

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL FRINGE 2004
James Seabright for Festival Highlights presents

DAVID BENSON'S HAUNTED STAGE

FRINGE FIRST WINNER ENTERS WORLD OF THE PARANORMAL

There's something creepy going on in the old Assembly Drawing Room... For years, stories of odd sounds, ghostly shadows and unnerving atmospheres have hung about this remote corner of the Assembly Rooms – and not just when the Fringe is on.

How appropriate then that Fringe favourite David Benson should premiere his latest show in this most haunted of rooms. Famous for his mesmerising portraits of Kenneth Williams and Frankie Howerd, Benson now turns his attention from dead camp comedians to the just plain dead. Or perhaps the 'not quite dead enough...'

For the sheer range of his performance, the tautness and vitality of his language, and the masterful comic insight, David Benson has few peers. And he can sing, the swine. Miss him at your peril. The Independent

So, what are ghosts anyway? Why do they continue to haunt us? And has anyone actually seen one? Benson explores these questions with his audience and illuminates the show with brilliant enactments of stories by the Masters of Terror – Henry James, M. R. James, his distant relative E.F. Benson and others. Plus a true tale of his own, guaranteed to make your hair stand on end.

Benson's ability to populate an empty stage with an amazing array of characters is on display once again with this new show. Expect the unexpected as you enter the Drawing Room to gaze upon the Haunted Stage...

A first-class entertainer... endows everything he does with real warmth and originality... truly irresistible
Edinburgh Evening News

David Benson stunned critics and audiences with his Fringe First-winning show *Think No Evil of Us - My Life With Kenneth Williams* in 1996. Since then, he has worked the trick again with *Mourning Glory* (1998 – a wicked meditation on the death and funeral of Diana, subsequently invited to the 1999 Sydney Festival), *To Be Frank - Frankie Howerd and The Secret of Happiness* (2001), and last year's hit *Star Struck*, in which he portrayed all the guests at a disastrous party given by Noel Coward. All four of these shows have toured the UK throughout the first half of 2004. David co-devised and directed Janet Street-Porter's smash hit solo show *All The Rage* at the 2003 Edinburgh Fringe and contributed material to Linda Marlowe's solo tour-de-force *No Fear!* Benson won rave reviews for his portrayal of Inspector Truscott in Joe Orton's *Loot* at Derby Playhouse, directed by Cirque du Soleil's Cal McCrystal (November 2003). He will be working with McCrystal again later this year in his first pantomime role, at Newbury's Corn Exchange. His Radio 4 series *The Private World of Kenneth Williams* was released on CD by BBC Worldwide in April.

LISTINGS

DAVID BENSON'S HAUNTED STAGE

Written and performed by David Benson

At Assembly Drawing Room (Venue 3) 6-30 August 2004 (except Tuesday 17) at 12.45pm (1h10m)

Tickets £5-£11

Box Office: 0131 226 2428

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