

It's that time of year again folks! That's right - Fringe!

Come July, thousands will flood downtown in search of theatre that plays proudly at the edge. But are you looking for live theatre that isn't afraid to declare its independence all year round?

The insurgent new Winnipeg Independent Theatre (WIT) association promises to pave the way. Inspired by Vancouver's See Seven and Saskatoon's Live Five winning strategies for raising awareness of independent theatre with slick campaigning and tempting ticket deals, WIT wants Winnipeg audiences to wake up to its own hotbed of talent, creativity, and yes, wit.

WIT's portal opens up to eight distinct companies offering a gamut of amusements and provocations. You name it, they play it: Shakespeare, Canadiana, feminist plays, festival theatre, multimedia fusions, musicals ... even whacked-out performances that'll make your mom and dad blush.

## Let's cruise the companies!

Named after the Hindu goddess of learning and the arts, **Sarasvati Productions** inspires change with its transformative vision of theatre. Not only has Sarasvati created FemFest, Winnipeg's festival of plays by women ([www.femfest.ca](http://www.femfest.ca)), but also established a reading series for emerging playwrights and the International Women's Week Cabaret of Monologues. Sarasvati also produces and tours its own socially relevant works. Community building through the arts affirms Sarasvati as a place where audiences can converge to celebrate life and creativity.

**Theatre Incarnate** plays homage to the imagination from its home base of STUDIO 320. Whether it's the stylishly raw or the frugally couture, what excites Theatre Incarnate most is the imaginative commitment of the performer. Individual isolation, the search for connection, and the questing of identity, these are the company's sources of inspiration as they offer audiences the performer as embodied poetry. Look for Theatre Incarnate's work within Winnipeg's annual theatre festivals as well as during the season with independent productions.

Hear it once, twice, and thrice, with **Echo Theatre's** Echo, Echo (Beach), and Little Theatre's extensions. Armed with an array of dazzling theatrics, Echo creates shows that are intelligent, entertaining, and innovative. Echo also gets off on puzzles, so it chooses challenging plays that make for exciting and inventive work. Echo is currently devising an outrageous follow-up to the 2009 Fringe cult hit *Le Grand-Guignol Sur La Prairie*.

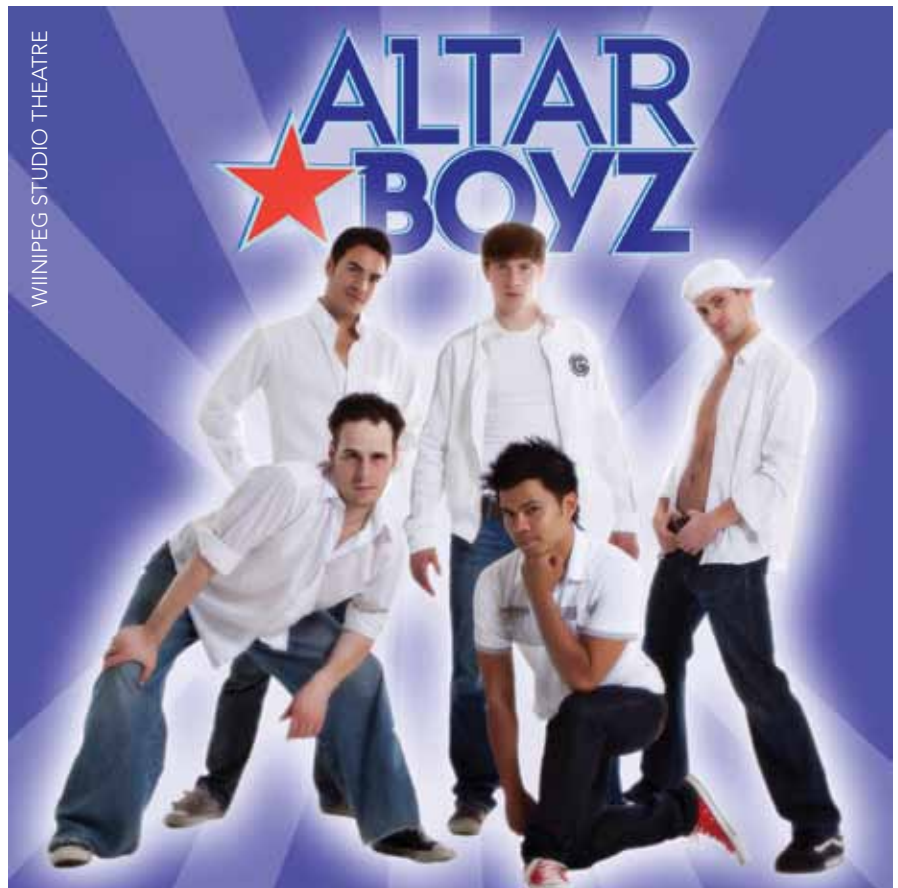
# See Independent, Act Independent



The black sheep of the flock, **out of line theatre** lives up to its name with experimental productions that push buttons. Shows toy with everything from pervy peepshows, to tango-infused Egyptian mythology, to rock-concert-witch-hunts, to surreal soup-soaked gnomes with snatchy-snatches too! Addicted to imagination, risk, and the wild ride of collaboration, this company dares you to jump right off the edge. They're now concocting *Time 2B Famous*, a new fall 2010 show inspired by the flashy lights of pop star icons Madonna and Tom Cruise.

Social significance and accessibility excite **Theatre by the River**. This crew makes regular appearances in festivals, independently, and on tour. Shows like the highly praised *The Bush-Ladies: In Their Own Words* see Theatre by the River in top form - entertaining audiences while educating them. This is a company that connects emerging artists, seasoned practitioners, and wide audiences, placing them all firmly at home in the ongoing drama of humanity. Into dark comedy? Check out *One Good Marriage* at the Fringe.

**White Rabbit Productions** is a multimedia theatre company that pulls out of its hat original Canadian works of music, theatre, and new media. Aiming to integrate theatre, music,



and media to make its distinct brand of Music Theatre, White Rabbit weaves a multidisciplinary network of artists learning and creating together. The company celebrates local writers, performers, directors, and musicians. Look out for a new original work at this summer's Fringe.

**Winnipeg Studio Theatre** creates, develops, and produces Canadian and International contemporary plays and musicals. Leaning towards the educational and developmental, Winnipeg Studio Theatre mixes original, traditional, and experimental theatre to let many kinds of artists discover and work together. The company

also engages with new work and talent by offering readings and workshops of plays in progress. Look out for Tony Award Winning musical comedy *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* at the Fringe.

**Theatre Anywhere** takes inspiration from Winnipeg theatre pioneer Harry Rintoul (1956-2002) and its mission is to showcase emerging talent. Dozens of shows under its belt, Theatre Anywhere is a definite talent-spotter. The Fringe allows the company to spotlight Manitoba playwrights and MTC's Master Playwrights Festival sees them delving

into classics. Notable recent shows include spearheading *The Lysistrata Project*, the first worldwide theatre event for peace in Manitoba, Yvette Nolan's *Blade*, and Caryl Churchill's *A Mouthful of Birds*. See where Theatre Anywhere heads to next at the Fringe.

Wanna learn more? Keep an eye open for the new WIT brochure, check out WIT's [wordpress.com](http://wordpress.com) blog, or become a Facebook fan to stay in the know on what's to see when you're seeing independent.

