

JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH



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Havant Arts Centre

East Street

Havant

Box Office: 023 9247 2700

By Roald Dahl

Adapted by David Wood

It is magic. “Marvellous things’ magic!”

Don't miss our fantastic Christmas production this December. Join James on a magical voyage into a world of giant insects, peach-pulling seagulls and true friendships.

Orphaned in a tragic accident, James is sent to live with his evil Aunts. But, an incredible series of events opens a whole new and exciting world to James, a world of adventure, new friendships and the voyage of his life! This is an unmissable show for the whole family.

Tickets are selling fast, so book now to avoid disappointment!

Wednesday 14th – Friday 16th December @ 7.30pm

Saturday 17th December @ 1.30pm & 4.30pm

Monday 19th – Wednesday 21st December @ 7.30pm

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

More information about everything covered in this newsletter may be found on our website www.humdrum.org.uk.

If you have any suggestions or comments about this newsletter please send them to members@humdrum.org.uk.

RENT AT THE KINGS THEATRE



We seem to be becoming a bit of a regular feature in the Kings Theatre Birthday Gala each September which, considering we've never played a run of a show there, is both surprising and very flattering.

We first came to this event following our performance of *Children of Eden* at the New Theatre Royal in July 2003 (oh, yes it was..!) when, having provided us with a stunning lighting effect (rainbow shooting out over the audience) at the end of the show, Mr Ian Pratt decided his little effect needed another outing – and what better place to do it than at the Kings Birthday gig? So, we concluded Act One of that year's show with two numbers from *Eden*. Our performance received such positive feedback from so many quarters that we were asked to return the following year.

With the New Theatre Royal being closed during the summer of that year our performance of *Titanic* actually fell *after* the Birthday gig in 2004. With the opening of *Titanic* being a fifteen-minute self-explanatory and self-contained piece we decided that not only was it appropriate for performance but it would do us nicely as a little bit of pre-publicity, too. Once again the general reaction was positive and – fantastic! – we were asked back to do the 2005 show.

Now, we did come in for a bit of flack in 2004 for performing something we were already rehearsing, rather than providing something specially for the gig. So this year James Cross came up with the brilliant idea of performing a selection of numbers from the Broadway musical *Rent*.

To say that rehearsals were hairy, infrequent and often held with an air of desperation is an understatement! We were in rehearsal for *Our Town* at the time and the Kings gig was due to take place the day after *Our Town* finished! So – no late-night revelry as the inhabitants of Grover's Corners walked out of our life. Oh, no! Most of us had to be at the Kings from 10.30 the next day!



For those that don't know the piece or who didn't get to see the gig, *Rent* is an updating of the story of *La Boheme*. The location is switched from Paris to New York and a hundred years or so have flown under the bridge, but the basic themes of artists trying to lead their lives as they want to lead them and dying horribly of whatever pandemic disease happens to be around at the time remain. The music is contemporary and the excerpts we performed ranged from the rocky to the ballad. Again – so far! – the feedback has been entirely positive.

Mike Allen reviewed the performance (although he did point out to me that it was more a comment than a review – he didn't feel it appropriate to put the three amateur companies involved in the evening into a competition) and he said about us:

'HumDrum AmDram normally perform elsewhere, but their mission to stage challenging work resulted in a potent selection from *Rent*'.

The company also received a letter from Ron Hasker, chairman of the board of trustees at the Kings Theatre, who said:

'Your support is really appreciated and the talent and professionalism of your performers has attracted much favourable comment'.

We've received no official invitation to participate in next year's celebrations as yet, but are considering what we can do should the invitation arrive.

Watch this space...

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

The July production of *Little Shop of Horrors* was a brilliant success this year, with 1,088 people seeing it over the 5 nights (up on the 1,000 for *Titanic* in 2004).

Many thanks also to everyone who completed one of our prize draw surveys and congratulations to Mrs. F Wiseman, who was the winner of tickets to our recent production of *Our Town*. We were very pleased to receive a total of 125 completed surveys, and will be using this information to further develop our company and its forthcoming programme of events.



We would also like to thank all of those who attended our charity night, where £2 from every ticket was donated to the Rowans Hospice. We are pleased to announce that the total donation to Rowans was £428.00.

THE FULL MONTY CHARITY



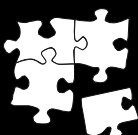
As preparations being for HumDrum's summer 2006 production of *The Full Monty* the musical, we are pleased to report that The Wessex Cancer Trust are our chosen charity for next year. As in previous years a percentage of the box office takings on our charity night will be donated to them.

HUMDRUM VOICES

HumDrum now has its own vocal group, HumDrum Voices, which is open to anyone to join. We practice every Wednesday from 7.30-9.30pm at Fratton Community Centre.

There is no cost to join but to help cover the cost of the rehearsal venue we charge a per session fee of £1 for members and £2 for non-members. Feel free to drop in if you fancy exercising those vocal chords!

At present we are working on Christmas carols with a view to performing them at the Christmas Bash in December, and after Christmas I hope to arrange other concerts as fundraisers. Hope to see you there!



So, with this in mind...

HumDrum will be hosting a HumDrum Christmas Bash for members, friends & families on Saturday December 10th at St. Francis Church, Northern Parade, Hilsea. More details will follow nearer the time but make sure you put it in your diaries!

HumDrum Voices will make their debut appearance with some festive Christmas carols to get you in the mood, and then you can get down and boogie with Pop/Rock band "IsThisOn" performing all your old favourites! This will be a ticketed event to raise money for The Full Monty.

OUR TOWN – THE REVIEW

September saw HumDrum perform Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, a gentle and moving look at the lives of a small New Hampshire town at the turn of the 20th century...

"This thoughtful, delicate production of *Our Town* deserved better than a first-night audience of fewer than a dozen.

Thornton Wilder's play is an elegiac portrayal of the gentle rhythms of small-town life and death, reflecting the sad realisation that the living are too busy living to realise what they have until it is gone.

A well-disciplined cast conjures the inhabitants of Grover's Corners, New Hampshire, with some detail.

Sally Evans is particularly good as Mrs Gibbs, as is Gemma Valler in the role of Emily Webb, catching well the enthusiasm of youth.

Sean Fisher is a good host as the Stage Manager, speaking directly and intimately to the audience as if we were in our own front rooms in our own town.

Set and lighting design are also polished and effective, setting strong accents of colour against the black and white of the costumes.

Perhaps the rhythms of small-town life are a little too evenly paced, and the elegiac tone is sometimes too soft, but this production certainly serves the playwright well."

(Jackie Penrose – Reproduced with permission from the News)

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE



And you are?
Wendy Fortune.

What do you do for a living?

Work looking after a bunch of teenagers for a living at the same place as Mr George.

Where are you from originally?

Sunny Sheffield

How long have you been involved with HumDrum?

12 years... how old am I?!

Ah, is that a trick question? Is "not a day over 21" the correct answer? First HumDrum show?

Into The Woods.. God I was an awful Soprano.

What is your most memorable HumDrum moment?

Twirling a baton on Roller Skates in a rehearsal for "God Bless you Mr Rosewater". The rollers skates never made it to the stage...

Most embarrassing onstage/backstage moment?

Trying to get the high note in Into The Woods "ask the tree"... ask anyone... Should have been shot....Oh and wearing the shortest outfit ever in Humdrum History in God Bless You Mr Rosewater....

If you could play any role, in any show, who would it be and why?

Macbeth... Lady Macbeth... WANT TO DO SHAKESPEARE... or anything in Pride and Prejudice... want Mr Darcy...! or Queen Elizabeth I...

What's your tippie?

Diet Coke

What is the last book you read?

"A Boy Called It".

If you could be taken back to a moment in history what would it be?

Not sure... so many...I'd like to relive the time my baby was born, so special....!



What are your pet hates?

Stupidity, Intolerance, Bitchiness

First record you ever bought?

Stairway To Heaven

Favourite ice-cream?

Mint Choc Chip

If you had to compare yourself to a cartoon character, which one would it be?

Wylie Coyote

Favourite board game?

Monopoly

What's under your bed?

Thousands of Comics... Bloody husband

Who should play you in the film of your life story?

Meryl Streep

Describe yourself in 3 words?

Fun, Strong willed and NORTHERN..

And finally, Marmite - Love it or hate it?

LOVE IT...

A PLEA FOR UNSEEN HEROS

When putting on a production, many of the most important and needed roles to fill are those behind the scenes. Today we want to make a plea for anyone interested in becoming one of those unseen heroes...

For every production we rely on people to do the following roles:

- Front of House
- Lighting Operation
- Set Design & Construction
- Wardrobe
- Production Co-ordination
- Sound Operation

Without these people, the show can't go on and we desperately need more of them. If you are interested in helping with any of the above, on an adhoc or more regular basis, please contact Claire Stevens.

ROY AND GLAD'S GOATS



When our beloved Gladys Wilcox suddenly died last year, the HumDrum committee set about wondering what we could do in her memory. We had not got very far – being the game old bird she was, it was very hard to think of something truly appropriate that she wouldn't snort at for being twee! I think it was Roger who first suggested the goats...

But before we were able to decide on something and do anything about it, darling Roy, Gladys's husband, also died. It goes without saying that we feel their loss terribly and the urge to do something – to celebrate knowing them, to commemorate their memory – became ever more impelling. Of course, in a way, there is no need to do anything because there is a permanent Roy-&-Glad-shaped hole in HumDrum. But they really were a special, special pair and we really wanted to do SOMETHING. So, back to those goats.

From the Good Gifts catalogue (www.goodgifts.org) HumDrum have sponsored an "orphan's dowry" - a pair of goats. To quote the catalogue, "Extended African families, often very poor themselves, take in orphans. Help the orphans become a gain not a drain: give a 2-goat dowry ... The gain? Milk for everyone, and the opportunity to build up a flock of goats."

Anyone who knew Roy & Glad will know what a genuinely Christian couple they were (both with and without the capital C) and that helps to explain the charity aspect of our decision. But how do you explain the goats? They're practical aren't they? You certainly can't help liking them. I don't know...

Anyway, there's a pair of goats called Roy & Glad winging (or bleating?) their way to Africa. They might not know that's their names – in fact they might have to call them something more African over there so they fit in and don't get picked on – but as far as we are concerned, they're called Roy & Glad and they are in memory of OUR Roy & Glad, the original and best. One thing's for sure though – they're the loveliest goats in all goatdom.

