



London Lowdown

Comedy Review David Mills: House Party! ★★☆☆☆

The narrative constructs adopted by cabaret performers with which to present their work can sometimes make for an intoxicating experience: a melancholy raconteur can provide a hugely affecting show; a spoof music hall star an incredibly funny one. The conceit behind David Mills's piece, that we're all at a high-octane house party and he's the acid-tongued gatecrasher, isn't particularly successful.

There'd be a livelier sense of 'togetherness' if he could riff off his audience better, but he's not a good enough improviser for that. And the droll wisecracking that kicks this show off is neither funny nor sharp: for a while, he's the boorish partygoer you don't want to get stuck with. But after a duff, scene-setting beginning, things do pick up when he settles down into a simpler format of songs – agreeably accompanied by Michael Roulston on keys – and observational jokes.

He's got good hot-under-the-collar material on sex and orgies, effectively slides in some namedropping – Kim Cattrall, Jane Seymour – to punctuate strong one-liners, and some of his songs are genuinely heartfelt. There's evidence that Mills knows how to show people a good time but he needs to polish things up – and figure out how to get his party properly pulsating from the outset. *Sharon Lougher*

Until Tomorrow, Etcetera Theatre, The Oxford Arms, 9pm, £7.50. Tel: 0844 477 1000. www.camdenfringe.org Tube: Camden Town
Also: Aug 24 and 25, Royal Vauxhall Tavern, 372 Kennington Lane, 8pm, £7. Tel: 020 7820 1222. www.hotaugustfringe.com Tube: Vauxhall

Gig Miike Snow

Mysterious pseudonyms are a standard accessory for dance music artists, and Scando-American pop trio Miike Snow take their unconventional name spelling from cult Japanese film director Takashi Miike.

They take their sound, on the other hand, from Europop, electronica and r'n'b references, and they've already proved their hit-making abilities, comprising multi-instrumental singer/songwriter Andrew Wyatt and producers Pontus Winnberg and Christian Karlsson (who worked on Britney Spears's Toxic, as well as tunes for the likes of Kylie and Ms Dynamite, under another wacky name, Bloodshy & Avant).

What Miike Snow have yet to establish is their own recognisable sense of personality, despite having been together for two years – but now could be the right time, as the electro-pop performance scene shines brightly. And tonight should be exactly the right kind of place: a credible club/dedicated live venue with a very convivial crowd.

Miike Snow's eponymous debut album is due for a British major label



release in October; it's a highly stylised yet sweetly catchy and soulful set of tunes. And while tracks including A Horse Is Not A Home and Black And Blue have scored virtual success, they really deserve to stand out in the flesh. Wyatt's emotive delivery certainly helps, as does the fact that Miike Snow are actually a pretty chiselled-looking bunch.

Think of their headline gig as a funky point of introduction – the fact that it's part of Cargo's ongoing Free Fridays series simply ups the feel-good value.

Arwa Haider
 Tonight, Cargo, 8pm to 3am, free. Tel: 020 7739 3440. www.cargo-london.com Tube: Old Street

Afterschool (18)

Running time: 107min ★★★★★

Having wowed Cannes with Buy It Now, his short about a teenage girl who sells her virginity on eBay, 25-year-old New York director Antonio Campos further impresses with this bleak and brilliant examination of teen alienation in the internet age. Robert (Ezra Miller, pictured with Addison Timlin) is a US boarding-school boy entirely preoccupied with online porn, until he's dramatically confronted by the tragic reality of two dead classmates – and charged with creating their video memorial.

Provocative, unflinching and stripped of anything approaching a consoling music soundtrack, it's a must for fans of challenging, A+ intelligent cinema desperately seeking the antithesis of High School Musical. *LI-Z*



I Love You Beth Cooper (15)

Running time: 102min ★★☆☆☆

Brat Pack director John Hughes (Ferris Bueller's Day Off) may have just departed to The Big Breakfast Club in the sky, but his spirit clearly passed through this occasionally enjoyable teen flick en route. Sadly it's a fleeting visit. It's the last day of high school (oh, the aching originality!) and mega-nerd Denis (Paul Rust, who looks like Dennis Pennis hung out to dry) has just announced his love for blonde cheerleader Beth Cooper (Heroes star Hayden Panettiere, pictured). She's, natch, sooo not interested, but goes to his lame party to humiliate him. Multifarious forgettable antics ensue. Wises are cracked and touching coming-of-age lessons learned – think Nick And Norah's Infinite Playlist with a more rubbish soundtrack. *LI-Z*



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Songs For A Summer Evening

There's stimulation for the ears as well as the eyes at the National Gallery this evening, courtesy of London-based Polish singer Monika Lidke. In Room 36 the multilingual performer will be singing, in French, Polish and English, jazz ballads from her appealing debut album *Waking Up To Beauty*.

Tonight, National Gallery, 6pm. Tel: 020 7747 2885. www.nationalgallery.org.uk Tube: Leicester Square/Charing Cross



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