

British Theatre Guide

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Big Shoe

Warren Drew

King's Head Theatre, Islington

(2010)

Jaclyn McLoughlin, who recently directed [The Common Good](#) at the Arcola, here showcases Warren Drew's witty, caustic and 'colourful' lines as we witness young vagrant Stanley - an engaging Alex Gatehouse - who is not having the best of days in trying to sell a certain magazine, the purchase of which, he notes, has the power to make us feel so very good about ourselves, especially in the eyes of others.

Gatehouse's opening monologue is a joy: even a puddle conspires against him, but things look up in the guise of starchy-toff Tim - Phineas Pett, recently in [A Yorkshire Tragedy](#) at the White Bear - who, in asking for directions, unwittingly finds himself implicated in Stanley's petty plot to rob enjoyably sardonic café-owner Cheryl (Jean Apps) of her fortune, egged on by his owing pots of money to 'John the knife' (Anthony Coleridge).

The comic timing between firey Gatehouse and astonished Pett, as each tries to get the upper hand, is an absolute pleasure to watch, and all four actors deserve a bigger audience than this tiny auditorium affords - but then, we would lose the charm that is the stage at the King's Head.

It is rare for the phrase 'laugh-out-loud' to actually do what it says on the tin but, for a comedy-hater like me, I can say that this works, perhaps because, beneath the adult humour, there is that all important sense of the vagaries of being human and our shared proximity of gutter to stars.

The good news is that, due to play's word of mouth success, the run looks likely to resume over the next month.

Reviewer: [Anita-Marguerite Butler](#)