

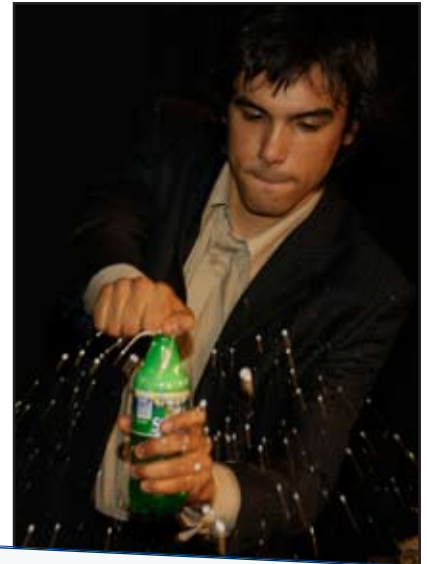
Three's Company

Play on Words

Touring
Pack

Bring Three's Company to your venue...

Three's Company are the young award winning theatre company seeking a venue for the course of the Edinburgh Fringe in 2007, for their new play, *Play on Words*.



"A tightly constructed and exceedingly funny script, which, as promised, does what it says on the box: plays delightfully with words, their potential power and their limitations at times when words fail us..."

...With a script as good as this it would be hard to go far wrong"

Oxford Theatre Review

About the play...

A multi-award-winning, new tragi-comedy, 'Play On Words' is a moving tale of friendship, a knockabout farce of quick witted punning and a surreal blend of theatre, illusion, and reality - all mixed into one truly unique theatrical experience.

Awards for Play on Words to date

Best Production by a Young Company - Buxton Fringe
Best Comedy (nomination) - Buxton Fringe
Best Young Actor (nomination for Yaz) - Buxton Fringe
Cameron Mackintosh Award for Best New Writing
and a place at the OUDS New Writing Festival

"Witty and sophisticated, this deserves a big future"

The Cherwell

"The audience loved the show, laughing uproariously... Go and see it"

Buxton Fringe

"A very funny play... hugely watchable, from beginning to end"

The Oxford Student

"A triumph!"

The Oxford Theatre Review

The Play on Words 2007 Tour

May: The ICA, London, as part of the Accidental Festival (*final stages of negotiations*)

July: The Infants' Hall, Buxton Festival Fringe (*confirmed*)

August: The Edinburgh Fringe... *at your venue?*



The story follows Fred and Eddie, two unwitting halves of a comic double-act, whose day at the office is interrupted by mysterious disembodied voices from behind the walls and the discovery of a familiar carved sharpener. Their day of crossword solutions soon becomes a race against time to save their long-lost friend Jen, facing cross words, theatrical tricks and a briefcase full of dried fruit.

As we follow their history through flashbacks, the line between playful puns and painful misunderstanding; comedy and tragedy; stage and audience starts to blur. The eventual search for the truth holds some shocking revelations and the ultimate test to Fred and Eddie's relationship, amid rebellious technology, audience participation and scene-stealing from a theatre technician who thinks he's seen the light.

"Play On Words is never short of literary tomfoolery – but what lies at the heart of Crawshaw's production is the impact of words..."

The Oxford Student

Production History

Written as Tom Crawshaw's eighth play as writer for Three's Company, 'Play On Words' was workshopped last summer as part of the Buxton Fringe. This small-scale performance **sold out completely** and went on to sell out subsequent added performances as well as receiving **an award, two nominations** and a rave review from the Fringe.

The script was subsequently selected for performance in the Oxford University New Writing Festival - one of 4 scripts chosen from 35, by Abigail Gonda of the Bush Theatre.

As part of this, it was given a further small-scale production by a company of

Oxford students. A huge hit with the judges, it went on to win the festival and was awarded the **Cameron Mackintosh Award** for New Writing from Oxford University.



During this process, Tom has been redrafting the script in consultation with the various actors, directors and judges to create the finished piece which Three's Company will be staging this year.



"The audience laughed uproariously through the comedic first half, then paid rapt attention when it turned into a psychological drama in the second."

Buxton Fringe

The script has attracted a director, designer and technical designer, based in London who will be joining Three's Company for the first time to work

on this year's tour. Yaz will be reprising his role of Eddie from the original production and auditions will be held for the rest of the cast, as well as a touring stage manager and technician in March. The result will be an inspiring collaboration by diverse practitioners on what will be the first professional production of this exciting new script.

Technical Matters

Despite being a technologically complex show, *Play on Words* has very simple technical requirements. Our lighting is flexible and simple, and our sound largely works from our own speakers backstage and/or

incorporated into the set. In a worst case scenario, this can be run over the venue's central sound system. There are no projection requirements. We run our own show with our team, and can get in and out in under 15 minutes.



The stages of the Buxton and Oxford scratch performances respectively

The set is a simple interpretation of a small office. Our designer is still finalizing the aesthetic but the show only calls for one desk, one chair and three to four boxes scattered around the stage - which double up as prop storage.

Ideal Minimum Requirements:

- Capability for five general lighting states, and a spot centre stage
- Four 13A plug sockets backstage
- A MD or CD player attached to a central sound system
- Storage for one desk, one chair and three small boxes of props



Selling Play on Words

Our press release will focus mainly on the comedy, tragedy mix of the play; the current / growing success of the new script; and the innovative staging ideas which break down actor audience barriers.

Further to this we are planning a news-release which links to a publicity stunt. Everyday, on the Royal Mile, we plan to hold an open 'audition' for the part of 'Man' in the play. This role only involves one line and is performed from the comfort of an audience seat but is nevertheless crucial to the play. If people do indeed turn up we will get them to perform some lines publicly and then choose one; if they don't, our producer will always be on stand-by to take on this highly demanding role for the day. The plan is for the news release to play down the rather relaxed reality of the situation. Two ideas below:

Dramatic accident leads to drastic casting action

Three's Company have lost an actor in the run up to their Edinburgh show – Play On Words – and are looking for a member of the public to replace him! After producing some great work in pre-Edinburgh rehearsals, eminent actor Michael Grady had a nasty accident exiting the stage and is recovering from concussion at home. Unfortunately this leaves him unable to perform and, without an understudy, Three's Company are opening this role up to any interested member of the public – but a different

one for each day! Luckily there is only one line so anyone – regardless of experience – can have a go. Ever wanted to perform in Edinburgh? Feel you belong on the other side of the footlights? Want an original way to see a show for free? Make your way down to the Royal Mile. Auditions held at 2pm everyday! – just outside the Fringe Office.

Win the chance to perform in a play in Edinburgh - no experience necessary!

That's right, Three's Company are offering this very chance in this year's production of 'Play On Words'. Simply come along to the Royal Mile – just outside the Fringe Office – 2pm everyday, where a lucky punter will

be selected and instantly rocketed to fame! All you have to do is read one line to us – in any way you think suitably dramatic. The lucky budding star will perform that very day with the cast of 'Play On Words' in the small but crucial role of 'Man'. Man's one line of script is simple but of key importance to the plot of this new tragedy-comedy, which follows two

friends battling the Great British pun in search of their long lost friend. What better way to truly get inside the Edinburgh experience. Plus, you can sit comfortably in the audience for all the rest of the play – for absolutely free! That's 2pm on the Royal Mile, outside the Fringe Office, everyday. All ages and sizes welcome! – silly hats optional.

We will have a large team in Edinburgh to distribute flyers, and we will mainly be sending them to locations where they can talk to audiences. We hope to have all in bold colourful t-shirts / hoodies that link to our poster / flyer design both in colour and with a logo.

We are also playing with the idea of an interactive addition to flyers and magazine / brochure adverts. This takes the form of a crossword surrounded by figures from the production - 'playing' on the words. The crossword features comical, Edinburgh related clues which can be filled in (e.g. 'correct answer to "would you like a flyer?" (2)' - solution: 'no'; 'upright entertainer (5-2)' - solution 'stand-up'). Three words are already filled in however, namely: "play", "on" and "words".

We will be purchasing a quarter page advert in the fringe brochure based around the crossword idea. It will be designed to appear as a real crossword when flicking through the brochure. The title/logo will float over this.

For our image / logo we are experimenting with both cartoons (see right) and / or doctored photos from a publicity shoot (see below for past creations). We are also looking for ways to represent the duality in the play: comedy v tragedy, reality v theatre - possibly involving a double sided flier, with the same image reflected slightly differently on the back.



eye catching heading / logo

edges look like torn paper

Dates are included but not the focus

real clues



Past Three's Company Publicity

Three's Company have sold out nearly all of their shows to date, and have acquired plenty of experience of sales and marketing as venue managers and promoters. Here are some samples of our recent work...

Some press images from Plane of Existence



Later Showers Edinburgh advert, 2005

Handout from the Play on Words previews and Othello



Biographies

Tom Crawshaw

writer and producer

Since seeing his first play performed aged 15, Tom has written **eight plays for the stage**, won a place in **three writing festivals**, been nominated for **Best New Writing** at the Buxton Fringe three years running, and been awarded the **Cameron Mackintosh Award for Best New Writing**. Previous theatre credits include *Later Showers* (Edinburgh Fringe 2005), *Plane Of Existence* (Buxton Fringe 2005), *Platformation* (Manchester 24:7 Festival 2004), *Income Taxi* (Buxton Fringe 2004) and *House Of Dreams* (with others, Buxton Opera House 2003).

His play *That's Life* was also professionally workshopped by **Buxton Opera House** in March 2003.

Tom has **directed three Three's Company productions** in the past and co-produced all ten. He worked as Assistant Director for *The Constant Prince* at **The Arcola** (London) in May and is currently working as dramaturge for a production of *Six Characters Looking For An Author* at **The Playhouse**, Oxford.

With Yaz, he set up **Underground Venues** in 2005, a venue group in the Buxton Fringe which last festival housed **300 performances of 50 different shows**. For **Underground Events** he produced several **sell-out comedy nights**, film nights and afternoons of acoustic music.

Tom is currently studying **Philosophy at Oxford University**. Tom also enjoys unicycling, caving and playing the ukulele but **does not** enjoy people asking if he does all of these at once.

Yaz Al-Shaater

co-producer & "eddie"

Currently studying at **Central School of Speech and Drama**, Yacein ("Yaz") trained at the **Rec Drama School** and the **National Youth Theatre**. Aged 20, he has performed in London, Derby, Manchester, Edinburgh, and across the Peak District.

An all-round performer, Yaz's many comedy performances - including lead roles in the '*Transport Trilogy*' (**Buxton Fringe 2003 - 2005**) are juxtaposed by serious roles, including Othello, Macbeth, Hamlet and Romeo in recent years. Recent professional credits include *Ticky Tock* (**Buxton Fringe**); *Romeo and Juliet Deceased* (**C Venues, Edinburgh Fringe**); *Plane Of Existence* (**Buxton Fringe**); *Platformation* (**Manchester 24:7 Festival**); Othello in *Othello* (**Buxton Opera House Studio Season**); Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* (**Ludlam Theatre, Derby**); Cheever in *The Crucible* (**The Old Clubhouse**); and the naked one in *Synchronicity* (**ICA, London**). He was also pleased to perform recently as '**Candleholder 2**' in a touring production of *The Sleeping Beauty* with the European Ballet. He is currently starring in a Triple Bill of Pinter plays at Central and as a Performance Artist will tour Europe in September with *Massa Confusa*.

"An extremely talented actor who deserves to go far..."

Buxton Opera House Review for *Othello*

"Desperately hilarious!"

Buxton Fringe Review for *Platformation*

"F*cking 21-year-old student c*nt."

Stewart Lee, August 2004

Yaz has a wide range of theatre experience having **directed four Three's Company productions**, designed lighting, sound, sets and publicity and produced for numerous others. With several years experience in **venue management**, Yaz is co-founder of **Underground Venues** with Tom.

Yaz is also practices magic, plays the guitar, is trilingual, and juggles. Less defeatist than Tom, he hopes to soon be able to do all at the same time.

Rose Lewenstein

director

Rose started her training in Musical Theatre, and went on to perform in a national tour of *Grease Gold* as Rizzo. Other performance credits include *Little Shop of Horrors*, *The Lion The Witch and The Wardrobe*, and *Girlfriends*. Rose is co-founder of **Blue Bud Stage Company**, and directed their first two productions, *Shakers Re-Stirred* (Upstairs at the Gatehouse), and *Corpsing* (The Hen and Chickens Theatre). Since then she has tackled a musical version of Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* for Travesty Players (at The Cockpit Theatre), worked with the Professional Artists' Network (at The Soho Theatre), and been invited to direct a run of *News Revue*, London's longest running political sketch show (at The Canal Cafe Theatre). Her most recent directing is for Word of Mouth Productions' new play *Meet Me in the Woods*, at the Old Red Lion Theatre.

"Smart direction from Rose Lewenstein!"

Ham & High Newspaper on *Meet Me in the Woods*

"Rose Lewenstein tackles [the show] with verve and pace."

Timeout Magazine on *Shakers Re-stirred*

Rose is a student at the **Central School of Speech and Drama**, whilst continuing her work for Blue Bud and as a freelance director. She is currently in pre-production for a collaboration of theatre and live jazz this summer, as well as a new piece for the ICA, London. Rose is also Head of Programmes at **The Accidental Festival** and is currently on an internship at the **Royal Court Theatre**.

An accomplished singer and pianist, other interests include jazz, literature, champagne, sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll; all of which Rose can *already* do at the same time.

Michael Grady

asst. director

Currently studying at **RADA**, Michael is co-founder of Three's Company and has curly brown hair. He started performing at five and directed his first show at 14. Since then, he directed four Three's Company shows, and worked with the **National Youth Theatre** and the **Royal Shakespeare Company**.

Sam Bailey

designer

Also studying at **Central School of Speech and Drama**, Sam has just won a place at *Scenofest*, the Prague Quadrennial Festival, with his company "**Parrot {in the} Tank**". Previously, he completed a Foundation Art Degree at Wimbledon. Sam also makes short films and is drummer for *The Cutaway*.

Haz Al-Shaater

technical and graphic design

Haz is at Leeds University studying Graphic & Communication Design, and with Yacein runs the marketing company *OrlandoRicardo*. He has designed for Three's Company forever, but prefers to stay off the stage. He claims to have abbreviated his name to Haz before his big brother shortened his to Yaz but noone really believes him.

Anna Beecher

stage and company manager

Anna is studying at the **BRIT Academy for Performing Arts**. She directed her first show at 14 - with a cast of 25 - and has been acting professionally since she was 11. Her first play was performed last year at the **Warehouse Theatre**, and she has led workshops and residencies for various schools in Buxton and London. Her voice has been heard in every Three's Company show so far, *except* Play on Words.

Julia Barnett

marketing and financial manager

Julia has worked closely with the many of the team both for **Underground Venues** (as Press Officer), and **Blue Bud** (Production Management). She also runs a contemporary dance company and is coordinating The **Central School of Speech & Drama's** tour to Prague this June.

About Three's Company

The multi award-winning Three's Company was originally founded in 2000 by three thirteen-year-olds, Yaz Al-Shaater, Tom Crawshaw and Michael Grady.



Beginning with small-scale local plays produced and created entirely by the three, the company attracted new actors, directors and designers to create an ever-changing group - now with ten professional productions under their belt, including five new plays.

Starting from their home-town, Three's Company has had **four consecutive sell-out, award winning years on the Buxton Fringe**, consistently including extended runs and the largest indoor audiences in the Fringe's history. Outside of Buxton, the group were chosen to take place in **Manchester's premiere new writing festival '24:7'** in 2004 and, in 2005, made their first appearance in the **Edinburgh Fringe** with *Later Showers*. This moving piece received strong emotional responses from audiences and a 5-star review from edinburghguide.com, who opened their review with a simple **"See this show. If you are fully booked, cancel others"**.



Three's Company were pretty chuffed with that and are keen to build on their initial success with this year's Edinburgh appearance and its wider UK tour.

Awards from the Buxton Fringe

Best Youth Production (2003); Best Young Actor (for Michael Grady) (2004); Best Musical Comedy (2005); Best Youth Production (2006); nominated Best Overall Production, Best Comedy and Best New Writing (2003); nominated Best Actor (for Michael Grady) and Best New Writing (2004); nominated Best New Writing (2005); nominated Best Comedy and Best Young Actor (for Yaz Al-Shaater) (2006)



"The future of drama is well assured in the hands of these talented young people!"

Buxton Advertiser, December 2001

"It is a privilege to watch talent like this developing in three guys who are barely gifted with their adult teeth... Aren't they sweet...?"

Buxton Fringe Review, July 2003

"A brilliant company... breathtaking young talent!"

Opera House Review, March 2004

"A company with breathtaking power... they really do deserve to be noticed."

Buxton Fringe Review, July 2004

"Buxton's worst kept secret!"

The Vine Magazine, November 2004

"I hope to have the honour to see more of them in the future."

Buxton Opera Review, November 2004

"The professionalism of these talented young men is astonishing."

Daily Mail, August 2005

"Their huge following in the town and beyond is the result of a series of prodigiously talented productions over a number of years... undoubtedly, this is a company with a vision and strength of purpose which exemplifies the Fringe spirit. Doubtless this is what is at the heart of the love that Buxton has for them"

Buxton Fringe Review, July 2006



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