



EDINBURGH FESTIVAL FRINGE 2005

James Seabright for Festival Highlights presents

The Black Sheep directed by Gregory Thompson in

ROAD TO PISA

A LOVE STORY. A ROAD MOVIE. A TALKING ASS.

Acclaimed comedy theatre company The Black Sheep return to Edinburgh with two new shows *Road to Pisa* and *Professor Bumm's Story Machine* following their 2004 sell out hits *The Joy of Wine* and *Fairly Tales*.

In *Road to Pisa* two unlikely acrobats and a glamour peasant hit Renaissance Italy's variety circuit, braving death, rivalry and a wonky tower. Tired of playing in the sticks, brothers Alfredo and Ronaldo hope to win fame and fortune at the festival in Pisa with their circus skills - but will the temptation of love, their over-bearing mother, and talking ass Neddy get in their way?

"Great comic writing" *The Guardian* - Pick of The Week for *The Joy of Wine*

Inspired by the 'Road To...' movies of Bing Crosby and Bob Hope, The Black Sheep bring their unique mix of theatrical mayhem to musical comedy, creating an uplifting show that recalls the innocence of the golden age of cinema. This irreverently funny hour, complete with unicycles, sword-swallowing and questionable Italian accents, also introduces Naomi Kerbel as a new member of the ensemble.

"Unsurpassed levels of lunacy" *Metro* on *The Joy of Wine*

Road to Pisa is directed by **Gregory Thompson**, whose recent work includes The Mercury Theatre's production of *The Pull of Negative Gravity* which won a Fringe First in 2004, and *As You Like It* for the RSC 2003. As the founding Artistic Director of AandBC Theatre Company, he created the acclaimed romantic comedy *The Tale That Wags The Dog* which has toured internationally and was seen in Edinburgh during the 2003 festival as part of the British Council showcase.

The Black Sheep was formed in 2000 by **Ciaran Murtagh** and **Andrew Jones**, after early collaborations at the Central School of Speech and Drama and later in sketch company Übersausage. Their work has included sketch shows *The Black Sheep Show*, *Luxury Assortment* and *Year of the Sheep*, improvised shows *Fairly Tales*, *Story Pimp* and *Liberty Hall!*, biblical sit-com *Holy Days* at the Soho Theatre. They have performed in crypts, fields, aeroplanes, public toilets, lifts and Vintner's Hall, in front of three thousand Polish children in Warsaw, and on *Go 4 It!* on Radio 4 and *Milk Run* on Radio 1. They were runners up in 2003 and finalists in 2004 for the Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award.

Naomi Kerbel has worked with a wide range of theatre and comedy companies at the Edinburgh fringe, from her appearance as a student with Cambridge Footlights to her acclaimed role in children's show *The Mole Who Knew It Was None Of His Business* at last year's festival. Other recent credits are as diverse as playing Jill in *Jack And The Beanstalk* at Newbury Corn Exchange and Petra in *An Enemy Of The People* at London's Union Theatre.

Read more about the company at www.blacksheepcomedy.co.uk

LISTINGS

ROAD TO PISA

Written by Andrew Jones and Ciaran Murtagh. Performed by Andrew Jones, Naomi Kerbel and Ciaran Murtagh.

Directed by Gregory Thompson. Designed by Prav Menon-Johansson.

At Pleasance (Venue 33) 60 the Pleasance Edinburgh EH8 9TJ (Sub-venue: Upstairs)

3-29 August 2005 (except 10 & 17 August) at **2.30pm** (1hr)

Tickets £5 - £9.50

Box Office: 0131 556 6550/ www.pleasance.co.uk

**For further information please contact Kat Portman on
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