

Review: Dance Like It Never Happened

By Suzanne Cleave

***Dance Like It Never Happened* at Theatre Royal Plymouth**

Jonny and the Baptists are back! They took to the stage last week at the Theatre Royal Plymouth with their new show full of riotous songs and stories.

Although set around grief and loss, *Dance Like It Never Happened* is as uplifting as it gets.

Jonny and the Baptists – also known as Jonny Donahoe and Paddy Gervers – are musical comics who were booked to perform in Plymouth in March 2020, and despite a two-year ‘delay’ it was, in their words ‘a joy to be back’!

In the intimate setting of the Drum, Jonny at the mic and Paddy on the guitar took us deep into their experiences over the last couple of years, with stories that resonated as the audience had experienced much of this themselves.

Brutally honest, the pair spoke of how in 2019 an election was lost, followed by our place in Europe and then worst of all, they lost a beloved friend. Then in 2020, grief scaled up, when the pandemic hit and life as we knew it disappeared. Jonny caught Covid and suffered the debilitating effects of long Covid, while Paddy had a breakdown.

Writing material for the show helped them get back on track. Full of jokes about politics (“This is not a political show”), the Royal family and religion, no area was out of bounds. This was interspersed with catchy songs such as ‘The Jonny and the Baptists Detective Agency’, ‘The Frog Song’ and ‘Garden’ – a ditty about the Garden of Eden, hyped up to include a backing track from Jamie Cullen’s band (but definitely not Jamie himself!).

In the fast-paced 70 minutes, there were songs, stand-up and storytelling. It’s definitely the sprinkling of fun we have all been craving.

The duo bounced off each other, much to the audience’s delight. After all, in every double act isn’t it true that one is shaped like a carrot and one like an onion? Jonny and the Baptist fit the criteria perfectly!