

CANOLFAN Y CELFYDDYDAU ABERYSTWYTH ARTS CENTRE

Press Release
Datganiad i'r Wasg



New staging of working class classic play to be performed at Aberystwyth Arts Centre.

Townsend Productions is delighted to announce that it will be staging a new two handed production of Stephen Lowe's critically acclaimed version of Robert Tressell's **The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists** at Aberystwyth Arts Centre on Tuesday 7 February 7.30pm.

This hilarious, fast-paced adaptation of Robert Tressell's classic book shares with its audience a year in the life of a group of painters and decorators as they renovate 'The Cave', a three-storey town house, for Mayor Sweater. It traces their hardships and struggles for survival in a complacent and stagnating Edwardian England. These workers are the 'philanthropists' who throw themselves into back-breaking work for poverty wages in order to generate profit for their masters.

This enduring and absorbing classic story is brought to life by Neil Gore and Rodney Matthew, two hugely talented and experienced performers, using comedy routines and entertaining songs of the Music Hall, with a few surprises along the way!

Robert Tressell's **The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists**, has become a classic of working-class literature since its first publication in 1914. The themes and style of the piece are eternally relevant and provoking as it puts life and politics into sharp focus in an entertaining and accessible way. What, with a Tory-led coalition government in power, and that the year 2011 was the centenary anniversary of Robert Tressell's death, the company felt it was the right time for this show to be seen on tour nationally.

Stephen Lowe's version of the story was first seen in 1978, when Joint Stock Theatre Company toured the country playing to packed houses. The play was revived at the Half Moon Theatre, London in 1983 and again for a touring production by the Birmingham Rep in 1991.

The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists' excellent cast features Rodney Matthew who joins the production straight off the back of 'Jerusalem' in the West End. He has worked at many of the leading repertory theatres these have included: West Yorkshire Playhouse where he worked for a year and at Dundee Rep where he spent a memorable five years performing in classical, musical and new work around Scotland and Neil Gore (*Song of Singapore*, Chichester Festival Theatre and the West end). The production is directed by Louise Townsend, with the creative team including designs by Fine Time Fontayne and lighting by Jo Dawson.

The play has had the Backing of the unions **RMT, Unite, TUC, GMB, PCS, Wales TUC, NUT, Accord, UCATT, NASWT and the FBU.**

Tickets for **The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists** are priced at £9 (£8 Concs) CC £8.50 (£7.50) and can be purchased at the Box Office on 01970 62 32 32 or online at www.aber.ac.uk/artscentre

For more info visit www.townsendproductions.co.uk

Ends

For further information, images, or for interview / press review ticket requests, please contact **ADD VENUE PRESS CONTACT** on **ADD DETAILS**

Notes to Editors

1. PRESS NIGHT – *ADD DETAILS*

2. CREATIVE DETAILS

The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists

By **Stephen Lowe**, based on the book by **Robert Tressell**

Directed by **Louise Townsend**

Musical Director: **Neil Gore**

Designed: **Fine Time Fontayne**

Lighting consultant: **Jo Dawson**

Cast: **Rodney Matthew** and **Neil Gore**

3. Tour dates

Jan 19 Chetnote Village Hall, DT9 6NU at 7.30pm - Box Office: 01935 873555 / www.artsreach.co.uk/ Tickets: £10.00/ £8.00

Jan 20 Powerstock, The Hut, DT6 3TB at 7.30 pm-Box office: 01308 485205 /www.artsreach.co.uk/Tickets: £10.00/£8.00

Jan 21 Thorncombe Village Hall, TA20 4NE at 7.30pm-Box Office: 0146030994/ www.artsreach.co.uk /Tickets: £10.00/£8.00

Jan 22 Child Okeford Village Hall, DT11 8EL at 7.30pm- Box Office: 01258 861391 / www.artsreach.co.uk/Tickets: £10.00/£8.00

Jan 24 Andover, The Lights Theatre at 7.30pm - Box Office: TBC / Tickets: TBC

Jan 26 & 27 Bristol, The Tobacco Factory at 8.00pm- Box Office:0117 902 0344/ www.tobaccofactory.com/Tickets: £12/£8.00

Feb 5 Bracknell, South Hill Park Arts Centre at 8.00pm- Box Office: 01344 484 123 /www.southhillpark.org.uk/Tickets £12.00/£11.00/ £10.00

Feb 7 Aberystwyth Arts Centre at 7.30pm- Box Office:01970 623232/ www.aberystwythartscentre.co.uk/Tickets: £9 (£8) CC £8.50 (£7.50)

Feb 8 Blackwood, Miners Institute at 7.30pm- Box Office: 01495 224425 www.blackwoodminersinstitute.co.uk/Tickets: £10.00/ £8.00

Feb 10 Inverness, Eden Court at 7.30pm - Box Office: 01463 234234/www.eden-court.co.uk / Tickets: £10.00/£8.00

Feb 11, Peebles, East Gate Arts Centre at 8.00 pm -Box Office: 01721 725 777/ Tickets: £12.00/£8.00

Feb 13, Banchory, Wooden Barn Arts Centre at TBC Box office: TBC/ Tickets: TBC

Feb 16 St Andrews, Byers Theatre at 7.30 pm- Box office: 01334 475000/www.byretheatre.com/Tickets: £14.00/£12.00/£10.00

Feb 17 Dunkeld, Birnam Arts Centre at TBC -Box Office: TBC / Tickets: TBC

Feb 18 Dunfermline, Carnegie Hall at 7.30pm -Box Office: 01383 602302/ Book online: www.onfife.com Tickets: £10.50/£8.50

Feb19 Hartlepool, Civic Centre at 7.30pm -Box Office: 01886 880125 Tickets: £8.00/£6.00

Feb 20 & 21 Doncaster Civic Theatre at 7.30pm- Box Office: 01302 342349 Tickets:£10.00/£8.00/£6.50 schools

Feb 22 & 23 Worcester Swan Theatre at 7.30pm- Box Office: 01905 611427 /Tickets: £13.50 (£12 Concessions)

Feb 24 Tunbridge Wells, Trinity Theatre at 8.00pm - Box Office: 01892 678 67 | www.trinitytheatre.net Ticket Prices: £14.00/£12.00 £8.00 school

March 1 & 2, Lowestoft, Seagull Theatre at 7.30pm- Box office: TBC/ Tickets: TBC

March 5th, Coventry, The University: Box Office: TBC Tickets: TBC

March 7, Burnley Mecahnics at 7.30pm- Box Office: 01282 477131 Tickets: £10.00/£8.00/£6.00 Concessions

March 8 & 9, Nottingham Lakeside Theatre at TBC- Box Office: TBC Tickets: TBC

March 13, Coventry TBC at TBC - This has now moved to Monday 5th March

March 18 , Caistor, Town Hall at 7.30pm - Box office: TBC/ Tickets:TBC

March 22, Haverhill Arts Centre at TBC - Box Office: TBC/ Tickets: TBC

March 23 & 24 Ipswich Wolsey Theatre - Box Office +44 (0) 1473 295 900

e: tickets@wolseytheatre.co.uk Tickets: £15.00, £10.00, £8.50

March 28 & 29 Hastings White Rock Theatre at 7.30pm Box Office: 01424 462288

/Tickets: £14.50, under 16 £8.50 Family ticket £38.00

April 19 Torch Theatre, Milford Haven - Box Office: TBC/ Tickets

April 21, 24, & 25 - Edinburgh Community Centres- Box Office: TBC/Tickets TBC

May 2nd, 3rd, Bath, Rondo Theatre- Box Office: TBC/ Tickets: TBC

May 24, 25, & 26 Harrogate Theatre- Box Office: TBC/Tickets: TBC

June 13 Wellingborough, The Castle- Box Office: TBC/ Tickets: TBC

June 16 Barnsley, Civic Theatre- Box Office: TBC/ Tickets: TBC

ACTORS BIOGS

Rodney Matthew

Rodney trained at Webber Douglas. His first four years in the business were spent with Mikron Theatre in West Yorkshire where he both performed and wrote for the company. It was here he first forged a partnership with Neil some twenty years ago. After a year at West Yorkshire Playhouse he returned to his home town to work with the ensemble at Dundee Rep where he spent a memorable five years performing in classical, musical and new work around Scotland. He has recently been working with His Majesty's Theatre Aberdeen in 'Sunset Song', Oxford Shakespeare Company in 'The Tempest' and 'Private Lives' and with the Royal Court at the Apollo Theatre in London in 'Jerusalem'. He has been spreading the word about Tressell's book ever since he first read it as a student and is delighted to have the chance to share it with an audience in a theatre.

Neil Gore

Neil has had a long association with *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* and was a co-founder of Metro Theatre Company, Sheffield, set up to tour the show in the 1980s. He has been a professional actor and musician for over twenty five years. Recent theatre credits include *A Christmas Carol* and as Toad in *Wind in the Willows* for Basingstoke Haymarket Theatre. Neil has also appeared in the West End run of Chichester's production of *Song of Singapore* (Mayfair Theatre, London), in *Dick Whittington* with Hale and Pace (Southend Pavilions and Bromley Churchill), *Jemima Puddleduck* (Unicorn Theatre, London), *Wind in the Willows* (Bloomsbury Theatre, London), *Sister Josephine Kicks the Habit* (Helmsley Arts Centre/Swaledale Festival), *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (Watford Palace) and he toured briefly with *Little Britain: Live!* as the vicar who is sicked on!

Other theatre credits include seasons with the Queen's Theatre Hornchurch, New Vic Stoke, Coventry Belgrade, Northampton Royal, Polka Children's Theatre, Eastern Angles, Mikron, Solent People's Theatre, Forest Forge, Age Exchange and Quondam Theatre Company.

Further information from Aberystwyth Arts Centre is available from Rachel Scurlock on 01970 622894 email rls@aber.ac.uk

Canolfan y Celfyddydau Aberystwyth Arts Centre

Aberystwyth Arts Centre is a department of Aberystwyth University.

www.aber.ac.uk/artscentre