

TALES FROM HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

Relaxed Performance - Audience Information Sheet

Running Times:

Act 1	60 minutes
Interval	15 minutes
Act 2	58 minutes

The venue for this performance is large airy church with white walls.

7 Fairy Tales will be told by 4 actors playing lots of different parts. Sometimes the characters may speak directly to audience members.

This performance starts at 2.30pm so the conditions will be much lighter than during an evening show. However, it is worth knowing that flashing or swirling lights are used at certain times throughout the show, this is mainly each time a match is struck by one of the actors.

There is an atmospheric soundtrack throughout production, included in these notes are times when some people might find it loud or spooky.

Here are some things that you might want to be aware of in advance of seeing the show:

Act 1

The Little Match Girl

A homeless girl takes refuge in a church. She meets a man who has come to repair the window. Together they strike matches to create magic and light and tell each other stories.

The Ugly Duckling – Approx. 15 mins long (first song 2 mins into the tale. Three songs in total)

A Mother Duck is waiting for three new eggs to hatch – when they do one of them doesn't look or sound like the others. They mock this 'Ugly Duckling' who tries to find somewhere else to live.

The Duckling meets an old, hard of hearing Cat and Hen but they reject her as well.



Eventually the Duckling meets some Swans and discovers that it is with these creatures that she truly belongs, as she is in fact, a beautiful Swan!

There are lots of fun songs in this tale! We hope you enjoy them!

The Princess and the Pea – Approx. 15 mins (song at the end of this tale)

A Prince is looking for a Princess but can't find one that he likes, until one day there is a loud knock at the door! Some people might find this knock too loud!

The King and the Queen are quite loud and a bit silly; they talk in a funny lovey-dovey sort of way.

The Queen puts a pea under many mattresses to test if she is a real Princess. The Princess has a sleepless night, but it turns out she is a real princess and can marry the prince! There is a song and dance to celebrate!

The Puppet Showman – Approx. 8 mins

A puppet showman wishes that his puppets were real actors. He goes to sleep one day and wakes up to find that his dream has come true and his puppets have come to life.

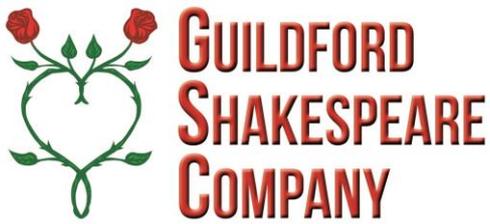
The puppets are played by three of our actors, they may look a bit creepy or scary because they are doing puppet movements!

At one point the puppets get angry and take over. This is a section that can get loud with a bit of shouting, a flashing light sequence and dramatic soundtrack. Two of the puppets turn the puppet master into a puppet and pack him into the suitcase. The actor playing the puppet master is just stepping into a trap door in the floor – he is fully in control and there is nothing to worry about.

At the end of this act, there is a moment where we think that the Little Match Girl's pet bird, a swallow, is dead and there is a sad song, but right at the end we hear its loud heart beat and we end the act on a hopeful note.

INTERVAL

The interval is 15 minutes long and you can visit the toilets, or stand up to stretch your legs.



Act 2

The Darning Needle - Song

A fun song about an upbeat needle who is always positive, no matter what life throws at her. She appears through the trap door with a loud pop!

The Emperor's New Clothes - Approx 15 mins with 4 songs roughly every 4 mins

A very silly story about a very vain emperor who only cares about his clothes! One day some roguish weavers make him a gown out of invisible thread and he ends up parading around naked! You do not need to worry about this – the actor won't be naked and it is a funny moment! He may ask the audience to wave your hands and cheer for him.

During the weavers song and dance there is some strobe lighting.

After this story, the Match Girl gets very upset with the Companion and runs around the church shouting that she is being left alone.

Thumbelina – approx. 22mins, 3 songs (1 a couple of mins in, one 5 mins later, then one 15 mins later)

A very sad woman who is desperate for a child meets a witch who creates a magic spell to give her a tiny child no bigger than her thumb.

The witch is played by the lovely actor who also plays the Companion to the Match Girl. He does quite a loud, evil laugh, but he is only pretending to be evil and it doesn't last very long.

There are sad themes in this story of Thumbelina being separated from her mother, her mother missing Thumbelina, of mean Toads and a Mole trying to marry Thumbelina.

At one point a giant swallow puppet comes in to rescue Thumbelina and all is well. The puppet's wings are controlled by the other actors.

In the final section of the play, we find out that the Match Girl's mother has passed away, which some people may find upsetting. This is also an important part of the journey for the Match Girl who starts to find a way to ask for help at the church.

You will know it is the end of the performance when the Match Girl takes a deep breath and blows out all the lights. After a short blackout, the lights will come back on and the actors will take their bows, and you can clap.