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carves to transform and be refreshed in the joy of creativity! The arrival and of characters are achieved less liquidity. Truth is the on and Paul have pinned o that reality. With its sty the whole hour is one between performers and

CANADIAN IMPROV SHOWCASE

Improv is to theatre what an inventor is to invention; that without which, forget it. Take any passing brain impulse, grab it before it gets away, shake it up a bit, try it on for size, and make a scene. Act it out. Get a few brains into a group and do a mash-up, create a whole scenario. There's the microcosm of theatre. Wrap the whole thing in writing, worry it to life, and you might get a "Play". Too bad, you'd have to learn the lines. Improv is theatre

before you have to learn lines. It's the matrix to muck about in with your acting shoes and see how good you are. A genius at mucking about this way is Matt Lawrence who operates The Canadian Improv Showcase, and he's brought five of the same ilk to Hamilton and The Pearl Festival. Make up a name, say, "Different Every Time", and the show goes on. Risky? Oh

boy, you bet, but these remarkable performers are nothing if not high-wire walkers with no safety net.

If last night's experience is any judge, they've got their act as breathtaking and hilarious as falling off a tightrope into a meringue pie. They're huge, all of six of them, in talent, invention, energy, timing, knife-sharp wit...and that's only five of the qualities they generate in their hour-long show. Add half-a-dozen audience volunteers, and the fun is a gutful of glee for all. There's no printed programme, so names are hard to come by, but I was able to single out effortless excellence in falling-about-just-plain-funny, Tony Babcock doing a take on a talk-show host or a deliriously hilarious famous mayor from not far down the road. Sneaking up on you with unexpected witty resources is Nkasi Olgbonnah as a mousy Spanish bull-fighter, and all unsuspectingly, Carmen Gillespie transforms in a nanosecond to an honest-to-god Montreal Canadian hockey grunt. Matt Lawrence MCs the whole. He is perfect in his relaxed and sure-footed experience, a natural improv. Add a prop or two to any of them and the moment is simple gladness to see. ▼ (TM)

The Pearl Company Canadian Theatre Festival 2012 Schedule

Thursday, Aug 23 - 7:30 pm - Different Every Time. Canadian Improv Showcase

Thursday, Aug 23 - 9:00 pm - pomme ls french for apple. liza paul & bahia watson

Friday, Aug 24 - 7:30 pm - Romeo and Juliet: An Escapist Comedy. make.art.theatre

Friday, Aug 24 - 9:00 pm - Love, Loss & Leonard. Fevergraph

Saturday, Aug 25 - 1:30 pm - Love, Loss & Leonard. Fevergraph

Saturday, Aug 25 - 3:00 pm - Romeo and Juliet: An Escapist Comedy. make.art.theatre

Saturday, Aug 25 - 7:30 pm - Different Every Time. Canadian Improv Showcase

Saturday, Aug 25 - 9:00 pm - My Funny Valentine. Shari Vandermolten & Quarter2NineProductions

ROMEO AND JULIET: AN ESCAPIST COMEDY

This is Woody Allen's fantasy Romeo & Juliet re-write. Shakespeare might very

have tried before and failed at. Throughout, Sero's nerdy sexed-up Romeo appeals to the audience for some recognition of his own battle to understand fate vs. free will. Does he *have* to follow the plot of