

Tips for theatre trips

BY UTHUR DEAN

The very fact that you are reading a column about theatre tells me that you have at least a little bit of gateway knowledge when it comes to plays and the like in this fair city. You know, at least roughly, who's good, where's good, and what to see. So I thought I'd put together a little primer for you on who to be watching out for. Here are the up-and-comers you guys should be following and supporting now, so you can seem super-clued-up when they make it big.

First off, there's **Making Friends Collective**. Run by playwright Adam Goodall, actor Andrew Clarke and several of their chums, Making Friends have been cutting a pretty clear path through recent Fringes and the like with their canny brand, which combines most of the prevailing trends in modern theatre. You may know them from their past work like *Rageface* and *Proficiency Test*. You'll certainly know them from their coming work like *Cleanskin* and *Knifed*, both of which are on in the next few months. Their work is always fun enough not to bore you and smart enough not to just thrill you.

Also worth following are **Bright Orange Walls**. Formed out of the prestigious Long Cloud Youth Theatre company, they produce work with a lively, rebellious spark that is hard to ignore. After a few early dips into devising,

director Sam Phillips has found his niche with bright, burning productions of classic texts. With two Shakespeare plays under their belts (*Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Twelfth Night*), the company is about to tackle the controversial *Spring Awakening*. Make sure you get to it before everyone is telling you to.

Red Scare Collective, which only recently blew the doors off BATS with the emotional tour de force that is *Long Ago, Long Ago* (look for its almost certain return season later this year or early next year), doesn't have much coming up. But that doesn't mean that you shouldn't tattoo their name onto the front of your mind. Company mastermind Cassandra Tse is at least a double threat,

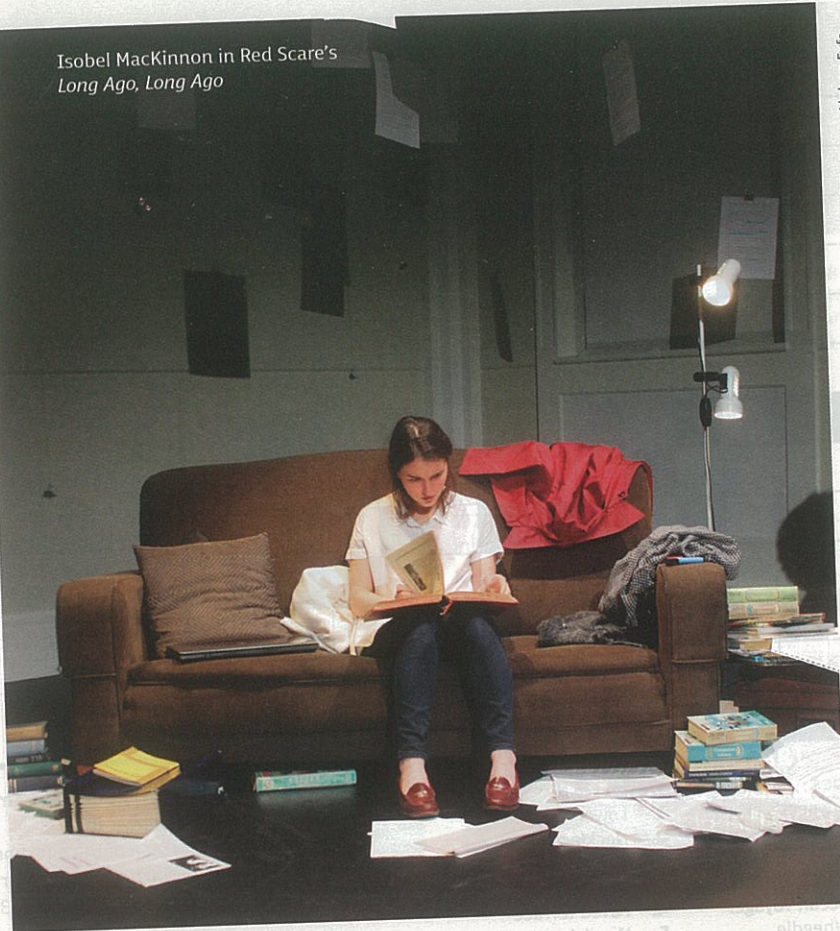
with her deft writing and energetic directing both marking her work at Red Scare as the kind of thing you don't want to be missing from here on out.

And no list of emerging Wellington talent is complete without a mention of **Playshop**. They're a young improv company that have been bringing chuckles to our stages for quite a while now, but their sharp, young energy keeps them from ever falling into a rut. They have a weekly residency at BATS. If you haven't seen them yet, then you'd better get yourself along!

So there we go. Write down those names, memorise them, and you can be the one saying you knew about them before they were big. **f**

Isobel MacKinnon in Red Scare's *Long Ago, Long Ago*

Photo: Freya van Alphen Fyfe



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