum, which, let's face it, wasn't all that great. The company was better though.

Then it was on to Emo Phillips, the icon of weird surreal stand up. I first saw Emo in the film UHF when I was a kid, and was always amused by the way he got his finger cut off and so calmly said: "Just call me mister butter fingers. Is my face red?"

His set was amazing. The venue in the Pleasance was so tiny, we found ourselves a mere few feet away from Emo and we were near the back!! Emo commented that the gig had sold out, as had been all the previous shows and also added "Thanks for putting me in the smallest theatre in Edinburgh!" There were so many good jokes. A few of my faves are:



“My ex wife is so evil. She’s doing evil classes with the devil..... he’s learning a lot from her.”

“I surprised my parents having sex once. My mum said Wow, Emo where did you learn that hot tongue action?”

“I’m a great lover.... I bet.”

“Speaking of severed heads, I went to the bathroom and saw the severed head of the postman floating in the bowl. Funny thing was it was a Sunday.”

Then there was the classic Emo religion joke, with the punch line “DIE HERETIC!” The rest of the joke is so long it probably won’t even fit in this issue. Emo’s classic delivery is still very much the outstanding

element of his show; that whiney, childlike voice, that restless fidgeting with his jacket, the wrapping of the arms around his wiry torso. In fact, besides his now grey head of medieval style hair, Emo looks very much the same. A life long ambition to see Emo Phillips live had been achieved.

Later that evening we spent an hour or so trying to find a nice place to eat, with artist Joneal and musician Robin leading the way. Me and Linzi were scurrying behind them like two freaky little hermit hobbits. Robin was a bit worse for wear after the previous night’s drinking, so we were looking for some place quiet. We tried a couple of places, but they were just too damn loud I tell ya. In the end we found a place called Double Dutch and sat outside in the warm air of the night. We drank wine, whiskey and ate Nachos. Well I did, I don’t know what the others had. There were some weird conversations going on between us all; the fact that Ken Dodd’s tickle stick is a tad weird when you really think about it, aging gimps and putting socks in women’s bras. Oh yes, and liberty vests came up too, as they so often do in everyday conversation!



Then we realised comedian Paul Foot was sat behind me. Look up there, above this bit of writing, that’s the picture of him eating his tea (at 11 o clock mind you). Then it was

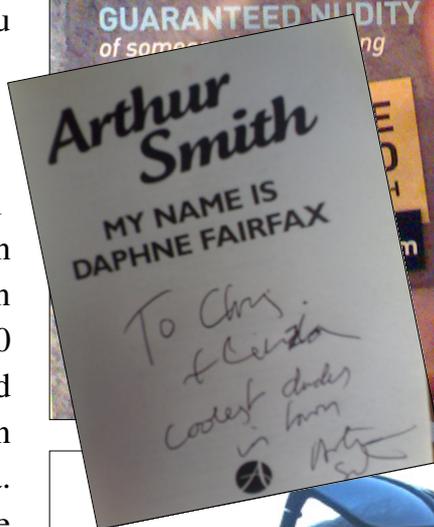
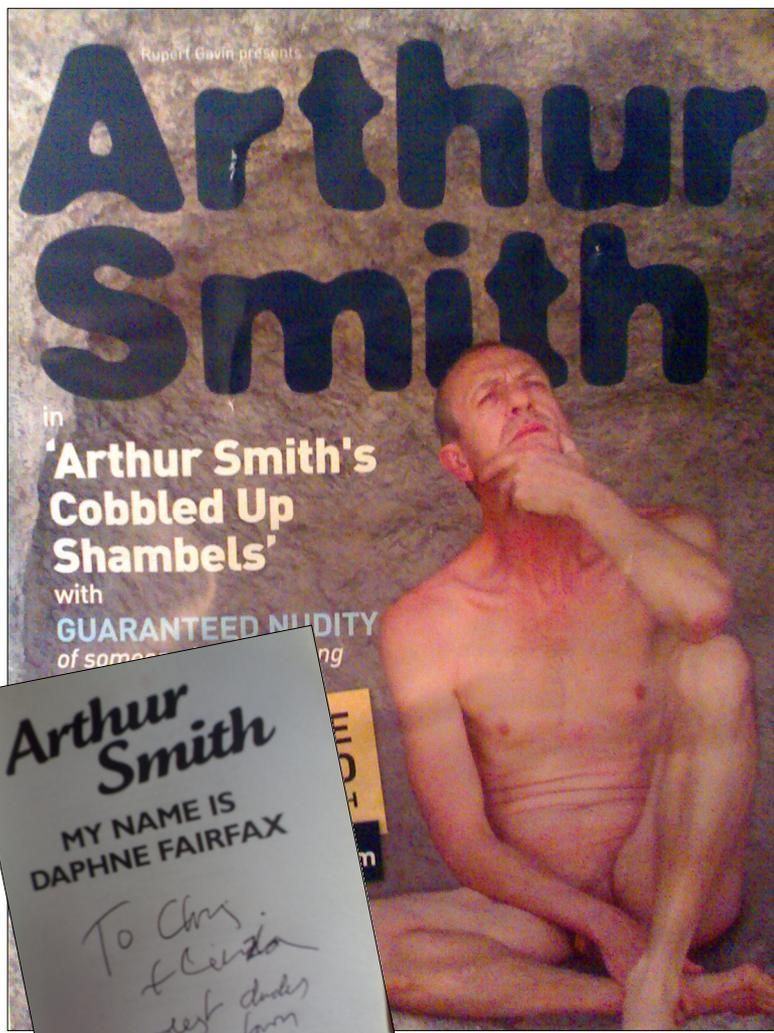
back to more jamming and drinking and chatting at Robin's before we called it a night.

SUNDAY: Sunday was a great day. We saw Arthur Smith at The Pleasance. Before we started queuing up, we noticed Arthur wandering about. Linzi shouted ARTHUR and he stopped. She asked for his autograph and took out the book I had just bought the previous day.

“Oh you bought my book,” he said to her, as she rifled through her bottomless portal of a bag to find pen. (NOTE: This girl's bag, I swear, is magical. The amount of things you can get in there you won't believe it. Trouble is, finding the items proves to be very tricky indeed.) “No, I bought it,” I said, which made Arthur chuckle. Linzi was still searching for the pen, and panic was setting in by now. “Come on girl,” said Arthur, “I'm on stage in 5 minutes.” Finally she found it, 10 nervous breakdowns later and Arthur signed my book. I told him to put Linzi's name on there too, but he got it wrong and wrote Linda. As you can see by the pic to the right of the signed item, a rather offended Linzi chose to correct his mistake after the encounter. I can't say I blame her.

Then in the queue we were handed a 10 pence piece and a programme, on the back of which we were expected to write what makes us pissed off. Then Arthur came across the queue as well, handing stones to the women, or as he called them “uncut diamonds.” He chatted again for a bit then went inside, ready to start his show.

Once again the venue was tiny so we got a nice comfortable seat at the back so we could lean back and enjoy the show. On the speakers before the show was the Lady Smith Black Mambazo track which sounds as if they're saying “Arthur Smith.” So Arthur joined in too, from unseen areas, over the PA





grunting his name along to the music. When the show began, Arthur told us he had bumped into Leonard Cohen outside and so the Canadian singer songwriter had agreed to

perform a song for us. Then out comes Arthur in his Cohen regalia, bursting into a pretty decent and spot on version of I'm Your Man (NOTE: for anyone who hasn't heard Arthur's recent show Arthur Smith Sings Leonard Cohen, you're missing out. Try and get a hold of it if you can). As he was singing, a nude woman calmly strolled past, reading a magazine, casually, as naked as the day she was born.

The show lived up to my expectations and its rather fitting title, Cobbled Up Shambles. I love Arthur Smith; he was reviewed in an earlier issue of Hound Dawg, dunno which one but I can't be bothered to go searching back through the archives to find it now if you wanna read it YOU'LL have to go rifling through the archives. They're all up on the site. Anyway, yeah, the show was great; slapdash, care free, free form and hilarious. Smith kind of cracked jokes whenever he wanted and spent a lot of time recalling anecdotes from his colourful past, as he called them "name drops." One highlight was what Arthur called the biggest name drop ever:

"Ned Sherrin was interviewing some starlet from the 50s and asked her Did you sleep with Elvis? She said Well only to make Marlon jealous."

Other highlights were Arthur's fantastic rendition of Simon Smith and His Amazing Dancing Bear, here altered to Arthur Smith and His Amazing Dancing Bear. And indeed, Arthur was accompanied by a dancing bear throughout the track. Inside the suit was Carrie Marx of girl singing group The Segues, who actually came on to do a quick song earlier on in the show. There was also the chat show segment where Arthur sat down and spoke to the rather dull Norbert, a German tourist visiting the festival. Of course, Norbert was actually a comedian in character but for a minute or so we actually believed he was a

real kraut (well I did, anyway). Arthur also read from his autobiography, *I Am Daphne Fairfax*, a book I am now in the middle of reading and I must say thoroughly enjoying.

The rest of Sunday was spent walking around the city, seeing the sights and eating our tea. We went back to the Pleasance and had the biggest hot dog known to man!! It was huge. We also saw Tim Vine, Greg Davies (the Rik Mayall lookalike) and Shappi Khorsandi. Sunday was my favourite day.

MONDAY: We had a nice vegetarian breakfast cooked for us by Joneal and went to buy our kind hosts some gifts: wine, eggs and a Thank You card, before packing up our stuff and heading for home. I was sad to leave this wonderful and exciting place, but I knew that the best part of this weekend was coming back with me. By that I mean Linzi. Yes I know it's sickly, but I'm sorry.

Here are some weird snaps we took.



The owner of he record shop you can't go in. You just have to tell him what you want! Weird! I don't get it myself.....



The tiny art gallery.



This caught our eyes.....

