

# GRUMPY OLD WOMEN

## Live 2 Chin Up Britain

*"An evening of Olympic-class whingeing about the state of the world, the collapse of good manners and the general ineptitude of men ... Some of the meditations on mortality and the fading of desire could almost have been lifted from a Beckett play."* Clive Davis, *The Times* ★★★★★

Fresh from a sell-out 62-date 2009 tour, Grumpy Old Women Live 2: Chin Up Britain – the new show from the creators of the touring phenomenon Grumpy Old Women Live – is set to hit London's West End for an eight-week run. SUSIE BLAKE (Coronation Street, The Victoria Wood Show) and WENDI PETERS (Coronation Street, Bad Girls) return to star alongside original Grump JENNY ECLAIR – who is also the show's co-writer with JUDITH HOLDER (best-selling author of the first Grumpy Old Women book and producer of the hit TV series). This testy triumvirate will be treading the boards (whilst trying not to break them) in all their collective grumpy glory at the Novello Theatre from 14<sup>th</sup> April to 5<sup>th</sup> June.

The country has gone to rack and ruin, but Britain's Top Grumps are ready to hit the nation's capital in a show packed full of handy hints on getting through these hard times the grumpy way. So chin up Britain! It's time to fight back, with ninety minutes of advance grumbling and tutting: the theatrical equivalent of a good shoulder rub – better value than a Marks and Spencer's meal deal, and more fun than jumping up and down on a trampoline without a bra.

Grumpy Old Women Live 2: Chin up Britain sees our battalion of battleaxes raise the bar with on-stage skipping, a D.I.Y. disco and live gymkhana, in this all-singing, all-dancing (well, *sort of*) spectacular! They'll be offering top tips on coping with Excessive Cleaning Disorder, celebrity culling, how to overcome menu masochism, and combining household chores with safe sex in the comprehensive Guide to Grumpy Rumpy Pumpy...

The original stage version of Grumpy Old Women Live completed four sell-out UK tours, a hugely successful month-long West End residency, and a hit run in Australia – which, combined, sold 180,000 tickets. The original show was also written by *Perrier Award*-winning comedian JENNY ECLAIR and JUDITH HOLDER and was released on DVD in autumn 2008.

### LISTINGS INFORMATION

**Venue:** Novello Theatre, Aldwych, London WC2B 4LD  
**Dates:** 14<sup>th</sup> April – 5<sup>th</sup> June  
**Times:** 1930 every day except Sundays, plus 1430 matinees every Wednesday and Saturday except 14<sup>th</sup> April  
**Box Office:** 0844 482 5170  
**Website:** [www.grumpyoldwomenlive.com](http://www.grumpyoldwomenlive.com)

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### What the press said about Grumpy Old Women Live:

*"A slickly scripted evening of comedy ... The largely female crowd greet gags about Trinny and Susannah and catalogue shopping with bashless glee."*

**Dominic Maxwell, The Times**

*"The audience, largely made up of robust middle-aged women, roared. I've sat with this crowd before. The same ageing girls' night-outers attended The Vagina Monologues at the Bristol Hippodrome three years ago. But Eve Ensler's play, for all its flashes of humour, remains so achingly, lower-sixthishly intense. With its lighter touch, Grumpy Old Women Live is a wiser and more knowing expression of female solidarity."*

**Amanda Mitchison, Sunday Telegraph**

*"There's nothing quite like the sound of laughter sweeping across an audience, and the stage version of Grumpy Old Women produces two hours of continuous humour, lapped up by a mainly female audience. It is so exuberantly performed... it could become a major touring franchise in the vein of The Vagina Monologues – and just as liberating for audiences who can recognise themselves in it."*

**Mark Shenton, Sunday Express**

*"The writing is stiletto sharp. Great gales of laughter greet every admission and shared middle-aged secret."*

**Robert Gore Langton, Daily Mail**

*"Warmhearted, witty, empathetic and, dare I say it, rather empowering."*

**Kathryn Flett, The Observer**

*"If you are planning to celebrate your divorce, mourn your lost youth, or simply want a feel-good night out with the girls, this is the perfect ticket ... Fluffier than The Vagina Monologues, sillier than Shirley Valentine, more uplifting than a reinforced Wonderbra."*

**Bruce Dessau, Evening Standard**

*"A raucous hen-party atmosphere prevailed as almost 2,000 women in the 30-plus bracket converged to watch comedienne Jenny Eclair, together with actresses Dillie Keane and Linda Robson, indulge in an orgy of good-natured lamentation."*

**Dominic Cavendish, Daily Telegraph**

*"The show is simply uproarious. It is big, brash and colourful, riding on a wave of warmth and empathy."*

**Pat Ashworth, The Stage**



## Jenny Eclair

Comedian, writer and stand up JENNY ECLAIR was the first woman to win the *Perrier Award*, live British comedy's highest accolade. She has hosted her own show on LBC radio, and is a regular contributor on shows such as BBC Radio 4's Woman's Hour, Banter and Just a Minute. JENNY has also recently presented Meter Mad and Drawn to be Wild (both BBC Radio 4).

JENNY performed and co-wrote (with JULIE BALLOO) The Andy Warhol Syndrome – a play about celebrity – at the 2004 Edinburgh Festival, London's Fringe and on tour around the UK. As an actress, she has also starred in a number of West End productions including Steaming, Mum's The Word and The Vagina Monologues. JENNY recently returned to her stand-up roots with her Because I Forgot To Get A Pension tour, which was extended due to demand for tickets.

JENNY has co-written Wendy and Grumpy Old Couples with JUDITH HOLDER. She has also written three novels: The Book of Bad Behaviour, published in 1994, followed by Camberwell Beauty in 2000 and Having a Lovely Time in 2005. She is a respected critic, and was on the judging panel for the 2006 *Orange Prize for Fiction*.

JENNY's TV appearances include Skins (Channel 4), Al Murray's Multiple Personality Disorder (ITV1) Comedy Map of Britain, Grumpy Old Women, The Grumpy Guides To ... and Grumpy Old Holidays (BBC TWO), Holby City (BBC ONE), The Bill (ITV1), Dawn French's Girls Who Do: Comedy (BBC ONE), The Culture Show (BBC TWO), Empire's Children (Channel 4) The ONE Show (BBC TWO), It's Grim Up North (BBC TWO), My Childhood (BBC THREE) and Graham Norton's Bigger Picture (BBC ONE). She was a memorable contestant on Celebrity Fame Academy (BBC ONE) and has also participated in Room 101 (BBC TWO), So Graham Norton (Channel 4), The Joan Rivers Position (five), Celebrity Weakest Link (BBC ONE) and Call my Bluff (BBC ONE). Previously, JENNY has also hosted The British Comedy Awards Aftershow Party (ITV2), Eurovision Song Contest (BBC THREE), The BBC New Comedy Awards (BBC ONE) and The Perrier Awards (Channel 4). She will shortly be appearing on BBC ONE's Let's Dance for Sport Relief, alongside fellow cast member SUSIE BLAKE.



## **Susie Blake**

Perhaps best known for playing Beverley Unwin in Coronation Street (ITV1), SUSIE BLAKE is a vastly experienced comic actor, having starred alongside VICTORIA WOOD in The Victoria Wood Show (BBC ONE), JOHN CLEESE in the film Fierce Creatures, and FRANKIE HOWERD in The Frankie Howerd Show (BBC Radio 4). Further comedy credits include The Darling Buds of May (ITV), Drop The Dead Donkey (Channel 4), The Stanley Baxter Show (ITV), Russ Abbott's Madhouse (ITV) and Roger, Roger (BBC ONE). She will be appearing with JENNY ECLAIR in this year's Let's Dance for Sport Relief (BBC ONE).

Also an accomplished stage performer, SUSIE has recently appeared in Wicked at the Apollo Victoria, and has a long list of theatre credits including High Society on tour, Noises Off at the Royal National Theatre, on tour and at the Piccadilly Theatre, The Shakespeare Revue for the RSC at the Barbican, the Vaudeville and on national tour; The Rocky Horror Show, and Godspell.

## **Wendi Peters**

Another star of Coronation Street (ITV1), WENDI PETERS is also well known for her role as 'Podger' Pam Jolly in Bad Girls (ITV1). Her credits include hit crime drama Out of the Blue (BBC ONE), Celebrity Adrenaline Junkie (ITV1), and the film In Love and War directed by RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH. WENDI was a finalist on the most recent series of Celebrity Masterchef (BBC ONE)

Last year she toured around Ireland in the new one woman play Mrs. Whippy, written by the Irish writer Cecelia Ahern, and has also toured with The Vagina Monologues. Other theatre credits include tours of Hello, Dolly! and Guys and Dolls, Gypsy at the West Yorkshire Playhouse, and Grease at the Dublin Olympia. She was part of the cast of Children Will Listen, which celebrated Stephen Sondheim's 75th birthday at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane and Stephen Sondheim's Follies in concert at the London Palladium.

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### **Judith Holder**

JUDITH HOLDER produced Grumpy Old Women for BBC TWO. She also wrote the best selling books Grumpy Old Women and The Secret Diary of a Grumpy Old Woman, and co-wrote Wendy and Grumpy Old Couples with JENNY ECLAIR. Before working on Grumpy Old Women Live, she produced some of the best-known entertainers and comedians in the business including DAME EDNA, CLIVE JAMES, MICHAEL ASPEL, BILLY CONNOLLY, LENNY HENRY and VICTORIA WOOD.

JUDITH was responsible for sending celebrities to far away places to survive as dumpees - JOANNA LUMLEY to a desert island, BILLY CONNOLLY to the arctic and LENNY HENRY to the Amazon. She also reunited the children from The Sound of Music and took them back to Salzburg in the award-winning After They Were Famous (ITV1) programme, and was responsible for all the ITV reunions that followed with the original cast of Grease, The Waltons and Dynasty. At the age of forty-six JUDITH decided to start doing her own comedy stand up routine, which almost certainly means that she is one of the oldest women to start stand up in bunion pads. She has written and performed comedy pieces on Woman's Hour and Home Truths (both BBC Radio 4).



## **Avalon Promotions**

Avalon Promotions Limited is one of the leading promoters of live comedy in the UK. Productions include: NEWMAN & BADDIEL in the first comedy show ever to be staged at Wembley Arena; FRANK SKINNER's record-breaking performance to an audience of 6,000 at the Battersea Power Station; Jerry Springer – The Opera at the National Theatre, at the Cambridge Theatre in London's West End, on national tour and at New York's Carnegie Hall; HARRY HILL at the Palace and Dominion Theatres in London; and Dave Gorman's Googlewhack Adventure at the Sydney Opera House, at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, on national tour and at the Village Theatre, New York (nominated for *Drama Desk Award 2004*).

The last 12 months has seen Avalon Promotions: present multi-award winning comics JENNY ECLAIR, RICHARD HERRING, RUSSELL HOWARD and FRANK SKINNER on sell-out runs; produce AL MURRAY, THE PUB LANDLORD live at the O2 and RUSSELL HOWARD on a 10-date sell-out arena tour; introduce some of the fastest-rising stars in comedy such as KRISTEN SCHAAL & KURT BRAUNOHLER and ISY SUTTIE; produce stage shows, such as Frank Skinner's Credit Crunch Cabaret, Jerry Springer – The Opera at the Sydney Opera House, and Grumpy Old Women Live, which has toured the UK four times and performed a highly successful run in Australia; stage; and present 20 acts at the Edinburgh Festival, where it has promoted a total of five *Perrier Award* winners and 18 *Perrier Award/Edinburgh Comedy Award* nominees in just 21 years.

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