



THE GHOST TRAIN

Relaxed performance – Tuesday 9 June, 2.30pm

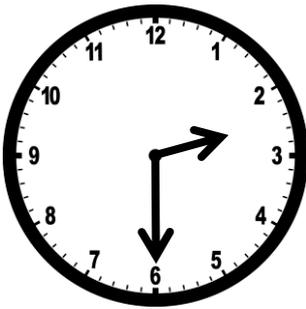
Welcome to today's performance of THE GHOST TRAIN! Here is some information to help you to enjoy the performance you are coming to see.

Today we are presenting what is called a Relaxed Performance. A Relaxed Performance is for everybody but we particularly want to welcome people who might sometimes feel a bit anxious or worried about coming to the theatre, so we have tried to do a few things to make it feel fine! At the start of the play the actors will come on stage and introduce themselves and tell you what parts they are playing, and during the play we are making some of the noises a bit quieter than usual, so hopefully they won't be upsetting for people who don't like a lot of loud noise.

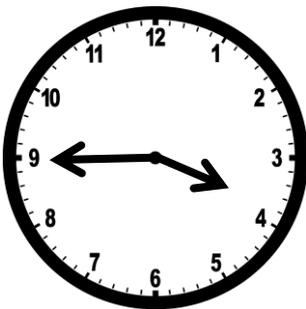
Enjoy the show!

TODAY'S TIMETABLE

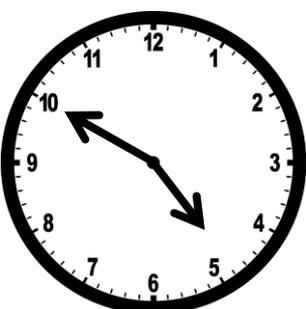
The play will start at 2.30pm



There will be an interval at 3.45pm which will last for about 20 minutes. This is so that the actors and the audience can have a break.



The play will end at approximately 4.50pm



DURING THE PLAY

During today's play there will be a relaxed atmosphere...

The lights will stay on, and the doors of the theatre will be left open so that you can go in and out if you want to.

If you want to get up and move around while the play is on then that is OK.

If you need to make a bit of noise while the play is on then that is OK.

If you want to go out of the theatre and have some time out then that is OK too.

In The Great Hall there are some chill-out areas where you can go and sit and relax. There are comfy bean bags and sofas.

ABOUT THE PLAY

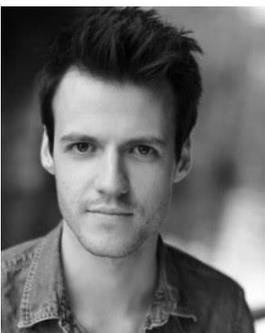
THE GHOST TRAIN is a comedy thriller. It was written in 1923 by Arnold Ridley. Some people remember Arnold Ridley as the actor who played the part of Private Godfrey in the television comedy DAD'S ARMY. The play is set in Cornwall in 1923. The story takes place over 4 hours at night, from 10pm to 2am.

THE GHOST TRAIN tells the funny and scary story of a group of train passengers who miss their train connection. They include a couple who have just got married, a husband and wife who don't like each other, an elderly lady and her parrot and a young man who is always joking and annoys everybody else. Because they have missed the last train, and they are in the countryside, they have to spend the night in the waiting room of the train station. The stationmaster warns them that the station is haunted! He says that a ghostly train comes through the station at night and that anyone who sees it may die!!

All kinds of funny and frightening things happen to the passengers. In the end, it turns out that the mysterious train is not a ghost train but an ordinary train being used to smuggle weapons, and the ghost story has been made up to frighten the passengers away.

The actors and the characters they play

At the start of the play today the actors will come on stage and introduce themselves so that you know who they all are. Here are some photographs of the actors and some information about the characters they are going to be in the play:



This is **Calum**. He plays the part of **Teddie**, the man who held up the train because his hat fell out of the window. He is very cheerful and often annoys the other characters.



This is **Amanda**. She plays two parts. She is **Saul Hodgkin**, the stationmaster. She also plays the part of **Julia Price** who turns up at the station later in the play and asks to be hidden. She pretends to be someone she is not.



This is **Sam**. He plays the part of **Richard**, a bad tempered man who does not get on with his wife.



This is **Ayesha**. She plays the part of **Elsie**. She is Richard's wife, and she wants to divorce him.



This is **Javier**. He plays the part of **Miss Bourne**, the elderly lady with the parrot. She gets drunk and falls asleep. He is also **Price**, one of the mysterious men who turn up later in the play.



This is **Will**. He plays the part of **Charles**, who has got married that day. He has just lost his job.



This is **Lena**. She plays the part of **Peggy**, Charles's new wife. She is from Huddersfield. They are meant to be going on their honeymoon.



This is **Femi**. He plays the part of **John Sterling** who comes into the play later on and who says he is a doctor.



This is **Joey**. She plays the part of **Miss Bourne's parrot**, who is also called Joey. She is also **Jackson**, a Police Officer who comes in near the end of the play.

Things to look out for in the play

1. Suitcases and other luggage

In the story the characters are on a journey so they have luggage with them. In the play, the actors pretend the luggage is other things, including a train. Also, an actor pops out of a luggage trunk and a suitcase moves around the stage on its own.

2. Being 'in the round'

At the Royal Exchange, the Theatre is seven sided, like a fifty pence piece, and there are seven doorways for the actors to come in and out of. In the play, actors come in and out of different doors.

3. Acting unconscious, dead or drunk

Some of the characters in the play fall unconscious, seem to be drunk, or pretend to have died. The actors are just acting – they're really OK!

4. Guns

There are some guns in the play but they will not make a loud bang. When a gun is fired in the play, the actor will just say 'BANG'.

5. Joey the parrot

In this production of the play, an actor plays the part of a parrot. Look out for how she is made to look like she's flying.

The Story

At the start of this production of THE GHOST TRAIN it seems as if we are watching the actors making their version of the play, reading out bits of the script and making all the sound effects just with their voices and objects that are on the stage. This continues for about 5 minutes.

This is the story of the whole play, so only read it if you don't mind knowing what happens at the end!

The Beginning of the play

Passengers are stranded at a small railway station in the middle of the countryside. It's 10 o'clock at night and there are no more trains until the morning. They've missed their connecting train because Teddie made them late. He had pulled the emergency cord and stopped the train they were on because his hat had fallen out of the window and he wanted to get it back. The other passengers are all angry with him.

Saul, the stationmaster, tells them the station is haunted. He says that 20 years ago that night the old stationmaster was going to pull the lever to close the swing bridge so the train could cross the bridge, but he fell down dead on the platform with a light in his hand, and the train crashed into the river killing 8 people. We see a funny underwater scene of what might have happened after the crash. The story goes that ever since that night, a ghost train has come through the station from time to time, and the ghost of the dead stationmaster walks the platform. Saul tells the passengers that two months earlier a tramp was found dead in the waiting room, thought to have died from fear.

Some of the passengers are very afraid but they decide they will have to stay the night as there is nowhere else to go. Saul refuses to stay with them.

A few minutes after he has left, he falls back into the waiting room. He is dead! He has a light in his hand – just like the stationmaster who died 20 years ago!

The Middle of the play

The passengers put Saul's body in the ticket office next to the waiting room and lock the door. It is raining and there are creaks and bangs outside which make the characters frightened. Richard gives Miss Bourne brandy from Teddie's flask, to calm her down, and she gets very drunk.

There is a knock at the door. Everyone is afraid. Julia Price enters, dressed in evening wear. She seems to be being chased and asks if the passengers will hide her. They do.

Two men come in. They are Price and John Sterling, also wearing very smart clothes. They say they are searching for Herbert's sister Julia who has 'run away'. They find her but she refuses to leave with them and screams. Herbert tells the passengers that Julia is imagining things – she imagines she saw the ghost train some years earlier and she believes the train will appear again this night.

They learn that Saul, the stationmaster, has died. John Sterling says he's a doctor and he goes to examine the dead body – but it has disappeared! Julia says that she thinks Saul was the ghost of Ted, the stationmaster from 20 years ago.

Miss Bourne is fast asleep after drinking the brandy.

Julia gets more and more upset and scared. She imagines Ted the old stationmaster is coming to haunt them. The wind blows.

Most of them go into the ticket office. Teddie is behaving strangely going back and forth to the doors. He asks Charles to trust him and to keep something for him. He passes an object to Charles to put in his pocket but we don't see what it is.

It's one minute to midnight. A bell is heard and a distant train whistle. Teddie goes to open the door but it's somehow locked. They're all locked in! The ghost train is coming closer...

The End of the play

Julia is collapsed on the floor. We find out that Julia was on the table watching for the train. She could see the driver and was about to speak when she fell off the table. She wakes up and can remember nothing.

The door knocks. No-one is there. A man's voice can be heard singing 'Rock of Ages'. This is the hymn the old stationmaster always used to sing. They are still locked in so they decide to break the door down to see who or what is on the platform.

The lights go out. Someone strikes a match to relight the lamp. During the moment of darkness the doors have mysteriously opened!

They all plan to leave. Teddie says he will stay with Miss Bourne who is still asleep. He says that he suspects the train is not a ghost train.

A shadowy figure of a man carrying a light and wearing a stationmaster's cap passes outside the window. Teddie pulls out a gun. He rushes outside and shoots at the man.

We hear the train coming back!

Teddie asks Charles to pull out the gun he gave him and to watch Sterling until he comes back. Teddie says 'The game's up'. He goes outside and stops the train.

Saul Hodgkin and Price are brought in with a police officer called Jackson. Teddie reveals that John Sterling is not a real doctor but is a criminal. Teddie is really Detective Inspector Morrison of the Secret Service and the train was a real train, carrying machine guns. Price and John Sterling are really criminals who paid Saul Hodgkin to help them. Saul had not died but instead had used a secret way out of the ticket office to 'disappear'! The two men own a clay company a few miles up the road which they were using as a 'cover' for their trade in smuggling guns. The tramp was murdered by them.

They wonder about Julia and go to find her. There is a tussle with a gun. She eats a piece of paper that had written on it the names of Russian agents Teddie was wanting to trace. She is arrested along with Saul, Herbert Price and John Sterling.

Miss Bourne wakes up and is pleased that nothing exciting has happened while she has been asleep.

The end of the play.

This production of THE GHOST TRAIN has been sponsored by

