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DUBLIN FRINGE FESTIVAL

As the Fringe enters its second week, reviewers round up the new shows

CARAVAN \*\*\*\*

The Helix, DCU

Julia Furay

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*Caravan* opens with two of its puppets in the throes of an orgasm, and only gets raunchier from there. Australia's Black Hole Theatre Company has created some seriously demented sex-crazed puppets. They're the cast of a circus come to town, complete with acrobat, clown and stripper. This nearly wordless piece follows them as they spiral downward from dancing and strong-arm contests to dismemberment and murder. And all this to the beat of a seedy and evocative soundtrack. What's surprising, however, is the amazing depth of expression Black Hole's expert puppeteers manage to convey. In addition to lust and rage, we also get glimpses of convincing fear and despair. Which is good, because after an hour of watching the puppets have a go at each other, it starts to seem childish. Sit at the front, or you'll be craning to see what those murderous puppets are up to.

*Runs until Saturday*