

COMEDY
**JANE BUSSMANN -
 BUSSMAN'S HOLIDAY**
 ★★ ★★
 ASSEMBLY@ST GEORGE'S
 WEST (VENUE 157)

ON THE surface, this looks to be a tale plucked straight out of a chicklit novel.

Celebrity journalist Jane Bussman gets so bored with the Hollywood A-list and the infuriating demands of their publicists and lawyers that she sets off to Africa to become a foreign correspondent and chase a hot international peacemaker.

But it's all true. Bussmann really did interview celebrities such as Paris Hilton and Ashton Kutcher, she really did run into trouble with a celebrity lawyer and she really did set off for the African bush.

For a woman who gaily admits that she previously told great big whoppers for a living, Bussmann comes across as remarkably candid.

I have never heard anyone be so upfront and open about the way in which celebrity publicists control and manufacture the public image of our Hollywood gods.

Bussman presents the story of her valiant attempts to become a war correspondent with plenty of laughter and self-deprecating wit, but always the great tragedy that is Uganda hangs over her.

The contrast between the lives of terribly pampered celebrities and abducted child soldiers in Northern Uganda couldn't be greater.

Bussmann finds tales of rape, mutilation and despair and visits a rescue camp she describes as the most depressing place in the world.

She has never performed before, but Bussmann has written for *Brass Eye* and *South Park*, so underlying this entertaining *How I became a War Correspondent* story there's a serious satirical edge.

We all know the world finds the thoughts of Paris Hilton more fascinating than the blighted lives of thousands of African children. The question that this show leaves you asking is, why.

CLAIRE SMITH

Until 27 August. Today 8pm



There's pain along with the laughter as Jane Bussmann contrasts Hollywood and Uganda Picture: Lewis Houghton

COMEDY
GODLIMAN & LANE
 ★★ ★
 PLEASANCE COURTYARD
 (VENUE 33)

THIS is a surprisingly entertaining hour of sketch comedy from one third of the cast of Channel 4's *Spoons*. David Lane demonstrates he's not restricted to the ratty, pathetic characters he so often plays in the show. And Kerry Godliman offers far more than her usual girl-next-door act, displaying another side beyond her cheery stand-up persona.

True, their material is consistently amusing rather than laugh-out-loud funny. One skit with a reality-TV producer suffering a breakdown is undoubtedly the highlight, but

he's an easy target, and the same could be said of the looped mickey takes on plastic surgery, advertising and TV shopping.

What's more, unnecessary scatological and onanistic themes keep appearing. Yet they're an immensely likeable duo, particularly as a couple of lurching ladies - Godliman slumping it in transport cafés, on fishing trips and swearing like a high-class hooker, much to the squealing delight of the preening Lane. He's an accomplished overactor when the role calls for it and it so often does. But they might benefit from slowing down a little, as a few good lines are almost missed, though they mock each others' mistakes cutely.

Televisionally endorsed by stand-ups Lucy Porter and Zoe Lyons, plus cultural heavyweights Tony Blackburn and Phillip Schofield, Godliman & Lane have a lot to offer.

JAY RICHARDSON

Until 28 August. Today 4.45pm

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60p

St Clements Wind Ensemble
 at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe
 15 - 24 August 2006