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Hotel Paradiso, Pleasance, Review

By **Irene Brown** - Posted on **21 August 2015**

Show details

Venue: [Pleasance Theatre, Pleasance Courtyard](#)**Company:** Familie Flöz, Theater Duisburg, Theaterhaus Stuttgart in association with Aurora Nova**Running time:** 75mins**Production:** Anna Kistel, Frederik Rohn, Hajo Schüler, Michael Vogel, Nicolas Witte, Sebastian Kautz, Thomas Rascher (writers), Michael Vogel (director), Hajo Schüler, Thomas Rascher (masks), Michael Ottopal (set design), Eliseu R. Weide (costumes), Dirk Schröder (sound design), Reinhard Hubert (light design)**Performers:** Anna Kistel/Marina Rodriguez Llorente, Sebastian Kautz/Matteo Fantoni, Daniel Matheus/Frederik Rohn, Nicolas Witte/Thomas Rascher

Welcome to the Hotel Paradiso!

There's a fairy tale feel to this family run Alpine hotel. The tobacco stained walls, stourie looking floral curtains, a functioning water pump and a concierge/ part owner who feels it's ok to be at the desk in his pyjamas, put it in an indeterminate time. The widowed mother rules with her walking stick but her ambitious daughter has other ideas for the antediluvian hostelry that miraculously has 4stars above its revolving doors. An angry dog that's never seen is perpetually silenced by one gesture from the knife wielding cook. As a series of guests check in and out, the whirring of the cook's other trade tool becomes an increasingly familiar sound in this dark and hilarious piece of physical theatre.

Big band sounds playing *Oh Johnny, Oh Johnny* set an eerily cheery tone to what turns out to be a macabre foyer farce – definitely not a bedroom one! Full of madcap interaction and astutely performed silent clowning from the four masked performers, happy ever after it is not. Acute comic observation is evident in every nuance of their body language and although their masks are necessarily static, these have been created with such detail that the characters behind them are utterly believable. From the coquettish, thieving maid to hotel inspectors and hapless polis; from the glamorous guests, the young hooded villain and an over enthusiastic bellboy, each is brought to credible and incredible comic life by this highly accomplished Berlin based world- wide touring company.

In balance, this dark piece is also scattered with recognisable tender moments like the lover and the beloved along with

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reconciliation in death involving a weird but charming celestial lift. The love struck son's poses reminiscent of Reggie Perrin or Del Boy are testament to this show's universality.

Despite the intense heat in the auditorium and the worst sightlines imaginable in so-called stepped seating, this extraordinary show is worth the pain. The Hotel may have lost stars above their door but this amazing group has scooped up many more.

05 -31August at 15.15 (not 17)

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