

Coming Soon

Festen

by David Eldridge

based on the Dogme film and play by Thomas Vinterberg,
Mogens Rukov and Bo hr. Hansen

Described by BBC London as 'powerful, poignant and overwhelming',
this is one of the most acclaimed plays of recent years.

26 April - 3 May
In the Playhouse

Three Polish Shorts

Striptease, Charles and Widows by Sławomir Mrożek
translated by Zyg Staniaszek

The Questors is delighted to present English translations of
three surreal political comedies from Poland.

10-17 May
In the Studio

Insignificance

by Terry Johnson

A fascinating play set in 1954 with four characters who
strongly resemble iconic figures of the era.

7-14 June
In the Studio

Charley's Aunt

by Brandon Thomas


Classic comedy of confusion and disguise that has
delighted generations of audiences.

21-28 June
In the Playhouse

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 Questors, Ealing's Theatre



Knopped Up by Naughty Helen

The Twisted Tales of Wilhelm Busch

in the Studio

The Questors Theatre, Mattock Lane, Ealing, London W5 5BQ

When I learnt in February that a show planned for the studio had been cancelled, I immediately asked if I could have that slot, and contacted Gareth Bevan to see whether he would be interested working on a devised show based on the drawings of Wilhelm Busch. A couple of weeks later we were auditioning for actors who wanted to work with us. By the middle of March we began rehearsing. What you will see before you is an original piece of theatre distilled from Panic, Desperation, Chaos and (the mother of all invention) Lack of Time and Money.

Wilhelm Busch, who? Well, he's famous in Germany. Most encyclopedias have him down as the father of the modern comic strip, drawing with a visual flair and sadistic tendency that has been compared to Tom and Jerry and Jackass. A few years ago I did a show based (very loosely) on his most well-known creation, *Max and Moritz*, about two boys who run amok and terrify their elders and betters.

He died a hundred years ago, on January 9, 1908, well-known and widely published all over the German-speaking world, but a virtual recluse and unmarried, leaving behind volumes of satirical picture stories, poems, and over a thousand oil paintings, none of which had been sold in his lifetime.

He first began contributing cartoons to *Fliegende Blätter*, the German equivalent of *Punch*, and over the years he refined his style of 'duets for word and sketch... comic-philosophic morality tales, fraught with visual mayhem and verbal acrobatics', lampooning the pretensions of modern man, and celebrating the rebel-spirit in the form of animals and children, conflicting with repressive authority.

We decided to adapt two of his longer picture stories, *Helen Who Couldn't Help It* and *The Knopp Trilogy*. Lack of time and money meant we had to simplify the way we told the stories as much as possible. Rehearsals, for me, were unusual in the fact that we were working with musicians who were creating songs and music based on our improvisations. At first we tried slavishly copying Busch's visual style, and quickly changed to a style of theatre one would call melodramatic and Victorian. We decided to create the idea that we were a not-very-good Victorian touring theatre company, one performance away from disgrace and destitution – or panto.

David Hovatter

Knopped Up by Naughty Helen

First Performance 10 April 2008

Cast

Jane Backlog	Julie (Knopp's daughter), Helen's guardian, Hannchen, Katie, Adele, Mrs Ruff, Kuno, Sourdough, Resi Liz
Ian Buckingham	Schmuck, Helen's guardian angel, Fritz
Victoria Butler	Helen, Doris, Mrs Knarrtje, Hans, Mrs Klaeppi, Derek
John Dobson	Uncle Nolte, Knopp
David Hovatter	Franz (later Father Francis), a subfusc figure, Eggbert Nebischitz, Mr Ruff, Mr Klaeppi, Mrs Angst, Freddy
Agostino Orsini	Waiter, a stork, the Devil, Adele's dog, Knarrtje's dog, Sourdough's wife, Bellow, Aunt Julietta
Geoffrey Morgan	Aunt Nolte, Knarrtje, Hermit, Dr Pelikan, Time, the Moon

Musicians

Rhiannon Bevan (*narrator/chanteuse*),
Ian Buckingham (*bass guitar*), Alex Marker (*percussion*)

Music and Songs

Gareth Bevan, Ian Buckingham, Victoria Butler

Thanks to

Michael Hayes, Judy Claybourne, Jo Matthews and John Barron

Production Team

Direction	David Hovatter
Stage Management	Martin Choules, Curtis Ashley
Wardrobe	Anne Gilmour
Lighting Design	Chris Edwards
Lighting & Sound Operator	Curtis Ashley