

# Doktor Kaboom: LIVE WIRE!

## The Electricity Tour

October 6, 2014 by Kelly McCorkendale

Never were truer words spoken than when the blonde boy to my right turned to his friend and whispered, “This is so cool!”

Entering the stage to rap music reminiscent of an early 1980’s gem and exiting to Thomas Dolby’s “She Blinded Me with Science,” Doktor Kaboom—the brainchild of actor and comedian David Epley—is a high-energy mad, German scientist with electricity on the brain and a thick, funny accent.



**David Epley as Doktor Kaboom (Photo: Martin Albert)**

Deftly blending comedy with education, he not only gets plenty of chuckles, but also imparts knowledge on kids and adults alike better than any Bill Nye.

Did you know about Nikola Tesla's dream of creating large electromagnetic fields with his specially designed coils in order to power the machines in our homes? Neither did I, but they are super cool. And, my review notes are less about the show and more focused on the difference between direct and alternating currents and reminders for remembering the charges of protons, neutrons, and electrons.

Yeah, he's that good at engaging even the least science-minded in his educational antics. Though I can't remember the names of any devices he used, I was impressed with how they shot electric bolts, generated static energy, and kept the kiddos engrossed.

Largely improvised, Epley pulls from the moment to enrich his performance, feeding off the audience to make each show fresh. As he goes through a series of demonstrations with concepts that build on each other until you understand how electricity works. He pulls young audience members into each "experiment" as helpers. The interactivity keeps the show a tad unpredictable and makes each performance unique, but it's obvious that he carries from stage to stage some basic tenets, namely that "Science can be very visceral" and safety is always first when tinkering.

But the most important take away is that, as he says, "In science it does not matter if you are right or wrong—it only matters that you learn the truth."

Epley is a genuine lover of all things science, and his unparalleled enthusiasm is contagious. He wants the youth that come to his shows not only to learn but to learn to love to learn. And he wants them to carry the banner for a better world (clean energy) in the decades to come. Any tree hugger can appreciate his show's end goal of creating an electricity source that is truly biodegradable (the material

may tickle your funny bone; the smell of it cooking as it lights up will not).

One part stand-up. One part theatre. One part science. All fun. *Doktor Kaboom: LIVE wire! The Electricity Tour* is an enjoyably edifying science lesson and comedy show that all ages can appreciate

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*Doktor Kaboom: LIVE WIRE! The Electricity Tour* . Written and Performed by David Epley; Directed by Annie Lareau; Technical Assistance by John Jenkins . Presented by The Kennedy Center . Reviewed by Kelly McCorkendale