

## Murray Bramwell's Reviews

*Appeared in - The Australian*

### **All Het Up**

Banquet Room  
Adelaide Festival Centre  
until 14 June

### **Hymne a Piaf**

Caroline Nim  
Space Theatre  
Adelaide Festival Centre  
until 15 June

The Adelaide Cabaret Festival still has a week to go and the newly refitted Festival Centre is jumping - as well it might, hosting 400 artists and 152 performances over just seventeen nights. With a program including crooners, comics, smooth jazz exponents, a mind reader, even a techno-haka group, the Festival Centre hasn't been such a hub of activity since... the last Cabaret Festival.

Among the recent highlights is *All Het Up*, a bijou musical composed by Fiona Horn and John Horn wittily assisted in book and lyrics by Guy Rundle. The subject is the often-visited subject of singles life and the excruciations of love, lust and courtship. Stylishly directed by Wayne Hope and driven by performers Jane Badler, Fiona Thorn, Colin Lane and Jeremy Stanford, with commentary and trumpet from Patrick Cronin, *All Het Up*, as its quaintly archaic title suggests, is nicely offbeat and refreshingly understated.

From the opening song, with its built-in mobile phone warning, to vignettes of urban encounter in bars, restaurants, footy matches and under the percale, *All Het Up* reminds us of the unforgiving etiquette of bourgeois romance. Rundle and the Thorns have a keen ear for buzzwords and the clichés of the interior life - as when one character sings that, despite Dr Phil and her other gurus, in the face of her new lover she is - self-helpless. Attractively local in its references and judicious in its cruelty, *All Het Up* is clever, elegantly presented and a reminder that sex in the city is a funny business.

Parisian singer Caroline Nim returns to the Cabaret Festival with *Hymne a Piaf*, a tribute to Edith Piaf, the urchin chanteuse who re-defined Paris and

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was the transAtlantic hit of the late 1940s. Piaf, so distinctive in her vocal style and her tragic vulnerability, is in many ways a difficult focus for a solo performer. Caroline Nim wisely avoids any attempt at impersonation - especially since she is somewhat taller than a sparrow and has plenty of talent of her own to offer.

Accompanied by Sean Hargreaves on keyboards and bassist Jerome Davies, Nin surveys Piaf's best known songs - Les Amants du Jour, La Vie en Rose and Mon Dieu with extended - perhaps, too much so- introductions and biographical background for L'Accordioniste and Milord. By providing useful English translations Caroline Nim reminds us how much better Piaf sounds in French. With her strong and accomplished vocals Caroline Nim serves her subject well - Edith Piaf, I am sure, would have no regrets. Scarlet Stories, Caroline Nim's second show with material by Weill, Jacques Brel and others opens this week.