


NEWCITY Stage

500 Clown and the Elephant Deal/500 Clown

June 29, 2009

RECOMMENDED

Ever wanted to go backstage to a catastrophe? 500 Clown's "The Elephant Deal" is a wonky, Brecht-inspired cabaret, proudly displaying all its flaws and seams. It's a lovely, death-defying mess.

The show-within-a show slowly runs off the rails; the hyper-vigilant, incompetent tech staff supporting Madame Barker (Molly Brennan) spins out of control. The comfortable, confident ensemble is a wonder to watch; Brennan's vocalist-of-the-apocalypse is charming; Adrian Danzig's hapless tech guy is flakey and fun. Composer John Fournier's torchy, Weimar-era cabaret numbers evoke sleazy, (legally) smoke-filled black boxes with contraband in the corners.

No piece about imperfection is without its own; the cast occasionally loses track of the audience interaction



Molly Brennan

and the story arc isn't as effortless as the movement work and humor. Technicalities, technicalities. 500 Clown restores energy and physicality that's missing from the scene. Bring someone who doesn't like theater and watch them change their mind. (Lisa Busceni)