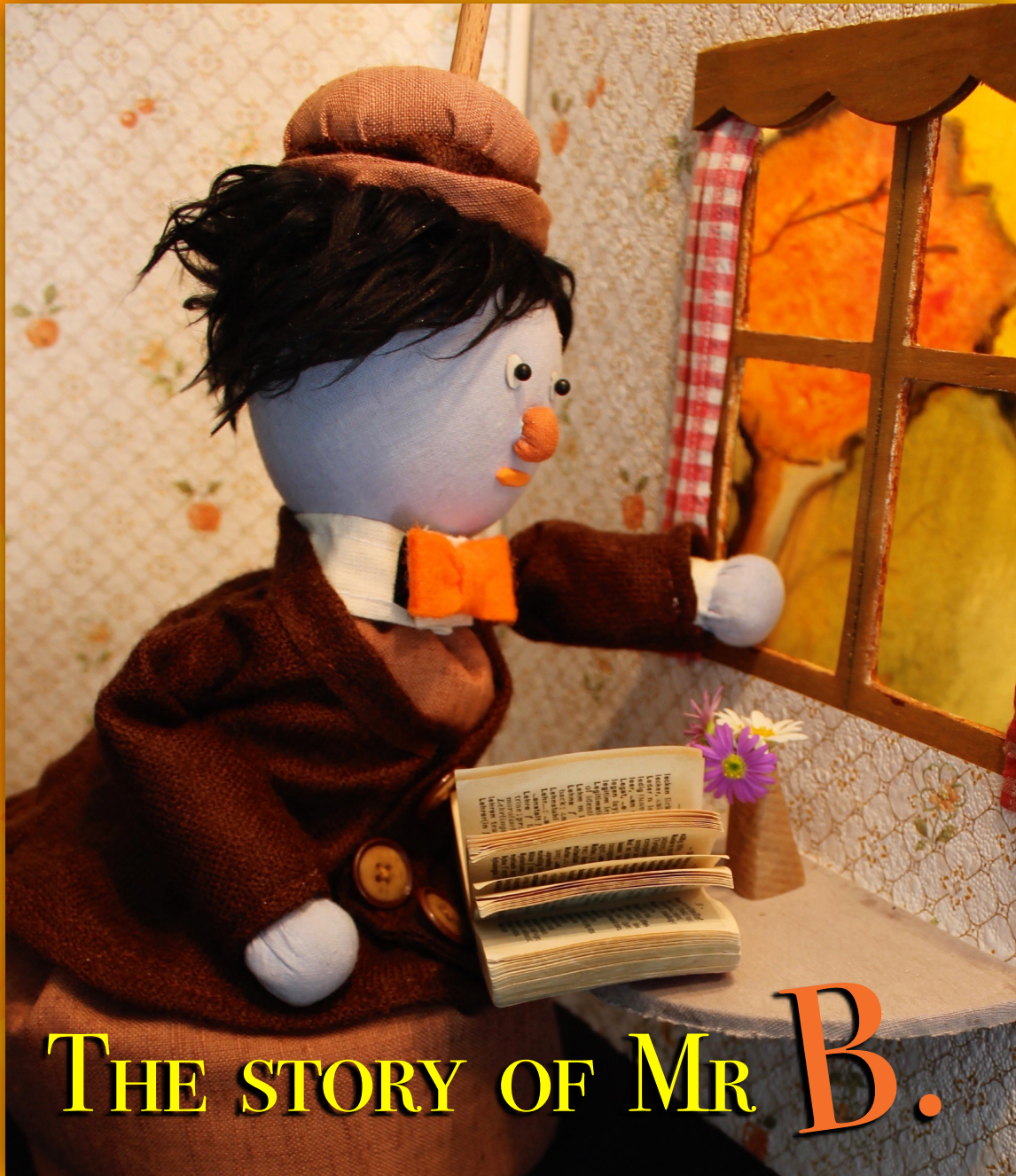


Shake Shake Theatre



Website:
www.shakeshaketheatre.com
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Social Media:
[@shakeshaketheatre](https://www.instagram.com/shakeshaketheatre)
Instagram
Facebook

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OVERVIEW of THE STORY OF MR B

The Story of Mr B. is surprise filled puppet show, set in a giant pop-up book. As we turn from one page to the next, our grumbling character 'Mr Bumblegrum' goes on a colourful, moving journey through the seasons. Nature tries to cheer him up with tenderness and humour; trees play, the sun swirls, mushrooms laugh and snow falls. As spring arrives Mr Bumblegrum realises he wants friendship again.

Can you help blow the stormy clouds away?

Will you be his friend?

The European premiere of the show took place at the French-German Youth Office (OFAJ) in Berlin, October 2014. Since then the show has toured throughout Germany, Switzerland and the UK.

Receiving high acclaim at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2016, with rave reviews and sell out shows, it went on to tour to various notable festivals and theatres in Europe.

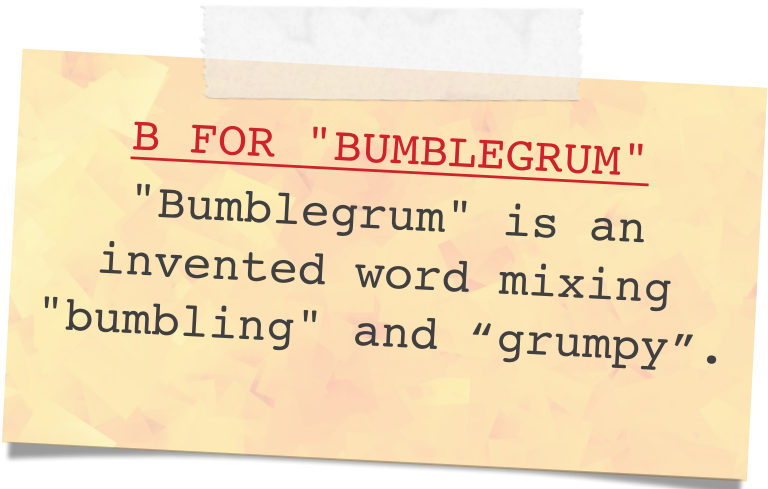
Show Details:

- Duration: 45 minutes
- Suitable for a family audience (children aged 5+)
- This show has been presented in various settings; indoor, outdoor, theatres, schools, libraries.
- Can be performed in English, French or German.
- Corresponding educational workshop available.

 THE STORY OF MR B.

 DIE GESCHICHTE DES HERRN B

 L'HISTOIRE DE MR. B.



B FOR "BUMBLEGRUM"
"Bumblegrum" is an
invented word mixing
"bumbling" and "grumpy".

SYNOPSIS

Introduction - Bobby the Mushroom would like to read you a story. As he opens the book we find our main character, Mr Bumblegrum. He is not very friendly. To understand why he is so unhappy, we must start the story from the beginning.

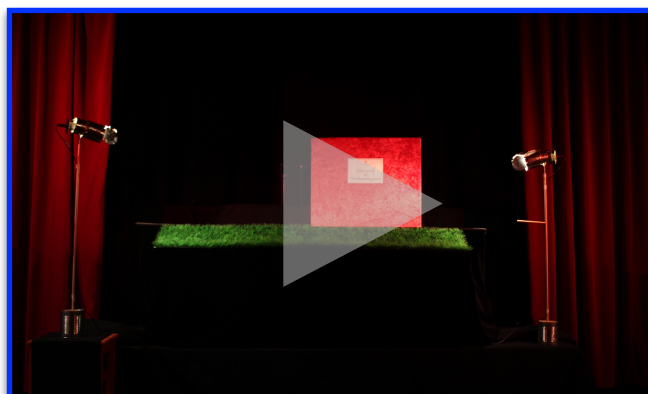
Summer - Mr. Bumblegrum (younger) works at the bar in the restaurant carriage of an old steam train. He is friendly, polite and liked by all those around him. One day he meets Lucy, a singer who is on her way to give a concert in the next city. She orders a cup of tea and their love story begins. We see their story through song, laughter and shadow theatre scenes. Afterwards Lucy is walking (and singing) alone in the forest and gets caught in a terrible storm. Sadly, she does not survive. With her death comes a time of mourning for Mr. Bumblegrum. He is angry and leaves the village, wanting to be alone.

Autumn - We see a grumpy Mr Bumblegrum living alone, in a little house in the forest. His new job is to count the trees. Nature is alive and tries to cheer him up. Birds try to play with him, trees dance around him and the loud singing sun comes to try and make him smile. They ask to be his friend and hope to remind him of happiness and joy. But he says 'Go away! Leave me alone!' to everyone. Eventually everything disappears, warning him not to be alone in the storm.

Winter - The forest has gone, with only one tree left standing. It becomes cold and begins to snow. Suddenly a snowstorm arrives and Mr Bumblegrum is scared. He cries out for help and the last tree comes to life. It reminds him that his wish was to be all alone. The tree says goodbye and leaves. Now lonely, sad and regretful, Mr Bumblegrum apologises and wishes for friendship again. He goes home.

Spring - As spring arrives the snow begins to melt, along with the ice in Mr Bumblegrum's heart. Bobby the Mushroom, with the audience's help, blows away the dark clouds to reveal blue sky. They call Mr Bumblegrum to show him the hope that comes with spring. He is joyful and grateful. He begins to water the flowers and to help nature grow back once more. He discovers joy again, thanks to his friends.

► Video trailer - We invite you to watch the video trailer for this show [here](#)



SHOW ELEMENTS

- The Puppets are known as 'Bag-Puppets'. They are created with a small sand filled bag and a ball as a head. They are controlled from above with a long stick. Some puppets have strings to allow arm movement. The puppets are approx. 25 - 30cm in height.



- Shadow Theatre
The initial romance between two protagonists is played in three scenes, without text and accompanied by music, on miniature shadow screens. These screens, hidden within the decor, are revealed by secret opening doors.

- The Storyteller leads the audience through the narrative in various moments. His name is Bobby and he is a giant Mushroom, played with live acting. He is able to speak directly to the puppets and also interact with the audience, asking them questions and enabling them to help with the progression of the show.



- The Set was hand-made with wood, cardboard and a lot of imagination. It is a giant pop-up book. Initially the book is closed, then it is opened to reveal illustrated pages as the stage backdrop. Puppets play in the foreground, while pop-up 3D elements; such as a house, a tree and a grave, bring the set to life. The structure stands on our custom-built table of 180cm long, 65cm wide and 60cm high. The table has cut out elements where trees grow from the ground and move along the set.

- Music is entirely composed, written or performed live by Pierre and Jess. Throughout the show we use a ukulele, original tracks, digital instruments and special effects we have created.



TECHNICAL PLAN

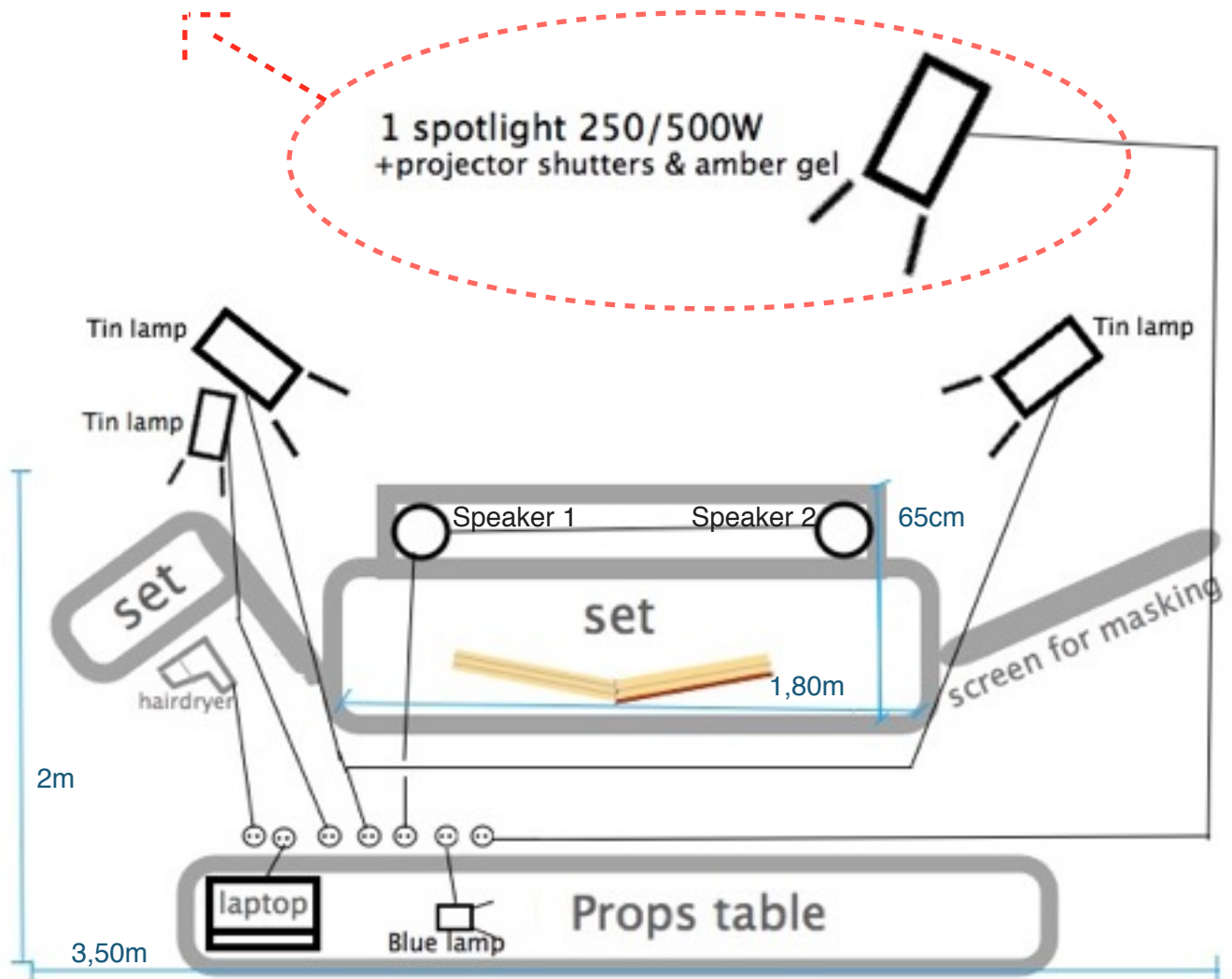
Special Requirements for the performance

We have our own sound and lighting equipment. We require the following materials:

- Electrical outlet 220V.
- Masking / draping fabric (preferably in black) for the background of the set.
- 4 chairs for our props.
- Possibility for black out, for the shadow puppet scene

Depending on the location:

- For over 40 people in audience: Podium stage approx. 50 to 80 cm high / or tiered seating.
- 1 spotlight 250W or 500W with shutters, amber gel and possibility to be turned off from the stage.



REVIEW EXTRACTS

"Families walk away from the show talking about the colours of nature, the funny joy of romance, the sadness of death, the need for people to be open and trusting of one another, the importance of looking after nature."

Festival Back to Ours, Hull, City of culture 2017

"Shake Shake Theatre plays with puppets, brings objects to life and throws shadows - and of course there are two actors on the stage. A moving story that will delight small and big children"

Ruhrfestspiele, Recklinghausen 2017

"The Story of Mr B lifts its audience into its heart and holds them there. "

★★★★★ The List - Festival Fringe, Edinburgh 2016.

"This is an enchanting, beautifully crafted piece of theatre by people who understand children and know how to engage them completely in the world that has been created."

★★★★ One4Review - Festival Fringe Edinburgh 2016

"The miniaturised details are so entrancing, I'm not sure if the kisses we blew at the end were for Mr B – or for the puppeteers"

★★★★ Herald Scotland - Festival Fringe Edinburgh 2016

"An endearingly thoughtful show from Shake Shake Theatre where both puppets and performers connect magically with the audience."

★★★★ The Stage - Festival Fringe Edinburgh 2016

"The Story of Mr B will brighten up any rainy Edinburgh afternoon".

★★★★ Broadway Baby - Festival Fringe Edinburgh 2016

"Two fantastic new puppeteers."

Lorenz Christian Köhler, Drehbühne Berlin 2015

"A sweet and magical show about the four seasons"

The Swiss Puppet Museum, Fribourg Switzerland 2015



Edinburgh Fringe Festival reviews are included at the end of this booklet.

PAST SHOW DATES

2019	
November 1	Kirchmöser Ufermoment, Kirchmöser, Germany
October 21	Amerika-Gedenkbibliothek, Berlin, Germany
June 15	Institut Français Berlin, Germany
2018	
November 29	BKA Theatre, Berlin, Germany
March 23 - 25	Nottingham Puppet Festival, UK
March 4	Tourism Nandaz, Switzerland
March 2	Tourism Verbier, Switzerland
January 22 - 28	Drehbühne Vorort, Berlin, Germany
2017	
May 21 - 25	Ruhrfestspiele Recklinghausen, Germany
February 28	Espace St-Marc, Le Châble, Valais Switzerland
February 22 - 25	Hull UK City of Culture - Back to Ours Festival, Hull UK
February 18 - 19	Little Angel Theatre, London
January 27	OFAJ - DFJW, Berlin
2016	
August 5 - 28 (44 shows)	Institut Français d'Ecosse, Edinburgh Fringe Festival
July 9 - Mr B	Festival Freilichtbühne Weißensee, Berlin
May 21 - Mr B	Kiezfest Vollgut, Neukölln, Berlin
May 8 - Mr B	Yuma Bar, Berlin
March 12, 14	Drehbühne Berlin, Wannsee, Germany
2015	
September 12, 13	Cabane de Louvie, Haut Val de Bagnes, Valais, Switzerland
September 5	Theatre Musée Suisse des Marionnettes, Fribourg, Switzerland
2014	
December 26	Maison Gard de Champsec, Valais, Switzerland
December 19	Espace Charrat Muse, Valais Switzerland
October 31	OFAJ - DFJW, Berlin

ABOUT US

**Theatre for the whole family.
Masks. Puppets. Shadows.
Made by hand and from the heart.**

Shake Shake Theatre, founded in 2014, is a collaboration between Pierre Filliez and Jessica Nicholls. This Swiss / Australian duo handcraft stories, puppets, masks, shadow figures and entire sets in order to tell heartfelt stories, from script to stage. Their family-friendly work focuses on humanity, humour, sustainability and sharing.

Their sell-out shows have enchanted families throughout Germany, the UK and Switzerland, in English, French and German. With educational workshops, they have inspired people of all ages, sharing skills in puppetry, masked theatre and storytelling. Having recently moved to Australia, they are keen to bring their body of work to Australian audiences and communities.



Pierre Filliez is Swiss and completed his diploma in Physical Theatre at the International Theatre School of Jaques Lecoq in Paris, France. In Switzerland he produced and played in various theatre and puppet shows. He teaches masked theatre and puppetry. As well as working with Shake Shake Theatre, he has collaborated regularly with Drehbühne Berlin and has produced theatre masks of various styles and commissioned art works internationally. www.pierrefilliez.com

Jessica Nicholls is Australian, with a BA in Communications, majoring in Theatre and Media, from Charles Sturt University in Bathurst, Australia. In Italy she studied Commedia dell' Arte, comic acting and mask making with Antonio Fava. She has toured puppet shows around Australia, the UK, Ireland, Switzerland and Germany with Shake Shake Theatre, School Performance Tours, Vision Mechanics and Drehbühne Berlin.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SHOW

**A philosophical tale that is good for the soul.
All ages can be engaged and moved by the story.
Hand-build the show ourselves.**

Starting from a simple writing exercise, where Pierre proposed a title and an object (an old steam train) to be included in the narrative, Jess wrote a story which the show is based on. We consider this story to be relevant to all ages, as it contains the universal themes of love, loss, empathy and a connection to nature.

We then adapted the short story into a puppet play. As the original style was that of a tale, we created a large pop-up book as the set, where scenes take place between the pages. To facilitate narration the character of 'Bobby' the mushroom was invented. He is played through acting and appears at different points of the show, telling the story directly to the public, while asking questions and interacting with them.

With a handmade aesthetic, we took great pleasure in planning the construction, recycling and re-purposing of materials and building everything ourselves. As nature is a strong element in our story, we play the show following the four seasons, which brings colour and a homogeneous aesthetic.

The set is dotted with small trap-doors and hidden windows from which the protagonists and other elements appear. Larger screens mask more voluminous props and at times also the actors. Throughout the show we use music, shadow theatre, acting and object theatre; such as a large decorated umbrella portraying the sun, confetti for a snow storm and incense smoking through the chimney of a colourful, tin-can steam train.

For this project, we pooled-together and took advantage of our all our skills: as actors, puppeteers, painters, musicians, writers, scenographers, aspiring carpenters, DIY-enthusiasts. And sometimes even magicians.

**This show was our first collaboration.
It is dear to our hearts and we are proud of its success.**





Shake Shake Theatre

THE STORY OF MR B.

FROM JESSICA NICHOLLS & PIERRE FILLIEZ

THIS SURPRISE FILLED PUPPET SHOW, FOR ALL AGES, SET IN A GIANT POP-UP BOOK, TELLS THE STORY OF MR BUMBLEGRUM. AS WE TURN FROM ONE PAGE TO THE NEXT, THIS GRUMBLING CHARACTER GOES ON A COLOURFUL AND MOVING JOURNEY THROUGH THE SEASONS. NATURE TRIES TO CHEER HIM UP WITH TENDERNESS AND HUMOUR. TREES PLAY, THE SUN SWIRLS, MUSHROOMS LAUGH AND SNOW FALLS. AS SPRING ARRIVES MR BUMBLEGRUM REALISES HE WANTS FRIENDSHIP AGAIN.



CAN YOU HELP BLOW THE
STORMY CLOUDS AWAY ?

WILL YOU BE HIS FRIEND ?

SHOW DATES

SHOW TIMES

LOCATION

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT...

PRICES

"CREATING AND SHARING UNIQUE ARTISTIC WORK, MADE BY HAND AND FROM THE HEART."

WWW.SHAKESHAKETHEATRE.COM

"Two fantastic new puppeteers"
Lorenz Köhler, Drehbühne Berlin



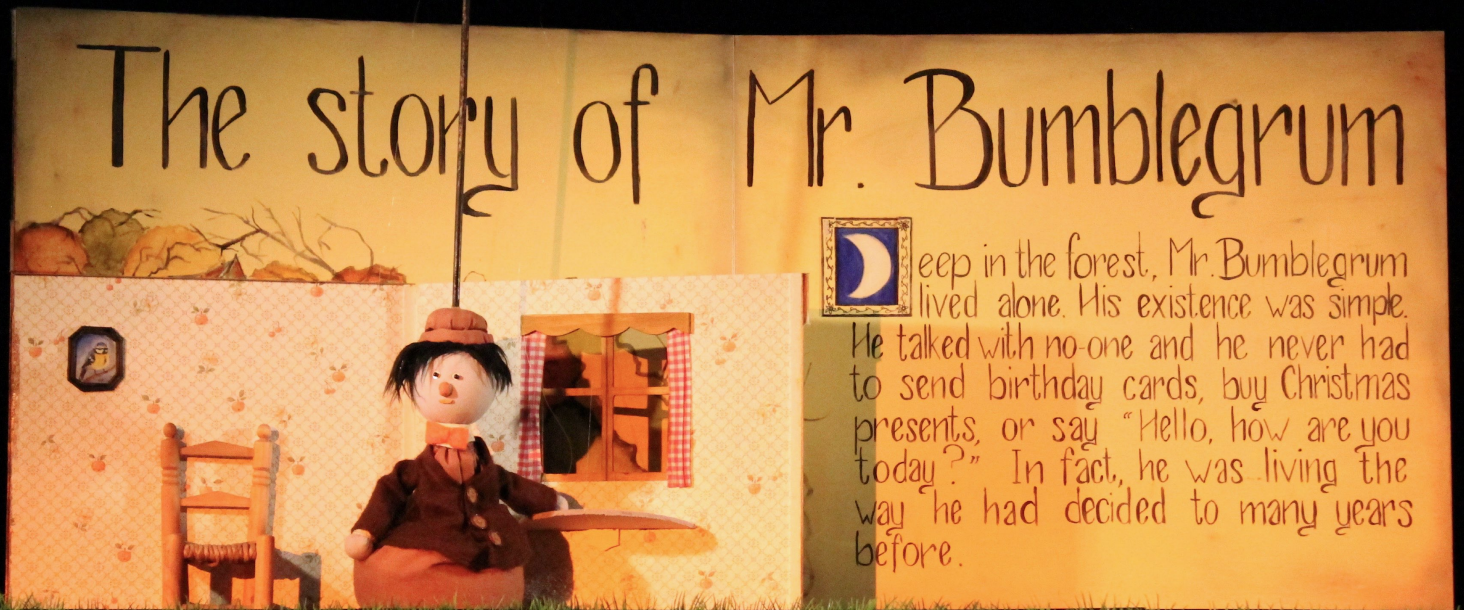
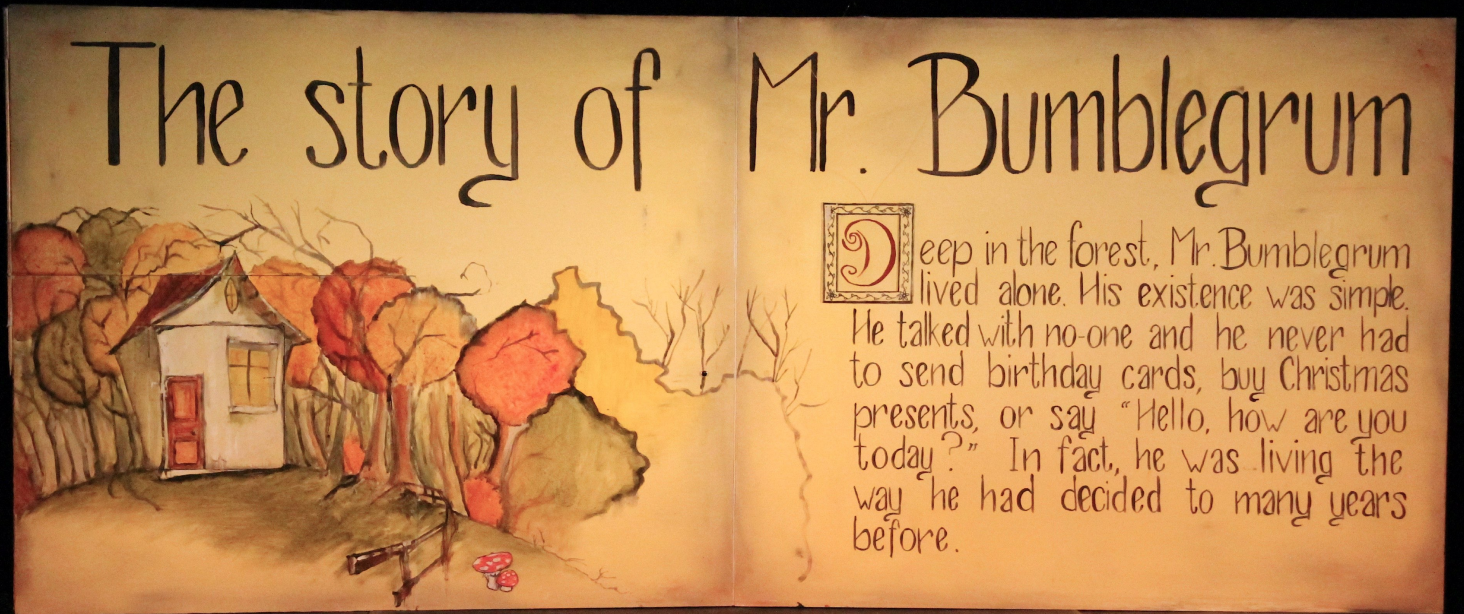
"I was completely absorbed into
the world of Mr B.. The amount
of visual elements and details
that you use to tell this story is
just amazing"
Natasa Trifunac, Berlin



"A sweet and magical show
about the four seasons"
*The Swiss Puppet Museum,
Fribourg Switzerland*



IMAGES











THE EDINBURGH
FRINGE FESTIVAL 2016

VIVE
LE
FRIN
GE!

5 - 28 AUGUST 2016
PRESS REVIEW



The Story of Mr B ●●●●●

A tiny tale, told with love in a giant pop-up book

Source: The List

Date: 12 August 2016

Written by: Thom Dibdin

Brave, tragic, compassionate and hilarious by turns, Shake Shake Theatre's *The Story of Mr B* lifts its audience into its heart and holds them there. With great humour and a real sense of how the minds of youngsters over about three-years-old work (while making sure any younger siblings won't be bored), it tells of life, love, forgiveness and regret.

Mr B is Mr Bumblegrum, a wonderfully dumpy puppet of an old man who lives alone, deep in the forest. Not even the mushrooms are his friends and he spurns the birds' beauty. His job is to count the trees, and that is what he does. But where did he come from? And how did the once- friendly waiter in the restaurant car of a local train arrive in this lonely place?

If grown-ups will admire the daring with which *The Story of Mr B* addresses the big issues in life – just as any great theatre should, whatever age it is aimed at – everyone will be fascinated by the intricate, cleverly constructed book through which the story is told.

Open it up and it becomes a forest where Bumblegrum's house pops-up, out of the page. Turn a page and a tiny train puffs over distant mountains then out onto the stage, big enough for young Mr B to climb aboard. Windows open to reveal his adventures told in crisp, precisely illuminated shadow puppets. Above, a giant parasol sun twirls in anticipation, singing to Mr B in a vain attempt to cheer him up.

It is the telling, though, which is so engaging. Puppeteers Jessica Nicholls and Pierre Filliez have a natural rapport which makes the theatre itself an easy place to be as their audience arrive – before they gently take them into their world and reveal the many splendid things which happen there.

The Story of Mr B 4****



REVIEW OVERVIEW

★★★★

Delightful childrens entertainment

one4review | On 13, Aug 2016

The Story of Mr B

This is an enchanting, beautifully crafted piece of theatre by people who understand children and know how to engage them completely in the world that has been created.

The story of Mr B is contained within a huge, velvet covered book in the middle of the stage. The book is opened and the pages within become the backdrop to the story. We begin by finding Mr B, a dumpy, grumpy old man, all by himself in the middle of a forest counting trees. How did he come to be like this? To find out we go back to the start of the story where he's happy and friendly, working in the bar on a local train. One day he falls in love with one of the passengers, the beautiful singer Lucy, but after an all too brief romance she is killed in a thunderstorm by a falling tree. Mr B, sad and angry retreats from the world and, at the point we first saw him, bitter, angry and alone. Things get worse for Mr B as the trees and the sun leave when they are shunned and he ends up in a barren winter land. At this point he realises that this is not what he wants and he starts to make things better – bringing back flowers and then trees and making friends with the sun. We all blow him a kiss and wish him well on his way.

The story, and the big issues it contains of love, tragedy and regret, is told with humour and charm by the skilled puppeteers who invest the puppets with real character and life. The book in which the story is set is exquisite. At one point it opens up and is transformed into an alpine scene where a tiny train comes over the top and then a full (puppet) size one, complete with a tin can engine and real smoke comes through the tunnel which has opened out from the page. At another point doors are open and we see a beautifully rendered shadow of the romance. The elements of the story telling are cleverly combined and the audience was utterly rapt throughout the whole 40 minutes.

Both children and the adults lucky enough to accompany them will be enchanted. Do try to see this.

By Karen



The Story of Mr B

Eve Green, aged 7, found this puppet show about friendship and death sad, but loved it all the same

FEATURE - PUBLISHED 14 AUGUST 2016

By **Eve Green**

What happens in the show?

It's a puppet show. Mr Bumblegrum is very sad because his friend dies but he learns about friendship, love and death.

Describe the show in five words

Amazing, funny, sad, good, lovely.

Who was your favourite character and why?

My favourite characters were the trees and the sun because he was funny, happy and he sang.

Were there any characters you didn't like?

No, they were all good.

What did you like most about the show?

I really liked the way the story was told and the puppets.

What didn't you like about the show?

Nothing!

What did you think of the songs?

The music was great.

What did your grown-up think of the show?

"It was a really well-produced show with lots of life lessons for kids, a beautifully portrayed story, and was very touching and uplifting."

Would you tell your friends to come and see the show?

Yes, definitely!

Edinburgh Festival Fringe: our critics' best shows

by The Stage - Aug 17, 2016

At the mid-point of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, with more than 150 shows under its collective reviewing belt, we asked our critics to name just the two best shows they've seen at this year's event. Here's what they chose...

Thom Dibdin

The Story of Mr B – Institute Francaise D'Ecosse

Children's puppet theatre which addresses the big issues in life – just as any great theatre should, whatever age it is aimed at.

THE STAGE

SINCE 1880

The Story of Mr B review at Institut Francais, Edinburgh – 'endearing' ★★★★★

By Nick Awde - Aug 23, 2016

Mr Bumblegrum is very grumpy, in fact he's never happy, ever. And so, to help us understand why, two cheeky toadstools bounce on to the puppet stage to introduce The Story of Mr B. In this tale for children about finding happiness, Australian Jessica Nicholls and Swiss Pierre Filliez strike an enchanting balance between funny and sad, told through a huge book that opens up to become Mr B's universe.

Peopled by expressive sandbag puppets, moving forests and fluttering butterflies, the pages open to reveal Mr B's house, an alpine railway station, a winter forest or a little window through which we see a shadow play candlelit dinner. We see how Mr B fell in love, travelled, had adventures and how tragedy befell him. But being reminded of all the wonderful people he met and places he visited doesn't make him feel any better, so all the animals and trees in the forest where he lives join together to show him how to be happy.

The innocently simple delivery addresses big themes boldly but sensitively, filtered through a fairytale narrative. The result is an endearingly thoughtful show from Shake Shake Theatre where both puppets and performers connect magically with the audience.

Endearing puppet show addresses big themes to connect magically with its audience.

Fringe Children's Theatre reviews:

The Story of Mr B.



By Mary Brennan, Dance critic

MR B – short for Bumblegrum – has no friends. Doesn't want any. Go away... But Shake Shake Theatre's puppeteers, Jessica Nicholls and Pierre Filliez, know that his lonely story has a happy ending, one that audiences (aged 3+) should see for themselves.

It's all inside a very big book, the pages not just colourfully illustrated but enriched with pop-up additions or little windows that reveal cameos of shadow-play. Time was, Mr B was young and in love with a singer. He met her in the restaurant car of a train. And there it is, tiny and distant at first but then - puffing smoke – arriving on-stage, big enough for them to climb on board. When a lightning flash fells a tree, fatally crushing Mr B's sweetheart in full view of everyone, he becomes the snarly, solitary grouch we encounter at the start. The loss of future happiness, the corrosive effects of profound grief – adults, and many works for little ones, would shy away from these dark and doom-laden topics.

But the unfailing joy of this production lies in seeing Mr B realise, from within his own heart, that he has to emerge from such futile misery. Whereupon the snow-shrouded book bursts into a spring-time of sprouting flowers, leafy trees and sunny beams. The miniaturised details are so entrancing, I'm not sure if the kisses we blew at the end were for Mr B – or for the puppeteers.



The Story of Mr B

“The Story of Mr B will brighten up any rainy Edinburgh afternoon.



by James Beagon on 19th August 2016

ShakeShakeTheatre present the tale of a man named Bumblegrum in a quirky and enjoyable puppet show for children.

AUDIENCE REVIEWS ON THE FRINGE FESTIVAL WEBSITE

Audience

Professional

Post your review

Sarah GRIOT

5 days ago

It's a beautiful show, not to be missed!!! My 2,5 was caught during the 40 minutes! Beautiful set, funny characters, full of emotions, and poetry. Really well made. Lovely actors playing different characters and changing voices each time. Never bored. A gem!

[Report abuse](#)

Cat M

6 days ago

Brilliant puppet show – our 2.5 yr old loved it and 10 month old sat mesmerised. Amazing!

[Report abuse](#)

Grace Jarvis

7 days ago

Enchanting, imaginative and heartwarming. We don't have children yet but when we do we'd love to bring them to this show! The story is sweet and engaging with lovely puppet characters and charming scenery. (We would also love to have our own Mr Bubblegum puppet to take home!).

[Report abuse](#)

KAREN Mair

7 days ago

A super surprise – luckily managed to get tickets at the last minute. Charming, imaginative– a winner for adults and children. Catch it if you can !

[Report abuse](#)

J Downie

7 days ago

Saw the show this morning with my 6 year old and 9 year old and we all loved it! It's beautifully put together and very cleverly done. Great little studio at the venue makes it feel very special too. Definitely recommend seeing it!

[Report abuse](#)

Fi Lyburn

11 days ago

Brilliant show. My 7 yr old daughter and 4 yr old son were enthralled and giggled lots. The props are extremely creative, diction always clear, no scary parts to the storyline. I loved it too. Best children's show so far.

[Report abuse](#)

Tracy Crawford

12 days ago

I loved this little show I say little as its in a little (but lovely) room. Lovely for all ages but think under fives would love it as there are lovely puppets and a little bit of sparkle. I was really charmed, it was clever and nicely thought out, a real joy to watch.

Susan Miles

15 days ago

This is truly a wee hidden gem. Totally magical and a wonderful bit of puppetry. I don't think it is simply a kids show as we enjoyed it as much as the children and would recommend it for adults too who like a wonderful wee story. A total wonderful festival find.

[Report abuse](#)

H Morrison

18 days ago

This is a beautiful puppet show. We went with our 3 kids (4, 3 and 10 months) and they were enthralled. My older kids enjoyed the humour and my baby loved the imagery. My husband also enjoyed it far more than he expected to. It definitely isn't just a kids' show but one that is suitable for all. Truly magic and would highly recommend.

[Report abuse](#)