

Morro and Jasp Press History

"Morro and Jasp are the the current rock stars of their field, as evidenced by the screams and cheers as the lights started to dim, before the duo had appeared onstage."

"Best of Fringe 2012" ★★★★★

Torontoist, www.torontoist.com, July 13, 2012

"The Amy Poehler and Tina Fey of Canadian clowning, Morro and Jasp have been getting more interesting and ambitious with each passing show." ★★★ (Out of four)

The Globe and Mail, www.theglobeandmail.com, May 15, 2015

"Morro & Jasp In Stupefaction ups clowns' game and pays off. The sibling duo's ambitious new show – they're joined by three other actors – yields deeper interactions and comic rewards...

Annis and Lee continue to invest their clown counterparts with curiosity and humanity. Their comic timing is impeccable – just watch how Annis makes her way across the room to a cart brimming with Cheezies or the clowns' prolonged tangled encounter with Rajaram. Yet amidst the chaos and banter they're acutely aware of the audience's reactions and poised to respond at every moment. Byron Laviolette's marvellous direction incorporates projections, smoke and frequent entrances and exits, while always feeling organic in the space. Props remain essential: Morro's Cheezie chase moves the action from the floor onto the stage itself, and audience cellphones contribute a beautiful visual effect near the end of the play.

Stupefaction is a little darker (visually and philosophically) than fans may be used to, but Morro and Jasp remain a shining light." **NNNN**

NOW Magazine, www.nowtoronto.com, June 20, 2017

"This is clowning with a razor blade embedded in the Cheezies, Morro & Jasp deliver a pertinent satirical warning about religion, power, politics, theatre, relationships and social media/technology, but make the audience laugh to the point of pain while they take their hits.

Clowning, and theatre, and satire, is messy work full of risk-taking and derring-do with a high chance of misstepping. When it also purges negativity, it is stupefying that it can accomplish that much." ★★★★★

My Gay Toronto, www.mygaytoronto.com, June 17, 2017

“Over the past few weeks — well, forever really, but resurging over the past few weeks — there has been a lot of conversation around gender equality on Toronto’s stages, in that female representation is still largely secondary to male characters and perspectives. So it may have been the influence of these conversations swirling around in our head, but during a moment early on in *Morro and Jasp: 9-5*, the latest show from the darling clown duo Morro and Jasp, we came to an unexpected realization. Could Morro and Jasp be one of Toronto theatre’s best feminist teams?

By now, the pair of red-nosed sister clowns have explored puberty (*Morro and Jasp do Puberty*), literature (*Of Mice and Morro and Jasp*), home economics (*Morro and Jasp: Go Bake Yourself*) and even spearheaded a campaign against clown discrimination. In every show, it’s these two sisters against the world, with only the audience playing supporting roles in their story when called upon.”

★★★ (Out of four)

Toronto Star, www.thestar.com, May 16, 2015

“Earlier this year clowns Morro and Jasp unveiled their latest show *Morro and Jasp: 9-5* in which they satirized the world of business. Now for the Fringe Festival they are reviving one of their most acclaimed pieces, *Morro and Jasp Do Puberty* from 2008. With *Puberty* the daring duo explores the extremely divergent feelings that physically becoming an adult can provoke and bring the once-taboo topic of menstruation front and centre (so to speak). An hour with Morro and Jasp will make you weak with laughter.

The duo’s paired views of physical disgust and imaginative rapture complement each other to create a complex picture of how teenagers react to the onset of adulthood. Morro’s desire to keep what happens to her body separate from her love of playing soccer baseball is like Jasp’s pretending to be seduced by her stuffed vegetable, a pea-pod named Peabody. In both cases the two are torn between innocence and the inevitability of new experiences. This melancholy undercurrent of the oncoming loss of innocence makes the comedy richer and our laughter heartier because the mixture of emotions is so true.

Morro and Jasp have secured a spot at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, the mother of all fringe festivals, where they will take the current show. Canada should be proud of them, and I hope people will contribute to their Indiegogo campaign to help pay their expenses to attend. Anyone in Britain who still thinks Canadians are boring will need only see *Morro and Jasp Do Puberty* to be proved hopelessly wrong.” ★★★★★

Stage Door, www.stage-door.com, July 1, 2015

“I began by saying that I didn’t feel qualified to write about their other show, *Of Mice and Morro* and Jasp, but I do want to say something about that show’s ending, because it is such a magical, delightful, and surprising twist, utterly dependent on enthusiastic audience participation. That’s all I’ll say — the show is going on the road, and I really don’t want to spoil the surprise. But it tells you something about the importance of not just audience participation, but audience engagement in Annis and Lee’s work. In their own production, they rely so much on having a crowd that’s deeply invested both in their characters and in the success of the show that they stake the entire ending on that connection. Unsurprisingly, it works — and as it works, the performers turn the tables on us, their faces beaming with delight at our own delight.

Not much else to say, except that theatre doesn’t get much better than this: it’s real, and full of artifice, and belly-laugh funny, and sad, and all about what’s visible, and all about what’s only implied. It should never work, but when it does, it works like nothing else. Thanks for reminding me of all that, Morro and Jasp.”

Dispositio, www.dispositio.net, July 15, 2012

“I went to this play with some trepidation...Almost immediately my fears were put to rest as I was won over by the characters of Jasp & Morro. Their depiction of a complex innocence where they play on the knowledge an adult has while embodying girls in their teens is quite tongue-in-cheek at times but they never overplay it. Their portrayal of that intricate interplay between sisters was also very well done... Amazingly, they managed to capture a lot of themes and experiences in one evening.

As an adult women, the show was a bit of a trip down memory lane for me. But the show enjoyed a large audience that thoroughly enjoyed the production. Ranging in age from 13-93 (I’m guessing!) and including men and women, we laughed heartily throughout the evening. Many of the people in my section were attending with a partner, and several conversations I had throughout the week indicated that people were there because a friend saw the show and told them THEY HAD TO GO. The theatre was certainly full the night I was there.

It’s wonderful to see women making a living for themselves in comedy, in Canada no less, because it is HARD. These are two clearly very talented and hardworking performers, with several shows having been nominated for awards: they have also written a cookbook and are working on a game and a graphic novel.”

Adventures in Academe, www.jodimcdavid.com, January 14, 2017

“It’s an absolute joy watching two performers at the top of their game who know and love their characters as much as the audience. The play itself is an exquisitely

crafted theatre experience with crystal clear moments, precisely timed laughs, real talk about menstruation and its accessories, and some very well placed satirical jabs. Being real pros, Heather Marie Annis and Amy Lee make all of the above look like the easiest thing in the world. Speaking of the world, there was something extra special about seeing the show on Canada Day as the show is being taken to this year's Edinburgh Festival. It's hard to think of better ambassadors for Toronto theatre and our Fringe abroad."

My Entertainment World, www.myentertainmentworld.ca, July 9, 2015

"They loved the humorous aspects while still maintaining an emotionally charged ending. They really valued the audience participation and the energy of the actors. We had just watched a really stuffy show recently so they felt like this redeemed theatre for them. I loved bringing a classic to life in such a creative and fun way. Something doesn't have to be depressing to be powerful. I think that the creativity the actors showcased was magical. Thank you for making a piece that was a real gift to the audience."

Megan Turnley, Grade 12 Teacher, Steinbach Regional Secondary School

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