

THE FULL MONTY



Prepare yourself for the most revealing musical of 2006!

Just when you thought life couldn't get any worse...

What's a man to do when he's at rock-bottom and there's no light at the end of any tunnel you care to mention? Jerry Lukowski's life is falling about his ears: work problems, money problems, women problems and problems with his son.

It's time to grab life by the short-and-curlies. No more half-measures. The only way for Jerry and his out-of-work buddies to regain control of their lives is to go *The Full Monty*...

Following their critically acclaimed production of *Little Shop of Horrors*, HumDrum return to the New Theatre Royal with the hit Broadway and West End musical *The Full Monty*.

This funny, heart-warming and immensely moving show boasts a brilliant score and an uplifting finale that goes to prove, no matter how low you get, there's always a way back.

Tuesday 4th – Thursday 6th July @ 7:30pm
Friday 7th – Saturday 8th July @ 8:00pm

New Theatre Royal
Box Office: 023 9264 9000

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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

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

CARDS ON THE TABLE



November 2006
Havant Arts Centre

In 1936 Agatha Christie published her twenty-sixth mystery novel - *Cards on the Table* - featuring the return of her most famous and arguably most popular detective, Hercule Poirot.

In Chapter Three of an earlier novel - *The ABC Murders* - Poirot asks his friend, Hastings, 'If you could order a crime as one orders a dinner, what would you choose?'. Hastings opts for that mainstay of the detective novelist - a body discovered in the library of a large country house with suspicion falling on a houseful of guests. Poirot responds that he would prefer a very simple crime, an intimate crime. He envisages four people in a room playing Bridge while a fifth reads in a chair by the fire. At the end of the evening it is discovered that the man by the fire has been killed. No-one has been in or out of the room and the murderer must have been one of the four players.

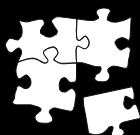
A year or so later, Poirot was to find himself investigating just that crime...

The novel was not dramatised until 1981 and then - possibly thankfully as far as local companies are concerned - Poirot was excluded from the proceedings. His role is taken by Superintendent Battle - but all of Christie's other notable creations are present.

Cards on the Table is one of Christie's finest and most original pieces of crime fiction: even though the murderer is, as the author has promised, one of the four Bridge players, the ending is brilliant and a complete surprise.

This is HumDrum's third foray into the world of Agatha Christie following our successful productions of *And Then There Were None* in 2002 and *The Unexpected Guest* in 2003.

This show marks Emma Cooper's debut as a director, following on from her work with HumDrum Voices and Emma is taking a short break from her



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choir work in order to get her *Cards on the Table*, so to speak. Fret not, though, choristers. Emma will be back with a rip-roaring selection of Rodgers and Hammerstein favourites for HumDrum Voices' next outing.

In the meantime, it's time to don your deerstalker hats and puff on your Meerscham pipes and get the old grey matter going... So - who exactly did murder the exotic Mr Shaitana as he sat by his fire?

So far Peter Colley has a one-hundred per cent track record of playing the killer in our Christies. Wonder if it'll be him again this time..?

GRAND FOR THE BAND

or

"How to get a good view of six naked men"

Musicians are funny beasts, often prone to spontaneously launching into a tune from *My Fair Lady* or *Annie Get Your Gun* without a moment's notice, save for a perfunctory wave of a hand from the conductor. Another thing that musicians are prone to do is cost money...producing a musical is a very expensive undertaking.

It is for this reason that we ask for your assistance. The "grand" we are required to raise for our next musical is actually more like £2400, but we didn't feel that "Two Thousand Four Hundred Pounds for a Band" was quite as catchy a title!

By sponsoring a musician for £30, you will receive two complementary Dress Circle tickets, an acknowledgement in the programme, and our sincerest and heart-felt thanks for your generosity and support.

In fact you can only get front row Dress Circle tickets (while stocks last) by sponsoring a musician, so if you want a good view of six naked men, get sponsoring!

JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH – THE REVIEW

Hold the front page! Creepy-crawly drama thrills the kids!

Director Sam Sampson had his work cut out persuading a cast of grown-ups to shed their adult inhibitions and act like kids.

But he seems to have won the battle, judging by the rollicking success of James and the Giant Peach at Havant Arts Centre.

The undoubted stars of Roald Dahl's magical tale are the evil aunts Spiker and Sponge, played by Sheila Elsdon and Linda Warner with menace and charm.

James's larger than life pals, a motley collection of creepy-crawlies with human faces, also shine in this HumDrum production.

My children loved the scene where Miss Spider – a leggily energetic Sally Evans – produces yards of silken thread to save the peach from marauding sharks in the middle of the Atlantic.

Ladybird's wiggling (Claire Stevens) got a special thumbs-up, although James (young Ben Swanson) seemed a little overawed by the proceedings.

Overall verdict? 'Ten out of ten', said six-year-old Phoebe emphatically.

Zackary, eight, was anxious as ever to find a reason to disagree with his little sister.

'No', he declared. 'On a scale of one to 1,400 million? 1,400 million!'

The show was so good, they said, that this review should go on the front page of *The News*. When I explained that it didn't quite fit the criteria, Phoebe insisted: 'But Daddy, it was dramatic and exciting!'

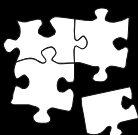
Jon Rosamond – The News

HUMDRUM VOICES CONCERT



When the idea was mooted about holding a fundraising evening for Havant Arts Centre, I thought it would be a great project for HumDrum Voices, following the success of our Christmas performance. And so we embarked upon 12 weeks of rehearsals, learning eight very diverse pieces in that short space of time.

We worked hard, but I have to say the rehearsals were a lot of fun as well. Most of the time spent learning the Gloucestershire folk song, *Sweet*



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Country Life, was spent in fits of giggles as the choir taunted me with West Country accents. Then I discovered a certain person was unable to sing/speak/hear the words 'lady flower' from a serious Britten hymn without a snigger. The sheer campness of the boys singing 'You know I love the ladies/I'm a straight-shooting son of a gun' in *Joy to the World* left us girls somewhat unconvinced. Oh, and let's not forget *Witchery Wood*, which James kindly decided was 'about Sally'. Then there was the night we were locked out of the rehearsal venue, and ended up trooping *en masse* to James and Stibs' house at 8pm on a Wednesday evening to commandeering their West Wing... (Stibs, you're a darling).

Actually, looking back, I'm surprised we got any work done at all.

Anyway, Tuesday 16th May arrived all too soon, and despite gremlins in the CD player (damn you, rewritable CDs!), and a certain chorister stranded in North End, the concert went better than I could have hoped. Not only did the choir give a professional, polished performance, but several soloists, duets and groups gave the programme some added flavour. We even had a visit from a certain vivacious Liverpudlian with a penchant for her own voice.

The evening raised nearly £250 for Havant Arts Centre, who have expressed their sincere gratitude. I would like to say a personal thank you to everyone who took part and everyone who bought a ticket. I hope this is just the beginning for our little HumDrum offshoot, and that we have many more such evenings to come.

HumDrum Voices is open to anyone to join, and is available to perform at any kind of engagement – contact me for more details.

Emma Cooper
emmy_lu@hotmail.com

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE



And you are?
Claire Stevens

Where are you from originally?
Gosport (no groaning please!)

What do you do for a living?

I'm a full time mum to Elliott, who is eighteen months old.

How long have you been involved with HumDrum?

Too long!! Only kidding – it must be 11 years.

First HumDrum show?

Into The Woods.

Favourite HumDrum show ever (even if you weren't in it)?

Oooohhh, I'm torn. I loved my first show, but it's going to have to be 'You're a Good Man Charlie Brown', firstly because it was such fun and we spent hours rolling about on the floor wearing very short costumes and laughing loads. And secondly, because I met my lovely hubby, George, through doing the show.

Least favourite and why?

Probably Equus – fab show, but was a bit disturbing to watch.

What is your most memorable HumDrum moment?

Sitting on stage during And Then There Were None, whilst Peter Colley forgot half a page of dialogue, which included a really important plot twist, and panicking! Thankfully, he realized and went round the houses to make sure all the relevant information was said – phew!!

Hmmm...have we cast Peter in "Cards on the Table"?! Your most embarrassing onstage/backstage moment?

Going onstage after a quick change in A Little Night Music and realizing that my ball gown was on back to front and I had breast darts on my back and a train down the front, that I had to hold out of the way to walk.

What's your tippie?

I like white wine, but also partial to a Southern Comfort and lemonade.

What is the last book you read?

Goodbye Ruby Tuesday by Donna Hay. Quite easy-going read – but that's what's required with a small child in the house.

First record you ever bought?

Always There, Marti Webb. (Theme to Howard's Way – I was only 10!!)

What are your pet hates?

Ignorant drivers and Sian Lloyd – the weather girl, just can't stand her.

Who should play you in the film of your life story (we're guessing it's not going to be Sian Lloyd)?



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Jane Horrocks, because I think she's a great actress and has good comic timing.

Describe yourself in 3 words?

Sensible, funny, luvverly

What do you think is your best quality?

Organisation

And your worst?

I clam up and mull on things.

If you had to compare yourself to a European country, which one would you be and why?

I'd be Switzerland – Has bountiful curves, sits on the fence at times and loves its chocolate.

Sex or football?

Chocolate.

And finally, The Spinnaker Tower - Love it or hate it?

Hate it!! Spending millions on that monstrosity when they could have put the money into so many better causes –like the old Portsmouth Arts Centre.

RUGBY SHIRTS



Why not be seen in the height of fashion this year with a HumDrum rugby shirt. The shirts are 100% cotton, come in "HumDrum Black" with a white collar, and have the HumDrum jigsaw logo and name embroidered on the left breast.

Sizes: S - XXL

Please send a cheque for £29.00 per shirt payable to "HumDrum AmDram" stating the quantity and sizes needed and your address to:

HumDrum
c/o Miss E Cooper
43 Powerscourt Road
Portsmouth
Hampshire
PO2 7JF

Please allow 28 days for delivery

IT'S A BOY!



...well we hope it is, 'cos Mackenzie is rather a silly name for a girl!

We're happy to report that Mackenzie Halford Gilmore was born at 3:43am on Wednesday 15th February, a very healthy 7lbs 14ozs.

Early indications are that he has his mother's exquisite cheekbones, and his father's ability to demand feeding at very high volumes!

GET TO KNOW A COMMITTEE MEMBER

The HumDrum committee can sometimes seem a bit of a mystery. So, in an attempt to unlock the secret world that is the 'committee', we are going to put them under the spotlight and find out exactly what they do and why they do it.....

So, here goes with our first member – the lovely and glamorous Mr James George.



How long have you been a committee member?

How long has there BEEN a committee?

What is your role on the committee and

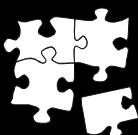
what does it entail?

Director (Member Development). I'm entrusted with looking after the development needs of our current members, getting new members in and making sure that everyone has a good time by dressing up as strange people and murdering one another late into the night...

What made you want to be on the committee?

Well, HumDrum was my baby (conceived with James Cross and Psu Boyne) so I guess it's always going to have a very snug, warm, lovely place in my heart.

What do you get out of it?



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What I DON'T get out of it would be easier to define. HumDrum is my friends, my social life, my artistic outlet. It keeps me off the streets (most of the time); it makes me laugh, it makes me cry, it makes me happy, it makes me angry. Anyone, but ANYONE, who was onstage when that rainbow shot out at the end of 'Children of Eden' and, one by one, the audience got to their feet, cheering and applauding, knows what I get out of it. HumDrum makes my journey worth the taking.

Any other interesting info relating to you and your committee role?

My role and that of Caz Gilmore are very heavily tied together. Watch this space for Caz's interview to see what else the two of us get up to.

WHAT A LOVELY TAN!

WANTED

One Sunbed - no experience necessary!

We need to borrow a sunbed for the set of The Full Monty in July - it does not need to work but it does need to be the flat bench type of thing that can be sat on - if we cannot find one, there will be a point during the show when Mikey and Fred will be squatting and hovering in mid-air in their pants and nobody wants to see that!

If you can help, please contact Caz Gilmore or Karen Swanson at info@humdrum.org.uk asap.

RACE FOR LIFE

A very big cheer to Emma Cooper, Karen Fisher, Wendy Fortune and Claire Stevens for running the Race for Life in aid of Cancer Research, along with 11,000 other women on Sunday 4th June. A great time was had by all and times for finishing were between 30 and 34 minutes for the runners, and 50 minutes for the walkers. Well done ladies.

MEMBERS SOCIAL EVENTS UPDATE

Right.

Recent weeks have seen HumDrummers murdering each other left, right and centre as a

result of a series of Murder Mystery evenings. We've also been horribly social in a board-games kind of way, too. Oh - and cards. Card games galore seem to be going on.

Russell's first Poker night was a success - if your name's Kerri McLeod. If not, I gather, you went home rather shamefaced at having lost to one of the most outrageous bouts of beginner's luck ever suffered by a group of card players.

Not so on the Bridge front. In a rip-snorter of an evening's play Sally Evans learnt the meaning of the phrase 'no bid' and used it like a sailor would use a lifebuoy on a stormy sea. She hung onto it for grim death - much to her partner, Russell's, frustration. Perhaps we need to be a wee bit braver with our bidding next time, Sally? Just a thought...

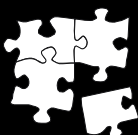
Anyway - lined up in the not-too-distant future are yet more murders and some Cluedo, too. I believe Kerri is organising another Poker night which she will host (there's a trophy for the Poker winner, by the way - if you can manage to prise it out of Kerri's clutches). I'm aware, too, that there are more of you who want to learn Bridge, so there'll be another session of that set up quicker than you can say 'seven no-trumps' (or 'no bid' if you're Sally).

In light of next year's Christmas show we'll also be organising a trip to see Seussical The Musical at the Theatre Royal, Winchester. That's on Thursday 22 June. Please let James George know if you want to go to that. As we go to press he has nine names on his list already.

And we're also trying to get a team together to represent HumDrum on the BBC 2 quiz programme Eggheads. To get an idea of what's required, try to catch the show one weekday evening at 1800 hours. Again, James already has a list of some interested parties, but please put your name forward as soon as you can if you think you're up for it and brainy enough! The stakes here are high. At the time of writing the prize money available is £30,000.00 and the idea is to split any prize money won evenly between the six participants and the HumDrum coffers.

And if there's anything you can think of to keep HumDrummers off the street when they're not rehearsing, please let James know. He's always open to suggestion.

'nuff said.



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