

HUFFPOST ARTS & CULTURE

Edition: U.S. ▾

FRONT PAGE POLITICS ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA ARTS TV BLACK VOICES LATINO VOICES RELIGION COMEDY LIVE | ALL SECTIONS

Culture · Arts Books Film Architecture Music TV



Featuring fresh takes and real-time analysis from HuffPost's signature lineup of contributors

HOT ON THE BLOG

John Hillcoat
Harry Shearer

Sen. Ben Cardin
Jeffrey Sachs



Michael Giltz

Freelance writer

GET UPDATES FROM MICHAEL GILTZ

Like 102

Theater: Daniel Kitson At St. Ann's

Posted: 01/13/12 02:50 PM ET

React ▾ Amazing Inspiring Funny Scary Hot Crazy Important Weird

Follow ▾ Theater , Daniel-Kitson , It's Always Right Now Until It's Later , St. Ann's Warehouse , Culture News

SHARE THIS STORY

Get Culture Alerts

Sign Up

Submit this story

IT'S ALWAYS RIGHT NOW, UNTIL IT'S LATER

*** 1/2 out of ****

ST. ANN'S WAREHOUSE

I've only seen two shows by performer/storyteller [Daniel Kitson](#) but he's already one of my favorite acts. Last year, he performed *The Interminable Suicide Of Gregory Church* at St. Ann's Warehouse in January. I thought about it with pleasure for the next 11 months and named it [one of the Top 5 shows of the entire year](#).

Now he's returned with another provocatively titled show -- *It's Always Right Now, Until It's Later* (no arguing with that, is there?). I've no doubt I'll be thinking about it for the rest of 2012 and it will be among my favorites of this year. Do I have to wait till 2013 to see him again in something new?

Kitson is a shambling, nondescript fellow who comes on stage with as little fuss as possible and starts to talk. At the end, he leaves as quickly as politeness will allow and seemingly never returns to soak in more applause. In between, he tells stories. [He's got a website](#) but it's no surprise he's the sort of fellow who doesn't update it regularly and probably finds it a burden more than a help. (For example, his list of past shows ends in 2008 and the top item in his news section proclaims Kitson is headed to St. Ann's...but it's a news item about his appearance there LAST January. I've signed up for his mailing list; I wonder if any emails will ever actually arrive.)

This time, the stories involve two people who brush past each other ever so briefly. We start with the imminent death of William Rivington and the birth of Caroline Carpenter. William has been planning his final words for many, many years and having delivered them, he is resolutely mute for the last nine days of his life. You don't want to spoil the effect of your final words by asking for more Jello from the nurse, do you? We skip back and forth throughout their lives and end neatly with the birth of William and the death of Caroline.

The set is intriguingly filled with bare bulbs hanging from the ceiling at various heights. Each bulb represents a significant moment in their lives and they light up briefly while Kitson dashes over to look at the bulb and share the memory it embodies -- an awkward blind date; sitting in a living room while your best friend is in the loo, having turned up the telly as loud as possible to drown out any unpleasant noises; and so on.

Sometimes Kitson has to crouch down on the ground to get near a bulb. Other times he must stand up on a chair. Back and forth he goes between these unconnected, not terribly unusual but in his hands movingly specific lives. Some bravura moments appear but Kitson typically barrels past any incipient applause to keep the focus on these two people. The accumulation of detail, the building up of treasured memories and quiet frustrations, the comic highs, the sad little lows that even your best friends might not be privy to -- this is where Kitson's storytelling draws its strength.

After two shows, I notice some patterns. Kitson loves elaborate structures, perhaps to keep the audience's attention on what are seemingly mundane lives. A typical passage might begin, "Eight minutes before this moment..." and end with him jumping to another bulb, another memory and saying, "27 years later...." Your need to constantly juggle the back and forth, to keep track of these people is a clever way of refocusing our attention on the specific moment, however universal the story of a little girl falling off her

FOLLOW US

MOST POPULAR ON HUFFPOST

1 of 2



Isaac Balloons Into A Hurricane, New Orleans Threatened

Recommend 651



Limbaugh's Wild Isaac Conspiracy

Like 6k



MAP: Hurricane Isaac's Path Aims For Gulf Coast

Recommend 216



GOP Candidate Compares Pregnancy From Rape To What?

Recommend 18k



GOP Approves Abortion Ban

Recommend 7k



Sylvester Stallone's Half-Sister Dies At 48

Recommend 282



Deaf Boy Asked To Make Controversial Change (VIDEO)

Like 2k



The Most Awkward Wedding Photobombs

Like 753



PHOTO: Christina Aguilera's 'Your Body' Dress Doesn't Leave Much To The Imagination

Like 201

DON'T MISS HUFFPOST BLOGGERS

1 of 5



John Hillcoat
[Lawless: Reinventing the Gangster](#)



Sen. Ben Cardin
[This Is No Way to Win an Election](#)

bicycle might actually be.

In his last show, Kitson was a character in the tale. Here, he's merely the narrator but invariably Kitson reacts like the stand-up comic he is to any stray moment. A noise in the hall outside of where he's performing will allow him to stop and discuss the noise and how much it has thrown him off (though of course it hasn't if only because it allows him to riff and remind you he's just telling a story, not "performing" or anything as grand as all that. "I'm not an actor," he says at one point, laughing, "as my family is so proud of pointing out." (That's a rough quote from memory. What sticks in the mind is how amused he is at his family's keeping Kitson in his place.)

Perhaps the biggest laugh is when he acknowledges his speech impediment and says, "If my stuttering has made you even remotely uncomfortable... you're a bigot." I've certainly noticed patterns after two shows and wonder if after a third or fourth I'll begin to feel I know his manners and methods too well. It's possible though for now I believe as long as the stories are strong I can enjoy his approach to storytelling again and again.

He is indeed an unlikely man to hold a stage until he begins to talk and then you don't want to stop listening. Like Spalding Gray and Garrison Keillor and other monologists, Kitson talks with engaging and disarming directness. He doesn't embody characters the way a Lily Tomlin or John Leguizamo can. He's always Daniel Kitson, but he burrows into the hearts of these people -- and us -- time and time again. He can be caustic and reveal genuine bitterness and pain but I've left his two shows with a genuine warmth and appreciation for how he's helped me stop and take stock, if only for a moment. You have to like a guy who quotes Calvin & Hobbes on his poster. Here's hoping he'll come back soon.

The Theater Season 2011-2012 (on a four star scale)

- The Agony And The Ecstasy Of Steve Jobs* ** 1/2
- All-American* **
- All's Well That Ends Well/Shakespeare in the Park* **
- The Atmosphere Of Memory* 1/2 *
- Bonnie & Clyde feature profile of Jeremy Jordan*
- Broadway By The Year: 1997* ** 1/2
- The Cherry Orchard with Dianne Wiest* **
- Chinglish* * 1/2
- Close Up Space* *
- Crane Story* **
- Cymbeline at Barrow Street Theatre* ***
- Dedalus Lounge* * 1/2
- An Evening With Patti Lupone and Mandy Patinkin* ***
- Follies* *** 1/2
- Fragments* ***
- Godspell* ** 1/2
- Goodbar* * 1/2
- Hair* ***
- Hand To God* ***
- Hero: The Musical* * 1/2
- How The World Began* * 1/2
- Hugh Jackman: Back On Broadway* ***
- Irving Berlin's White Christmas* ***
- It's Always Right Now, Until It's Later* *** 1/2
- King Lear at Public with Sam Waterston* **
- Krapp's Last Tape with John Hurt* ***
- Lake Water* **
- Love's Labor's Lost at the PublicLab* ** 1/2
- Lysistrata Jones* *
- Man And Boy* * 1/2
- The Man Who Came To Dinner* **
- Maple And Vine* **
- Master Class w Tyne Daly* ** 1/2
- Measure For Measure/Shakespeare in the Park* ***
- Milk Like Sugar* ***
- Mission Drift* * 1/2
- Misterman* ** 1/2
- The Mountaintop* ** 1/2
- Newsies* **
- Pigpen's The Nightmare Story* *** 1/2
- Once* *** 1/2
- Olive and The Bitter Herbs* ** 1/2
- On A Clear Day You Can See Forever* * 1/2
- One Arm* ***
- Other Desert Cities on Broadway* ** 1/2
- Private Lives* **
- Queen Of The Mist* ** 1/2
- Radio City Christmas Spectacular* ** 1/2
- Relatively Speaking* * 1/2
- Samuel & Alasdair: A Personal History Of The Robot War* ** 1/2
- The Select (The Sun Also Rises)* ** 1/2
- Seminar* **
- Septimus & Clarissa* *** 1/2
- Shlemiel The First* ** 1/2



[Death, Explained](#)



[Did You See This? The Real Lebowski](#)



[Stream the New Album From Jens Lekman](#)

[Slate Articles >](#)

MOST DISCUSSED RIGHT NOW



[Saving A Dying Indian Art Form With Technology](#)

HOT ON FACEBOOK

1 of 2



[Al Pacino Takes 20-Year-Old Film Role To Broadway](#)



[WATCH: A VERY Different Version Of 'Sexy And I Know It'](#)

HOT ON TWITTER

1 of 2



[thatkevinsmith](#)

My daughter was born out of wedlock. In Senate candidate Tom Smith's mind, this is somehow akin (or Akin) to rape...
<http://t.co/y1Wstbn>

[Retweet](#)



[antderosa](#)

Paul Ryan: Rape is a method of conception <http://t.co/KMgF2jWC>

[Retweet](#)

HUFFPOST'S BIG NEWS PAGES



[Snooki](#)



[Smoking](#)



[Ask The Parent Coach](#)



[Chris Christie](#)



[Arizona Politics](#)



[Natural Disasters](#)



[Wisconsin](#)



[Shadow Conventions 2012](#)



[Fox News](#)

[MORE BIG NEWS PAGES >](#)

Silence! The Musical * 1/2
69 Degrees South * 1/2
Sons Of The Prophet *** 1/2
Sontag: Reborn *
Spiderman: Turn Off The Dark * 1/2
Standing On Ceremony: The Gay Marriage Plays **
Stick Fly **
The Submission **
Super Night Shot ** 1/2
Sweet and Sad **
The Table ** 1/2
Titus Andronicus at Public with Jay O. Sanders * 1/2
Unnatural Acts ***
Venus In Fur ***
We Live Here **
Wild Animals You Should Know ** 1/2
Zarkana **

NEW YORK MUSICAL THEATRE FESTIVAL 2011

Blanche: The Bittersweet Life Of A Wild Prairie Dame *** 1/2
Central Avenue Breakdown ** 1/2
Crazy, Just Like Me ***
Cyclops: A Rock Opera *
Ennio: The Living Paper Cartoon ** 1/2
F---ing Hipsters **
Ghostlight **
Gotta Getta Girl ** 1/2 for staged reading
Greenwood *
Jack Perry Is Alive (And Dating) * 1/2
Kiki Baby ** 1/2
Kissless * 1/2
Madame X **
The Pigeon Boys ***
Time Between Us * 1/2
Tut **

FRINGEFEST NYC 2011

Araby *
The Bardy Bunch **
Books On Tape ** 1/2
Civilian **
Hard Travelin' With Woody ***
Leonard Cohen Koans *** 1/2
The More Loving One **
The Mountain Song *** 1/2
Paper Cuts ***
Parker & Dizzy's Fabulous Journey To The End Of The Rainbow ** 1/2
Pearl's Gone Blue ***
Rachel Calof ** 1/2
Romeo & Juliet: Choose Your Own Ending **
2 Burn * 1/2
Walls and Bridges **
What The Sparrow Said ** 1/2
Yeast Nation ***

Thanks for reading. Michael Giltz is the cohost of *Showbiz Sandbox*, a weekly pop culture podcast that reveals the industry take on entertainment news of the day and features top journalists and opinion makers as guests. It's [available](#) for free on iTunes. Visit Michael Giltz at his [website](#) and his [daily blog](#). Download his podcast of celebrity interviews and his radio show, also called *Popsurfing* and also [available](#) for free on iTunes. Link to him on Netflix and [gain](#) access to thousands of ratings and reviews.

Note: Michael Giltz was provided with free tickets to the shows with the understanding that he would be writing a review.

Follow Michael Giltz on Twitter: www.twitter.com/michaelgiltz

Comments 2 Pending Comments 0

[View FAQ](#)

Comments are closed for this entry

View All

Recency | Popularity

[Aussieann55](#)

2 Fans

06:59 PM on 01/13/2012

The man is a genius.....I have seen all of his shows. His verbal dexterity,inspite of his occasional stutter, is a wonder to behold. He is a storyteller like no other and deserves a much wider audience.

[Permalink](#) | [Share it](#)

HUFFPOST BLOGGER

Michael Giltz

freelance writer

127 Fans

10:25 PM on 01/16/2012

Thrilled to hear the pleasure doesn't dim after multiple shows. Thanks for sharing.

[Permalink](#) | [Share it](#)

[Advertise](#) | [Make HuffPost your Home Page](#) | [RSS](#) | [Careers](#) | [FAQ](#)

[User Agreement](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Comment Policy](#) | [About Us](#) | [About Our Ads](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Copyright © 2012 TheHuffingtonPost.com, Inc. | "The Huffington Post" is a registered trademark of TheHuffingtonPost.com, Inc. All rights reserved.

Part of **AOL Lifestyle**