

Spymonkey's Cooped

Marketing Pack v3.0

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1 Box Office Information

Name of company:	Spymonkey
Title of show:	Spymonkey Cooped
Company contact:	Toby Park Unit 7b level 3N New England House New England St Brighton BN1 6DW 07766 712757
Tour Press/Publicity	Toby Park (as above)
Duration	85 minutes, interval optional
Age Suitability	14+ (see note on audiences)
Spymonkey are:	Aitor Basauri (Spain) Stephan Kreiss (Germany) Petra Massey (UK) Toby Park (UK)
lighting/technical manager	tbc
director	Cal McCrystal

created by Cal McCrystal, Aitor Basauri, Petra Massey,
Stephan Kreiss, Toby Park

production design Lucy Bradridge

stage manager tbc

technical assistant tbc

'4xinLove': written & produced by Neil Filby & Toby Park 2001

diva remix by Jean-François Houle

guest vocalist Corinne Zarzour

'Mr Sandman': original composition by Pat Ballard 1954

production Toby Park & Jean-François Thibeault

drums Larry Aberman

double bass Simon Dolan

piano Eliot Douglass

baritone sax Toby Park

'Love Sounds th'Alarm' by GF Handel

harpsichord Peter McCarthy

video production Lorna Heavey

cameraman James Nutt

video nun Zoe Bywater

choreography Laetitia Thackeray

photographs David O'Driscoll
Bernhard Fuchs
Tork

graphic design Tork

Spymonkey artistic directors Aitor Basauri, Petra Massey, Toby Park

1st UK Performance

17th July 2001, Komedia Brighton

Outline

Spymonkey present a deliciously demented take on the pulp gothic novella.

A misty night.

A young girl arrives at a remote railway station in the heart of darkest Northumberlandshirehampton to take up her position as confidential secretary to the reclusive Forbes Murdston. Beautiful, fawn-like, swinging, but a hostage to passion, Laura knows now that life - and love - will never be the same again...

...And her an orphan!

2 Press Quotes

"So funny it would be ridiculous to miss it... There are puns, sight gags, a disco song, a peerless parody of Crouching Tiger's martial magic and a nude pastoral dance that made me laugh so much my throat hurt." The Times (UK)

"Utterly infectious... a perfectly paced hybrid of The Pink Panther and Psycho" The Independent (UK)

"Imagine Mills & Boon rewritten by Monty Python. Or the Muppets doing a cover version of a trashy American Gothic soap. Fling in a fig leaf or three and some brilliantly ditsy clowning and whey-hey! You're close to being Cooped with Spymonkey... SEE IT!" The Herald (UK)

"Spymonkey are very, very, very, very, very funny - and I'm not just saying that because I'm paid by the word. The reigning monarchs of physical comedy" *****5 stars The Melbourne Age (AU)

"Engaging, ridiculous and very very funny... Judging by the audience reaction (a standing O), a crowd favourite this year [at Just For Laughs]" Montreal Gazette (CA)

HITLIST *****5 stars "Jaw-achingly funny" The List (UK)

***** "Everything about this sensational show works brilliantly. An absolute triumph of comedy and theatre" THREE WEEKS (UK)

"Trust me folks, this show even has the critics going back for seconds and believe me it's just as funny second time around!" HAIRLINE MAGAZINE AWARD WINNER *****5 stars

The Scotsman

****4 stars "Puerile yet sophisticated, genre-conscious yet wildly unpredictable, constantly inventive"

Total Theatre Magazine

"Grannies blushing at the naughty bits, kids hooting with laughter, twenty-somethings on a date holding hands and grinning, teenagers from the local sixth-form colleges clutching each other in glee."

Scottish Television

"Each performance is precisely played and every punchline timed to perfection"

The Stage

A STAGE 'MUST-SEE' EDINBURGH 06 " It is simply not possible to have more fun at the theatre than this. Just go to see Spymonkey and laugh. That's all that needs to be said. Go. See them. Laugh.

"One of the best, most hilarious shows seen on the Fringe, Cooped is not to be missed... Astounding and hugely entertaining to watch... Almost made me lose control of my bladder" Metro (UK)

www.rockster.ca

"A must-see show. The consensus among the people I talked to is that this evening was one of the funniest things they've ever seen. Mel Brooks. Monty Python. Spymonkey ranks right up there. They deliver. And deliver. And they keep delivering until you're ready to yell "Enough! I can't take it!"

TOTAL THEATRE AWARD NOMINEE 2006

MONTREAL CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD NOMINEE 2007

Tagesspiegel Berlin

"Non-stop laughter"

Berliner Zeitung

"Wild British humour"

RBB TV - 3 Jan 2014

"Monty Python on acid"

3 Copy Sheet

54 words:

"Made me laugh so much my throat hurt" The Times (UK)

Spymonkey's deliciously demented take on the pulp gothic novella.

Beautiful, fawn-like, swinging - but a hostage to love. Laura knew the first day she met her new employer that life - and love - would never be the same again.

...And her an orphan!

75 words:

Directed by Cal McCrystal

"Made me laugh so much my throat hurt" The Times (UK)

Beautiful, fawn-like, swinging - but a hostage to love. Laura knew the first day she met her new employer that life - and love - would never be the same again.

...And her an orphan!

International comedy sensation Spymonkey present their deliciously demented take on the pulp gothic novella.

115 words:

Directed by Cal McCrystal

"A carefully crafted brand of lunacy... Made me laugh so much my throat hurt" The Times (UK)

Beautiful, fawn-like, swinging – but a hostage to love. Laura du Lay arrives at a remote railway station to take up her position as confidential secretary to the reclusive Forbes Murdston. She has ignored for as long as she can the unsettling rumours that surround her new employer, his ominous manservant Klaus and the ancient house. But Murdston's violent mood-swings can only signify one thing: INSANITY!

...And her an orphan!

International comedy sensation Spymonkey present their deliciously demented take on the pulp gothic novella.

200 words:

Directed by Cal McCrystal
Designed by Lucy Bradridge

"A carefully crafted brand of lunacy... Made me laugh so much my throat hurt" The

Times (UK)

A misty night.

A young girl arrives at a remote railway station in the heart of darkest Northumberlandshirehampton to take up her position as confidential secretary to the reclusive Forbes Murdston. Beautiful, fawn-like, swinging, but a hostage to passion, Laura knows now that life - and love - will never be the same again...

...And her an orphan!

She has ignored for as long as she can the unsettling rumours that surround her new employer, his ominous manservant Klaus and the ancient mansion. But Murdston's violent mood-swings can only signify one thing: INSANITY! Her terrible dreams seem to warn of some impending calamity. If only she could get word to Inspector Judadench to warn him. In her desperation she turns to the trusty family lawyer Roger Parchment. How can she leave Forbes now, now that he is so close to finishing his memoirs? How can she leave him when she has grown to love him? Yes, now... now she is truly...

...COOPED!

International comedy sensation Spymonkey present their deliciously demented take on the pulp gothic novella.

4 Show History and Touring

Cooped was developed in April and May 2001 at Riverside Studios and BAC in London and Teatro Ticino in Switzerland, and premiered at the Komedia Brighton on 17th July 2001. It enjoyed a rapturous reception at the Edinburgh Festival 2001. Its ensuing UK tour confirmed the show as a favourite amongst audiences and critics alike. Performances have included Brighton Paramount Comedy Festival (2002) and the London International Mime Festival (2002 & 2003). In 2002 it toured internationally to Hungary, Finland and Switzerland with support from the British Council.

Following their residency in the adult burlesque ZUMANITY – ANOTHER SIDE OF CIRQUE DU SOLEIL in Las Vegas, Spymonkey created an extended version of the show in Calgary Canada. Since then their international touring has included performances at Sydney Opera House, Melbourne Comedy Festival, Just For Laughs Montreal, South Bank London and Brighton Festival.

5 Company History

'Spymonkey follow a rich comic tradition which runs from Tommy Cooper through Morecombe and Wise to Reeves and Mortimer. They are clowns supreme, the high priests of foolery.' Tom Morris, Associate Director, Royal National Theatre, London

'Among the country's brightest young companies.' The Times UK

'Groundbreaking and sharply brilliant, Spymonkey dance along the very boundary of artistic bravery. They take big risks in their work, and manage to be both true to a highly experimental process AND take their audience with them on that journey. Our loss is Las Vegas's gain.' Julian Crouch, Improbable Theatre UK

With their dark, edgy physical comedy rooted 'somewhere between Monty Python, the Marx Brothers and Samuel Beckett' (The Houston Chronicle), and a quartet of performers from Spain, Germany and England, Spymonkey have proved to be a truly international phenomenon, enjoyed by and accessible to a wide range of international audiences. The cultural and linguistic diversity of the group, and their unique blend of physical comedy and explosive surrealism has won them a deserved international reputation: at the time of writing they have performed in 17 countries from the US, Canada and Mexico to Syria and Taiwan. International promoters spotted early on the opportunity that Spymonkey's work offers: original work that simultaneously represents the best in contemporary British theatre and rich comic entertainment. In the words of Patrick Brazier, head of the British Council in Damascus, Spymonkey are a 'superlative example to the world that there is more to British theatrical culture than just Shakespeare.'

Spymonkey was founded by Toby Park, Petra Massey and Aitor Basauri in 1997. Having met whilst working for the Swiss action-theatre group Karl's Kühne Gassenshchau, they approached comedy director Cal McCrystal to make with them a new physical comedy show. At the end of 1998 'Stiff', a black comedy about undertakers, had its premiere at the Komedia Brighton and toured briefly in the UK and Switzerland. In 2000 Paul Weilenmann was replaced in the role of Mr Keller by Stephan Kreiss. One of the hits of the Edinburgh Fringe in 2000, it won a Total Theatre Award. Since 2000 'Stiff' has been performed in Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, Finland, Spain, France, USA, Canada, Mexico, Syria, Ireland, Romania and the Czech Republic. It was included in the British Council Showcase of the best of British theatre in 2001.

Critical praise for 'Stiff'

'A dead funny, quick-witted show about mortality, full of the kind of clever word-play that ensures you get from "passed away" to "pissed off" very quickly. This is a tragical tale and you'll weep, but only with laughter.' The Guardian UK

'I nearly died laughing.' The Times UK

'Irreverent, inventive. impish and droll. The most fun anyone has had with the

undertaking business since Evelyn Waugh wrote 'The Loved One' Houston Chronicle USA

'Deliriously funny – credit this young European troupe with impeccable taste in influences and, what's even better, a skill to match the originals.' Globe & Mail, Canada

'Cooped' was the second collaboration between Spymonkey, writer/director Cal McCrystal and designer Lucy Bradridge. It opened at the Komedia Brighton in July 2001 and confirmed the partnership as a formidable creative presence in British theatre. (see Section 4 'Show history and touring')

In 2003 Spymonkey and director Cal McCrystal were invited by Cirque du Soleil to create and perform the comedy for 'Zumanity - Another Side of Cirque du Soleil', the adult cabaret they created in Las Vegas. Since starting its residency in its sumptuous theatre at the New York-New York Hotel & Casino in August 2003 the show has been enjoyed by over half a million people. Spymonkey's surreal, inventive and irreverent style have made them the uproarious highlight.

Critical Praise for Spymonkey in Zumanity

'The Puritans surrender to prurience and fornicate with anything in reach: one another, the audience, a lifesize doll that actually does come to life and tries to seduce a fellow in the front row. Arousal! Appalling! And most deftly done.'
Time Magazine USA/Canada

'Rampantly brilliant bad taste.' News of the World UK

'The comedic essence of Zumanity.' Image Magazine USA

In 2005 the members of Spymonkey took the decision to leave *Zumanity* in order to continue their own work, and in October 2005 created an extended version of *Cooped* for mid-scale international touring. In 2007 they created their third show *Bless* which was nominated for 3 Betty Awards during its inaugural run in Calgary Canada.

6 Biographies

AWAITING UPDATE

PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR MOST UP-TO-DATE COMPANY BIOGS

7 Contact Information

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