



Photo by Leif Norman

Jem Rolls lights up the spooky underside of life in the *Midnight Cabaret*.

JEM ROLLS off the Tongue

Big Word Performance Poetry—King's Head

Ever notice a kid's face as they gaze fixedly at a Christmas tree, all focus, mouth open, slightly agog? That's what you'll notice about a lot of spectators as they watch performance poet, Jem Rolls. I swear, the guy is like the Pied Piper or something.

This mesmerizing capability, coupled with Roll's forceful, very animated delivery, serves his type of show well. Let's face it, when you're reciting a lot of poems, it's inevitable that everyone won't like every poem. For my taste, the opening poem went on too long and lost me (I suspect I wasn't the only one). And the closer, *The Hammer Gang*, (slang for intoxicated/stoned partygoers who invade your home), was met in the audience with more than a few embarrassed glances as Rolls barreled through the seats while

singing a superhero theme song. And did anyone else notice how closely the rhyming pattern of the *Hammer Gang* duplicated one of Rolls' more popular pieces, *Clanger Man*?

Between these were some Jem gems, from the amusing bit of schtick where he re-entered the theatre and re-started the show, to the really funny lament of children with a certain type of mother,

All in all, it's more of the same from Mr. Rolls, which will delight his fans, bewilder his detractors, and maybe convert the odd person. But it's largely a case of you either like him or you don't.

Janice Sawka

My Morocco

The Desert Bus Co.—Cinematheque

Written and performed by Ken Cameron, *My Morocco* starts out as a travelogue piece about an excursion to North Africa, but quickly

becomes much more than that.

When Ken learns of a family tragedy while on his trip, we become caught up in his misfortune as he wrestles with his emotions. While this piece is filled with wonderful descriptions of the sights, sounds and smells of Morocco, it is worth seeing because of Mr. Cameron's thought-provoking look at human relationships and his examination of his own inner struggles as a writer.

Ken Gordon

Throughout this 75-minute play, Cameron wonders aloud if the experiences he is living through would make a good play. I have lived through some deadly 75-minute personal explorations in the one-person form, but in this case the author does it justice.

Ken Cameron is a wonderful actor who seamlessly created and performs several characters. His writing is sharp and evocative. He tells a compelling story with insight and pathos.

I have written several times this fringe about the importance of an outside eye. Director Andy Curtis shows why this can be an important element in presenting personal material.

Kevin Longfield

"It was a dark and stormy night. Limb after limb, like a slowly squeezed fist of chow mein noodles, fell to the ground.

In the studio, the big, hairy hippie reached for the cat under the piano..."

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