

The New England Theatre Geek

Something to Think About: “Doubles, Demons, and Dreamers”

Posted on [June 13, 2014](#) by [Danielle Rosvally](#)



image credit: Jessica Kuszaj

Presented by [Sleeping Weazel Productions](#) *Ugmo and Eenie Go Down the Ruski Hole* Written and directed by Kenneth Prestininzi
June 12-21, 2014 [Boston Center for the Arts](#) Boston, MA [Sleeping Weazel on Facebook](#) [Johnny Blazes on Facebook](#)
Review by Danielle Rosvally

(Boston) As a heterosexual cisgendered woman living in what essentially constitutes the suburbs of a low-key city like Boston, it's easy to let things like Pride Week fall off my radar. As such, it took the reminder of my accompanying companion and a couple of big honking rainbow flags spotted on the way to BCA to remind me what time of the year it was. In a lot of ways, this situation is allegorical to the overall message of the current incarnation of *Doubles, Demons, and Dreamers*.

The bill of fare (for this weekend at least) consists of a short presentation by hometown darling Johnny Blazes followed by an original one-act. I'm not sure what I expected when I walked in, but I'm pretty sure it wasn't what I walked out with.

I have long wanted to see Johnny perform and they* did not disappoint. Johnny is billed in the playbill as “an improbable sir/ma'am cabaret rockstar” and I'm not certain I could come up with a better description of the act. In their glitter moustache and pink stiletto boots with balloon boobies and prominently displayed pants bulge underneath crinoline petticoats, Johnny walks their slack-

rope dance upon normative gender barriers. After watching for a time, I began to wonder if it even mattered what biological gender this performer had been assigned; then I realized (none too gracefully) that that was the entire point. Johnny has a set of pipes not to be rivaled and a sense of humor not to be questioned. A “cautionary” word: if you sit on the aisle, you will wind up with a lapful of Johnny (though really, who could be upset about this?). One thing is certain: I will never hear “Maybe This Time” sung the same way again. In this act, Johnny questions with hopeless abandon their place in today’s society: is there a space for them? Is there any way they can be accepted and acceptable? No answers are apparent; which again (I believe) is the entire point of the piece. The second item on the menu, *Ugmo and Eenie Go Down the Ruski Hole*, echoes this theme. Disturbingly stellar performances from the piece’s two actors (Leicester Landon as Ugmo and Alston Brown as Eenie) enwrap the audience in the show’s sleepless, listless, 2AM reality. The piece has so many layers that I’ll be unpacking it for some time, but at its heart lays a message about labels, acceptability, and the spaces we make for ourselves in which we are allowed to be who we truly are. It interrogates the layers of armor and performance that this harsh world foists upon anyone who is “different” or “other”.

The attention to detail in costumes, set, and props for this piece is incredible; the crafted world is immersive and completely believable. Though it would be difficult to say that this piece is “enjoyable” simply due to the painful truths that it exposes, I can say that it excellently put together and flawlessly performed. If you’re looking for a way to partake in pride, or if you’re simply looking for an eye-opening experience, I’d highly recommend heading downtown to the BCA. Note that, after the 14th, the show changes. No longer will it be Johnny Blazes and *Ugmo and Eenie*... but instead two one-acts entitled *Lava Fossil* and *Talk To At Me*. The second *Doubles, Demons, and Dreamers* incarnation certainly has a lot to live up to, and I have some confidence after what I saw last night that it will deliver.

*For you grammarians out there who have little experience with Drag Kings: this is not an agreement error; Johnny prefers the ungendered pronoun set “they” and “their.”



The exquisite Johnny Blazes. (c) 2104 Eowyn W. Evans, Holy Crow