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## Andy's Weekend Round-Up

Posted on 02 May 2011 by Andy Horwitz

**Saturday afternoon** I went to see [Immediate Medium's](#) "The Assassins Chase Pinocchio" at [CSV](#). This show is a multimedia event for children of all ages reinterpreting Carlo Collodi's classic tale *Pinocchio*. Max Dana's adaptation strips the story of all its Disney-fication, bringing it back to starker folk-tale roots. In this adaptation people die, cats get their paws chewed off and Pinocchio is a lot more mischievous and troublesome.

Since I was at a matinee I saw the show with an audience full of kids and it was pretty crazy. Kids have such short attention spans and they notice things differently than grown-ups. They also have no compunction about talking in the theater, wandering onstage or just generally acting out. It made for a strangely edgy dynamic because I was constantly wondering if the kids were just going to lose it. Mostly, though, the kids seemed into it – though I had some trouble following the story myself. The amplification kind of garbled the dialogue at places and it was hard to understand what the actors were saying. Minor complaint.

The company – Liz Vacco, Siobhan Towey and Lisa Clair – developed the piece with Dana and they wisely found a balance between kid-friendly wackiness and adult-friendly aesthetic choices. Grown-ups can appreciate the shadow-play, the video work, the overall design and the silly/smart jokes. Kids can relate to the goofy over-the-top characterizations and the broad physical humor. There is even a sequence where kids are invited onstage to dance and play, which was really fun to watch. It is kind of like Radiohole for Kids but without the beer and with a more structured narrative.

I'm a sucker for fairy tales and folk tales and I really enjoyed the way Immediate Medium stayed true to the story while using contemporary techniques to tell it. And at the end, when Pinocchio turns into a grown man, it is very poignant and touching. I think we all can relate to how the pressures of adult life change us, no matter how much we want to hold onto our youth. Dana's physicality changes in subtle but noticeable ways and our shoulders slump along with him as the boy becomes a man.

Since I don't have kids I don't know how appropriate everything is, but the audience I was with – adults and kids alike – seemed to enjoy it. Once they got over the initial confusion of trying to find the Disney character.

Cool stuff – go check it out.