

NEWS

It's no holiday being a coach driver...

Hull Truck Theatre presents
Men of the World
Written and directed by John Godber

Mon 19 – Sat 24 April 2010

The nationally-acclaimed theatre company returns to the New Vic with another excursion of its hilarious coach holiday classic *Men of the World*.

Bringing with them a stellar cast from the original production, this tour features *Emmerdale* star Dicken Ashworth as Larry, who has also appeared in blockbuster movies including *Wallace and Gromit* and *the Curse of the Were-Rabbit*. He will be joined by Rob Angell as Stick. The 2010 tour of *Men of the World* will be Rob's 26th production with Hull Truck – he is also a familiar TV face thanks to appearances on *Waterloo Road*. Sarah Parks, who has been working with Truck since 1993 and who starred in *Funny Turns*, the opening production in Hull Truck's £15m home, completes the talented line-up.

This critically-acclaimed production from Hull Truck's Creative Director John Godber, one of the nation's favourite playwrights, joins coach drivers Stick, Frank and Happy Larry as they head off with another party on yet another trip down the Rhine Valley. Audiences are invited to see things from the driver's seat on a journey which is anything but smooth.

John Godber said: *"My parents first went abroad when they were 54 – they enjoyed a 15-hour bus trip to Paris; thereafter they were hooked and spent many happy holidays travelling down the Rhine Valley or down south on Turkey and Tinsel outings.*

"I always felt rather sorry for the coach drivers and began to investigate their role in these trips. They are variously first aid officer, tour guide, marriage guidance counsellor and match maker, not to mention the fact they are driving million pound buses all over Europe.

"I've always been attracted to the underdog as hero, never more so than in the plight of long suffering coach drivers. What I've tried to do in Men of the World is to make a bad bus trip into a brilliant night out!"

John Godber is Artistic Director of Hull Truck Theatre and one the UK's most successful playwrights. Over the last 20 years he has had international success with his observational comedies: *Up 'N' Under* won the Laurence Olivier Comedy of the Year Award and *Bouncers* scooped seven Los Angeles Critics Circle Awards. Godber was awarded two BAFTAs for his film *Odd Squad*.

Tickets, which cost £8.50 – £17.50 (with concessions available), can be booked by calling the New Vic's Box Office on 01782 717962 or online at www.newvictheatre.org.uk

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For further press information, including interview and image requests, please contact Clare Hargreaves on 01782 717954 ext 317 or at chargreaves@newvictheatre.org.uk

Notes for Editors:

Cast

Robert Angell as Stick

Robert trained at Rose Bruford College. His theatre credits include: Ray in *Funny Turns*, Harry in *A Kick In The Baubles*, Ronnie in *Studs*, Frank Rowley in *Up 'n' Under*, Keith in *Black Tie and Tales*, Stick in *Men Of The World*, Al in *April in Paris*, Leo in *On A Night Like This*, Frank in *Educating Rita*, Dracula in *Dracula* and Gavin in *Office Party* all for Hull Truck Theatre; Charles Waterbury in *The Railway Children*, Jack in *September In The Rain* at Theatre Royal, York; Ron in *Perfect Pitch* at the Haymarket Theatre, Basingstoke; Peter Cable in *Point Of Death* at the Thorndike Theatre, Leatherhead; Judd in *Bouncers* at the Chester Gateway Theatre; Bruce Niles in *The Normal Heart* at the Nottingham Playhouse; Officer Shrank in *West Side Story* and Male Nurse in *Having A Ball* at the Mercury Theatre, Colchester; Neville in *Season's Greetings* and Mark in *Taking Steps* at the Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich; Chief in *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* at the New Inn Theatre, London; Charlie in *A View From The Bridge* at the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh; Jim O'Connor in *The Glass Menagerie* for Live Wire Theatre Company and Quince in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the Globe Theatre Company.

Robert's television credits include: The recurring role of Nigel Hinchliffe in three series of *Waterloo Road* for Shed Productions and the B.B.C.; *Red Riding 1980* for Revolution Films; *Dead Clever*, *Coronation Street* and *Cold Feet* for Granada Television; *The Mark of Cain* for Red Productions; *The Royal* and *Emmerdale* for Yorkshire Television; *Odd Squad*, *Thunder Road*, *Doctors*, *Bloomin' Marvellous*, *2.4 Children* and *Love Birds* all for the B.B.C.; *Sons And Lovers* for Company Pictures; *Wing And A Prayer* for Channel 5; *The Bill* for Thames Television; *Brookside* for Mersey Television; *Bugs* for Carnival Film and Television; *Castle Of Adventure* for T.V.S.; *Boon* for Central; *The Saint* for L.W.T. and *Only A Gave* for I.T.V. Playhouse.

Robert also appeared in the film *And When Did You Last See Your Father?*

Dicken Ashworth as Larry

Dicken was born in Todmorden, West Yorkshire and taught Drama & English in Sheffield before embarking on his acting career.

For the past 30 years he has worked extensively across the industry in theatre, television, radio and the odd Hollywood Blockbuster!

His screen work includes: *Inspector Morse* (Carlton TV), *At Home With The Braithwaites*, *Brookside* and *Heartbeat* (Yorkshire TV) and *Doctors*, *Dangerfield* and the sci-fi cult classics *Doctor Who* and *Blakes 7* (BBC). You may also recognise him as Geoff Horten in *Coronation Street* (Granada TV, 1990 – 1997) or most recently, Duke Woods from *Emmerdale* (Yorkshire TV, 2007-2008).

On the big screen he has appeared in: *The Revengers Comedies* (Artidsn), *Return To Treasure Island* (Disney), *Chariots Of Fire* (Goldcrest Films), *Krull* (Columbia), alongside Harrison Ford in *Force 10 From Navarone* (AIP) and in Roman Polanski's *Tess* (Columbia). Dicken's most recent blockbuster film role was as Mr Mulch in *Wallace & Gromit and the Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (DreamWorks / Aardman Animation).

Dicken has worked extensively in theatre including: The Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester, Sheffield Crucible, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Hull Truck Theatre, Oldham Coliseum and The Lowry Theatre.

Sarah Parks as Frank

Sarah's first appearance with Truck came in 1993, when she appeared in *Fish 'n' Leather* by Gill Adams. Other Truck credits include *Funny Turns*, *My Mother Said I Never Should*, *It's a Girl!*, *An Evening With Gary Lineker*, *Hard Day's Night*, *Off Out* (Edinburgh Fringe First winner), *Seasons in the Sun*, *April in Paris*, *Our House*, *Moby Dick*, *Oh Baby!*, *Fly Me To The Moon*, *Men of the World* and *Crown Prince*.

Theatre credits elsewhere include: *Independent Means*, *Pygmalion* (Library, Manchester), *All the Fun of the Fight* (Wakefield Theatre Royal), *East is East* (Pilot Theatre), *When We Are Married* (York Theatre Royal), *Comedy of Errors*, *Sweet William*, *The Bells*, *Oedipus*, *The Crack'd Pot*, *Alcestis*, *The Mysteries*, *Twelfth Night* and *Richard III* (Northern Broadsides), *Jump To Cow Heaven* (Big Fish and Riverside Studios, Edinburgh Fringe First and "First of the Firsts" Awards), *Mother Courage* (Royal National Theatre), *An Evening With Gary Lineker* (Riverside Studios), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Boys From Syracuse* (Olivier Award winner), *Macbeth*, (New Shakespeare Company), *Having a Ball* (Liverpool Playhouse and Comedy Theatre) and *The Winter's Tale* (Orchard Theatre).

TV and Radio credits include: *Mrs Inbetweeny*, *Shameless*, *The Street*, *No Angels*, *Fat Friends*, *Outlaws*, *Blue Murder*, *Island at War*, *Coronation Street*, *Emmerdale*, *Sparkhouse*, *Heartbeat*, *Ruth Rendell Mysteries*, *The Bill*, *Guardian*, *The Theban Plays*, *Wormwood*, *Land of Green Ginger*, *Catcher in the Rye*, *Fat Camp*, *Heart/Attack*, *The Unhearable*, *The Blackpool Detective*, *An Insurance Inspector Calls*, *This Sporting Life*, *Mrs Pepperpot*, *Bye Bye Miss America High* (Sony Award winner), *Sweetly Sings The Donkey*, *The Well of Loneliness*, *Praying Hands* and *Last Bus Home*.

Sarah is also a writer and occasional producer, steering the world premiere production of *Rosebud – the Lives of Orson Welles* to a Fringe First and the inaugural Carol Tambor Award.

John Godber

Writer and Director

John was born the son of a miner in Upton, West Yorkshire. He trained as a teacher of drama at Bretton Hall College. Whilst he was Head of Drama at Minsthorpe High School, the school he attended as a student, he won every major award at the National Student Drama Festival between 1981 and 1983. In 2005, John's 50th play *Wrestling Mad* marked his 21st anniversary with Hull Truck as Artistic Director.

John's plays are performed across the world and he has the distinction of being one of the most performed writers in the English language. He has won numerous awards for his plays including a Lawrence Olivier award and seven Los Angeles Critics Circle Awards. His plays include: *Bouncers*, *Up 'n' Under*, *April In Paris*, *Teechers*, *Blood, Sweat and Tears*, *Cramp*, *Happy Jack*, *September In The Rain*, *Salt Of The Earth*, *Passion Killers*, *Happy Families*, *Up 'n' Under II*, *Gym & Tonic*, *Dracula*, *Lucky Sods*, *Hooray For Hollywood*, *Weekend Breaks*, *It Started With A Kiss*, *Unleashed*, *Thick As A Brick*, *Big Trouble In The Little Bedroom*, *Season In The Sun*, *On A Night Like This*, *Our House*, *Departures*, *Men Of The World*, *Reunion*, *Screaming Blue Murder*, *Black Ties & Tales*, *Perfect Pitch Going Dutch*, *Christmas Crackers*, *Crown Prince*, *Sold* and *Funny Turns*.

Within his extensive career in writing and directing in TV and Film, John also devised the BBC2 series *Chalkface* and his screenplay *My Kingdom for a Horse* starring Sean Bean was nominated for an alternative BAFTA award. John's first feature film *Up 'n' Under* was released in January 1998. In 2005, he co-wrote *Odd Squad* for BBC 2, with his wife Jane, which was shot in Hull using local actors. *Odd Squad* won two British Academy of Film and Television Arts Awards in the Schools' Drama category and in the BAFTA original writer section.

John has an MA from Leeds University, an Hon D.Lit from Hull University, an Hon D.Litt from Lincoln University, a D.Uni for the Open University and was a Ph.D research student for five years at Leeds University. He is a Professor of Contemporary Theatre at Liverpool Hope University and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.