



Goblin in association with the Royal Exchange Theatre

THE BALLAD OF RUDY

Relaxed performance – Wednesday 16 December, 11.30am

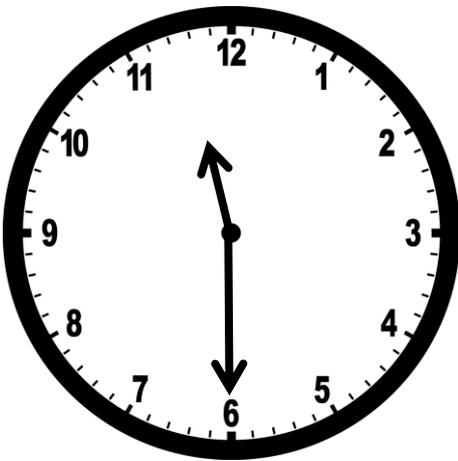
Welcome to today's performance of THE BALLAD OF RUDY! Here is some information to help you to enjoy the performance you are coming to see.

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.

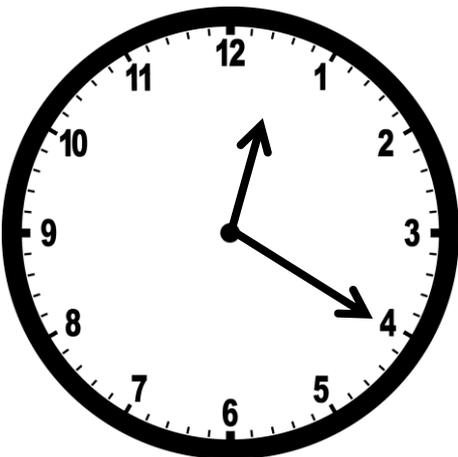
Enjoy the show!

TODAY'S TIMETABLE

The play will start at 11.30am



The play will end at approximately 12.20pm



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.

We will adjust sound levels, and the actors will make it really clear when it's about to get noisy so that you can put ear defenders on if you would prefer.

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 BALLAD OF RUDY is an original story about a reindeer who discovers self-expression through music. Central to the production is live music and lots of different instruments are played by the three actors.

The actors all play animals, but their clothes and mannerisms are very human. The play is set in the North Pole and the world of the play has the feel of a cool Jazz Lounge. The story begins on Rudy's first day of reindeer school. After being told off for being disruptive, Rudy meets a magical Jazz Penguin who introduces him to a world of musical characters, each of whom will teach him different things about music, creativity and self-expression.

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 **Hollie**. Hollie plays three different characters. The first character is **Mrs Hoo**, she is the teacher at Reindeer school and you'll meet her first. Hollie also plays **Fitz** who is an Artic Fox. Fitz is a puppet who has a very special way of communicating - using a language of music called Jazz scat - made famous by the likes of Ella Fitzgerald. Hollie also plays **Nina**. Nina is a walrus who once had a dazzling jazz career.



This is **Peter**. Peter plays **Rudy**. Rudy is a reindeer who begins the play by hoping that one day he will pull the sleigh, but by the end he has realised he would much rather play and make music and leave the sleigh pulling to some of the other reindeer.



This is **Yana**. Yana plays two different characters. The main character she plays is the **Jazz Penguin**. The Jazz Penguin is on a world tour and is visiting the North Play to try and see the Northern Lights. The Jazz Penguin is a bit like a magical character who Rudy conjures up to help him find his way in the world. Yana also plays **Polar Bear Joe** who is a grumpy bear who is supposed to be scary but Rudy isn't scared.



RUDY



JAZZ PENGUIN



POLAR BEAR JOE



NINA



MRS HOO



FITZ

The Story

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

The audience enter a jazz lounge. Soft jazz music will be playing.

The play begins when Mrs Hoo arrives. It is the first day of reindeer school and she is ready to teach everyone what it takes to pull the sleigh. She introduces the original team of reindeer who are pictured in the classroom.

Suddenly Rudy arrives. He is late and bursts in, interrupting the lesson. Mrs Hoo encourages him to take his seat but Rudy is too excited to settle. Eventually Mrs Hoo invites Rudy to the front of the class to teach him a lesson called Keeping in Step. The rhythm is easy and soon Rudy gets carried away tapping along to his own impulsive beat. Rudy thinks he is being entertaining, although Mrs Hoo is not impressed. Mrs Hoo tells Rudy off before leaving.

In the next scene, Rudy is feeling alone and frustrated for being different. At this point the Jazz Penguin arrives. The Jazz Penguin is looking for the Northern Lights and explains you can only see the Northern Lights if you've got 'the Jazz' in you. Rudy wants to know what 'the Jazz' is. The Jazz Penguin decides to take care of Rudy and entertains him by playing his trumpet. The Jazz Penguin then gives the gift of a guitar to Rudy. It isn't long before they are playing music together.

It gets darker and Rudy mentions they might be near to the grumpy Polar Bear, but Jazz Penguin explains they are looking for a cheeky fox called Fitz.

Fitz arrives but has a very special way of communicating. Together the three have fun jazz scatting. The Jazz Penguin then invites everyone to get involved in a call and response task, so all you need to do is follow Fitz's lead.

Afterwards, the Jazz Penguin is ready to move on but Rudy is having too much fun with Fitz and so decides to stay. The Jazz Penguin leaves them to it, but warns him about the grumpy Polar Bear. Rudy and Fitz hear the roar of a Polar Bear. Fitz is scared but Rudy is brave.

Polar Bear Joe arrives. Polar Bear Joe is grumpy because it is so hot and the ice caps are melting. Rudy tries to cheer Polar Bear Joe up. Polar Bear Joe teaches Rudy the blues and explains it's OK to feel sad sometimes. They sing the blues together. Then Polar Bear Joe leaves Rudy alone.

Rudy starts to play on Polar Bear Joe's piano. As he plays a lone puffin arrives. More and more puffins arrive and the music gets louder and becomes quite chaotic. It is noisy. Rudy has fun with the puffins but is out of breath and confused by the time they have left. At this point a calming falcon flies overhead and a calming melody is played. Rudy is captivated by the bird. The Falcon leaves.

Rudy feels calmer and then the Jazz Penguin returns. Rudy is excited and tells the Jazz Penguin about all the things he has learnt but he still isn't sure if he has 'the Jazz'.

The Jazz Penguin takes Rudy to meet Nina, an old walrus. Nina is glamorous but her Diva days are behind her. However, Jazz Penguin persuades her to sing one more time. She teaches Rudy that Jazz is all about 'heart'. She sings a song called 'No Need to Follow the Herd' which is all about doing your own thing. Nina sings about different animals who did their own thing and the audience is involved making animal sounds and actions.

After the song, the Jazz Penguin suggests they arrange one more gig before Jazz Penguin leaves Rudy and the North Pole for good. Nina and Jazz Penguin head off to get ready and Rudy is left alone wondering if he finally has 'the Jazz'.

At this point, the lights begin to flicker and gentle piano music plays. It gets darker and the deep sounds of a cello strike up. A giant fantastical Whale floats into the space and dances with Rudy. Rudy discovers an electric guitar and plays it together with the soft piano and cello music. The sky lights up with the Northern Lights.

After experiencing the Northern Lights, Rudy is very chilled out. Mrs Hoo arrives to tell Rudy the good news that he has been chosen to pull the sleigh. However, Rudy has a surprise for Mrs Hoo. He then invites Mrs Hoo to play in one final gig with him. Lots of the characters return and lots of instruments are played including the drum kit.

The Jazz Penguin returns as well and has one final present for Rudy.

They play and celebrate together.

The end.

Things To Look Out For

1. Musical instruments

In the play, the three actors play lots of different instruments including Bells, Trumpets, Acoustic Guitar, Tambourine, Double Bass, Piano, Saxophone, Clarinet, Electric Guitar and Drum Kit. There is one pre-recorded piece of music that includes piano and cello.

2. The Northern Lights

The Northern Lights occur naturally in the skies across the North Pole. There are many different myths and folklores about what the Northern Lights present, some cultures believe they are the spirits of dead animals. In our story the Northern Lights are represented by a huge majestic Whale who Rudy sees towards the end of the play when he finally discovers he has got 'the jazz' and learns it's OK to be different.

3. Taking part

There are a couple of opportunities to take part, including at the beginning with Mrs Hoo when you will learn how to say Hello using different body parts, and make antlers with your hands. In the middle you'll get to jazz scat with Fitz the Fox, and towards the end you'll get to sing with Nina and make animal sounds and actions. It's gonna be coooool!

The relaxed performance of THE BALLAD OF RUDY has been generously supported by Ordinary People, Interesting Lives and Rycroft Children's Fund.