

Announcing the world premiere of a new play
about one of Britain's greatest comedy legends

HOWERD'S END

by Mark Farrelly

starring Simon Cartwright as Frankie Howerd
and Mark Farrelly as Dennis Heymer

Directed by Joe Harmston



photo Steve Ullathorne

Can you imagine being terrified of your own happiness? You can? Then let's begin...

Frankie Howerd is one of Britain's most loved comedians. But he has a secret. And the secret's name is Dennis.

This brand new play by Mark Farrelly ('Quentin Crisp: Naked Hope') takes you to the heart of Frankie and Dennis' clandestine relationship, which lasted from the 1950s until Frankie's death in 1992. It also affords a glorious opportunity to encounter Frankie in full-flight stand up mode.

Packed with laughter, but unafraid of truth, 'Howerd's End' portrays two humans' journey through closeness, love, grief, and all the other things that make life worth living. Come and say farewell to a legend...and learn the art of letting go.

'Howerd's End' will get its world premiere at Old Joint Stock theatre, Birmingham from Wednesday 8 - Sunday 12 April and will then tour (full dates attached, with more to be announced).

Frankie Howerd is played by Simon Cartwright, who received rave reviews as another British comedy legend, Bob Monkhouse, in 'The Man Called Monkhouse' at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival:

"A masterclass in Monkhouseian mannerisms: the drawling inflections, the way he sculpts the air as he talks. It's all there, including the self-satisfied aura"

Dominic Cavendish, The Daily Telegraph on 'The Man Called Monkhouse'

"As he fires out Monkhouse's profusion of one-liners, Cartwright nails his subject's clear, almost courtly middle-class tones; each phrase is a set-up and punchline in itself, as the voice rises for emphasis then falls for reassurance. Masterly."

Dominic Maxwell, The Times on 'The Man Called Monkhouse'

Simon also played Bob Monkhouse in 'Toast of London' on C4 and in Paul Hendy's film 'The Last Laugh'.

After studying at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and graduating from the University of Surrey, Simon carved a career both as an actor and impressionist, making appearances at The Comedy Store with Alistair McGowan. His TV appearances include 'Bob Says Opportunity Knocks'.

Dennis Heymer is played by the play's author Mark Farrelly, who is also the writer and performer of two hugely-acclaimed solo plays, 'The Silence of Snow: The Life of Patrick Hamilton' and 'Quentin Crisp: Naked Hope', which he has performed over 200 times across the UK / New York and counting. His next play is a solo portrait of radical film-maker Derek Jarman.

"You won't be able to take your eyes off this magnetic actor Mark Farrelly. He inhabits the character of Hamilton with a blazing fluidity"

The Times, 4 stars, on 'The Silence of Snow: The Life of Patrick Hamilton'

"Farrelly's performance is electric"

What's On Stage, 4 stars, on 'The Silence of Snow: The Life of Patrick Hamilton'

"An uncanny feat of resurrection. Farrelly's mastery of his audience is total"

Time Out, 4 stars, on 'Quentin Crisp: Naked Hope'

Mark made his theatre debut immediately on graduating from Cambridge, playing the lead in Stephen Fry's 'Latin!' at London's King's Head Theatre. His West End credits include 'Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?' opposite Matthew Kelly at Trafalgar Studios.

Joe Harmston (Director)

Joe has directed over 100 theatre productions around the world and forged associations with some of British theatre's most significant voices including Harold Pinter, Ronald Harwood, Michael Frayn, Trevor Nunn, Peter Hall, Peter Ustinov and Bill Kenwright. He directed Pinter in Pinter's own 'The Lover' / 'The Collection' at The Donmar Warehouse, created and ran the hugely successful Agatha Christie Theatre Company, and remains much in demand as director, dramaturg and, more recently, writer.

Frankie Howerd

Frankie Howerd was and still is "one of Britain's best-loved comedians". A radical, whose courage and innovation as a performer have too often been obscured by cosy nostalgia, he was the first stand-up to dispense with conventional punchlines and slick patter, instead crafting stumbling, surreal streams of insecurity, based on his sense of inadequacy, disappointment and sheer unsuitability to the very job of being a comedian. In his refusal to 'do' comedy like everyone else had done, he paved the way for other non-conformists like The Goons, Monty Python and Eddie Izzard.

2020 UK tour dates

Wednesday 8 - Sunday 12 April

BIRMINGHAM

Old Joint Stock
4 Temple Row W,
Birmingham B2 5NY
www.oldjointstock.co.uk
Box office: 0121 200 094

Monday 11 May

WHITHORN

The Swallow Theatre
Moss Park
Ravenstone
Whithorn
Newton Stewart DG8 8DR
www.swallowtheatre.co.uk
Box office: 01988 850368

Monday 13 July

LONDON

Hospital Club
24 Endell Street,
London WC2H 9HQ

Friday 17 July

BEDFORD

The Place
Bradgate Road,
Bedford MK40 3DE
www.theplacebedford.org.uk
Box office: 01234 354321

Friday 24 July

SUDBURY

Quay Theatre
Quay Lane
Sudbury
Suffolk CO10 2AN
www.quaysudbury.com
Box office: 01787 374745

Friday 2 October:

LICHFIELD

Lichfield Garrick
Castle Dyke,
Lichfield WS13 6HR
www.lichfieldgarrick.com
Box office: 01543 412121



photo Steve Ullathorne

Friday 23 & Saturday 24 October

CHELTENHAM

Everyman Theatre,
10 Regent St,
Cheltenham GL50 1HQ
www.everymantheatre.org.uk
Box office: 01242 572 573

Running time: 70 mins approx