

TONY JO for HRH ENTERTAINMENTS in association with THE GRAND THEATRE

National Theatre of Variety

GRAND THEATRE BLACKPOOL


Box Office 01253 290190

blackpoolgrand.co.uk


THURSDAY 3 AUGUST TO SATURDAY 28 OCTOBER AT 7.30

VARIETY AT NIGHT


STARRING




TONY JO
COMPERE




STEVE ROYLE
HILARIOUS
FAMILY ENTERTAINER



CLAUDE POWELL
CLASSIC
CROONER



LEANNE FURY
SENSATIONAL
VOCALIST



JOHNNIE CASSON
UK'S NO.1 COMEDIAN

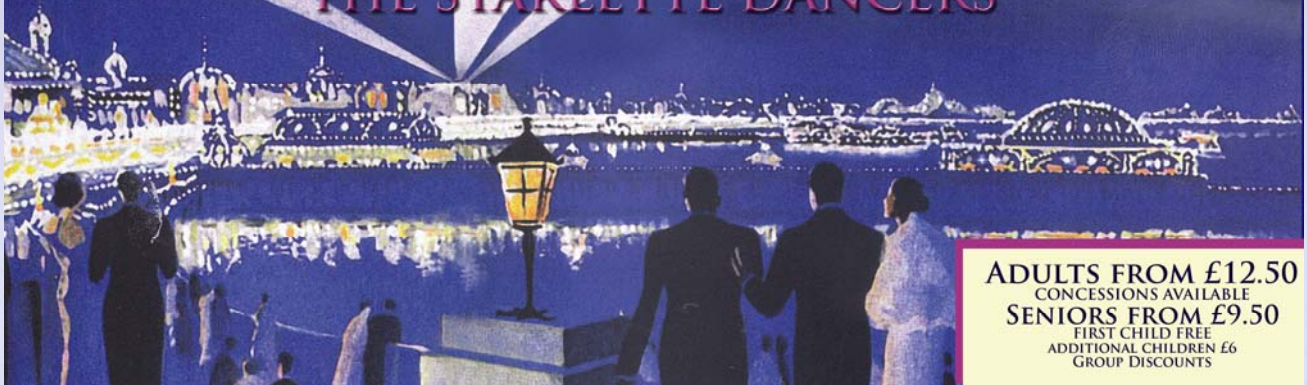


GUY BARRETT
MASTER
ILLUSIONIST



GUEST ARTISTE
EACH WEEK
MYSTERY TALENT

GLITZ & GLAMOUR!
THE STARLETTE DANCERS



ADULTS FROM £12.50
CONCESSIONS AVAILABLE
SENIORS FROM £9.50
FIRST CHILD FREE
ADDITIONAL CHILDREN £6
GROUP DISCOUNTS

GRAND THEATRE – MEDIA PACK

VARIETY AT NIGHT

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VARIETY AT NIGHT

Grand Theatre, Blackpool – Media Pack

Starring

Tony Jo – Compère

Johnnie Casson – UK's No. 1 Comedian

Steve Royle – Hilarious Family Entertainer

Guy Barrett – Master Illusionist

Claude Powell – Classic Crooner

Leanne Fury – Sensational Vocalist

The Starlette Dancers – Glitz & Glamour

Mystery Guest Artiste each week

Produced by Tony Jo for HRH Entertainments

'A variety show for all the family!'

MEDIA RELEASE

**Glitz, glamour, hilarious comedy, sensational singing, mind boggling illusions, mystery guests and ultra cool compère.
This is Variety!**

This summer join us at the Grand Theatre when we present a show which truly does bring the stars out at night! VARIETY AT NIGHT starring *Johnnie Casson, Tony Jo, Steve Royle, Guy Barrett, Claude Powell, Leanne Fury, The Startlette Dancers* and a mystery guest artiste each week.

Variety at Night runs from Thursday 3 August to Saturday 28 October at 7.30pm and is directed by Tony Jo for HRH Entertainment in association with the Grand Theatre National Theatre of Variety. Tony Jo said of show, "I am delighted to present a top class summer season show in a top class theatre which is the hub of entertainment in wonderful Blackpool. I love the Grand Theatre and Blackpool, and cannot wait for the opportunity to prove that the best summer seaside shows are in the greatest summer theatre in the country."

Variety at Night will star comedic impresario **Tony Jo** as *Compère*, fabulous jokester **Jonnie Casson**, hilarious family entertainer **Steve Royle**, *master illusionist* **Guy Barrett**, *classic crooner* **Claude Powell**, *sensational vocalist* **Leanne Fury**, with the **The Starlette Dancers** bringing glamour and glitz to the occasion and mystery guest artiste each week.

Grand Theatre manager Paul Iles added, "The Grand Theatre offers Blackpool's only brand new, fully-produced shows in 2006. *Variety at Night* is for holidaymakers and residents to enjoy. The show looks a million dollars!"

Blackpool's all new evening variety show is sure not to disappoint, with so many talented acts on stage, it will be a sensational spectacular.

Tickets for **VARIETY AT NIGHT** are priced from only £12.50 (concessions and Friends of the Grand discounts available), from £9.50 for Seniors with first child seat free and additional children at £6. Call the **Box Office** now on **01253 290190** to book your seats or book online at blackpoolgrand.co.uk. For party bookings of 12 persons or more, contact the **Groups Hotline** on **01253 743232**.

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Johnnie Casson

Johnnie Casson is a very funny Yorkshire-man whose second home is undoubtedly here in Blackpool. His popularity is second to none and his laidback style of delivery and warmth on stage makes him an instant hit with audiences.

His inoffensive charm and “over the garden fence” humour have made Johnnie the star he is today. He has appeared at the Grand many times before in summer seasons and pantomime.

Johnnie has become a legend amongst comedians the length and breadth of the UK and has found a popularity envied by many “bigger named” performers. A unique style of delivery, some clever material and an exceptional warmth, this dynamic and genuinely funny man, with the “mixed-up metaphors”, has a very natural asset – “like ability”, illustrated within minutes of him commencing his original blend of comedy when smiles and titters soon turn to uncontainable laughter.

Des O'Connor said Johnnie was one of the funniest comedians to appear on his show. This was proved time and time again with numerous return visits with Johnnie moving to the “star” slot.

Johnnie has made many television appearances on some of the country's most popular programmes, such as *The New Comedians*, *Celebrity Squares*, *Rock with Laughter*, *Talking Telephone Numbers*, *Jack Docherty Show*, *Live at the London Palladium* and of course Johnnie's memorable appearances on *Des O'Connor Tonight*.

Every major cabaret venue has, at one time, succumbed to Johnnie's mixed-up style of humour! So, sit back and relax while Johnnie puts a smile on your face that will build to a belly-full of laughter!

Tony Jo

Tony Jo is one of the most talented comedians in showbusiness. He has written material for such television classics as *You've Been Framed*, *Stars in Their Eyes*, *Chain Letters*, *Crosswits* and *Born Lucky* and has had a ten year association with the production team of *Question of Sport*.



On the after-dinner circuit his versatility is acknowledged by the affectionate name of 'The Guvnor'. In 1997, 1999 and 2001 he was awarded the after-dinner Speaker of the Year Award.

His television appearances include *Jim Davidson's Generation Game*, four series of *The Comedians*, *Live at Her Majesty's* and three *Royal Variety Performances*. Having toured with big stars such as Tom Jones, Engelburt Humperdinck, Gene Pitney, Shirley Bassey and Vic Damone, he has appeared at many major theatres and halls including The Royal Albert Hall and The London Palladium.

In 1998, he co-starred in *Comedy Bonanza* at the Grand Theatre. Tony has worked aboard the QE2 and Fred Olsen cruise ships as a member of The Grumbleweeds, and in his own right, and continues to cruise as a solo artiste.

In 1998 Tony was presented with an award from the Variety Club of Great Britain for being one of England's top comedians and also to recognise his work for hundreds of charities; he has raised many millions of pounds. He is the creator, producer and director of one of the biggest charity shows in the North of England, *All Hands on Deck*, which has starred Joe Longthorne, Johnnie Casson, Cannon & Ball, Jeremy Beadle and Roy 'Chubby' Brown to name but a few and last year raised £25,000 in only one night. Last year Tony directed and compèred *Theatre at War* for the National Theatre of Variety.



Steve Royle

Steve returns to the Grand Theatre, Blackpool to co-star in this year's summer season show *Variety at Night*, Blackpool's top family summer show for 2006. His popularity with both children and adults alike made him an obvious choice for this year's spectacular production.

Steve is probably best known as Mad Edgar from Camelot Theme Park. He initially created his famous medieval character when he began work at the park just over 12 years ago. Since then his notoriety has grown with performances in theatres, television, cruise ships, hotels, holiday centres and social clubs around the world. Steve

is also a regular presenter on BBC Radio Lancashire.

In 1996 Steve won the *Search for a Star* competition at the Talk of the Coast and was voted Critics' Choice at the *Showcall Showcase* in 1997. He has appeared at the Variety Club of Great Britain annual dinner, performed the warm-up on Phil Cool's television shows, entertained the casts of *Coronation Street* and *Brookside*, supported Joe Pasquale at the Leeds Varieties and performed with Rory Bremner, Rik Mayall, Ken Dodd, Dave Spikey and Peter Kay.

In October 1997 he appeared in his first serious acting role in ITV's *The Things You Do For Love*, where ironically he was to meet his future wife Janet Maher. Steve and Janet were married in September 2000 and in 2002 their daughter Daisy was born.

In 1999 Steve appeared on ITV's *Give Your Mate A Break* with Les Dennis and has since become a regular headline act on the alternative comedy circuit. He has supported Peter Kay and Dave Spikey on tour as well as working with other top alternative comedians such as Johnny Vegas, Paul Zenon, Tony Burgess and Alex Boardman.

Last year saw Steve perform on the famous Blackpool North Pier throughout the summer, recording *Max and Paddy's Road to Nowhere* with Peter Kay and starred in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* at The Grand Theatre, Blackpool. Steve returns to this theatre again later this year to star in *Dick Whittington*, a traditional family pantomime alongside Ray Meagher (Alf Stewart from *Home and Away*) and Andrew Newton Lee (heartthrob Robbie from *Hollyoaks*).

Guy Barrett

Guy Barrett comes from a showbusiness family background; his father is circus ringmaster Norman Barrett and his mother Sally a former professional ice skater.

Guy developed an interest in magic at a very young age. In 1990 Guy started working with large scale illusions and over the years has received many awards, including the British Ring Shield by the International Brotherhood of Magicians. He has worked all over the world with his illusion act in theatres, cabaret and on television.



When not working with his own illusion act Guy can be found designing illusions for other magicians and advising on shows.

Guy takes the classics of magic and the latest of illusions and presents them in a fresh modern manner.



Claude Powell

Claude Powell is known to his fellow professionals in showbusiness as Mister Smoothie, due to his laid-back style of presentation. He has performed extensively throughout Britain, performing in Scotland, the North of England, the Midlands, Wales or further afield, Spain, Africa and Channel Islands, where he performs to his increasing international fan base.

One of Claude's proudest theatre moments was performing at the London Palladium with the great Matt Monroe. Music critics have described him as a blend of Nat 'King' Cole and Brooke Benton, with just a hint of Louis 'Satchmo' Armstrong thrown in for good measure.

Claude's debut appearance at the Grand Theatre was in *A Cavalcade of Variety*, the inaugural performance celebrating the designation of the Grand as the National Theatre of Variety. It was largely due to the audience response on that night that Claude was asked to join our Summer Season line-up.

Leanne Fury

Leanne has loved to perform for as long as she can remember. Always entertaining family and friends as a toddler, she became involved with her local amateur dramatics society and performed in yearly shows and pantomimes.

From the age of twelve, Leanne attended the Gwyneth Hare School of Dance in Urmston, Manchester, where she took part in competitions and passed several exams. Leanne appeared in four professional pantomimes at Buxton Opera House, as a dancer; *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *Babes in the Wood*, *Dick Whittington* and *Cinderella*. It soon became apparent to all that Leanne was serious about performing and wanted to further these ambitions into a career. At sixteen she moved to Epsom to attend Laine Theatre Arts, and graduated from a three-year musical theatre course with honours. Since graduating Leanne has had the pleasure of working in many fantastic countries and meeting fascinating people.

Leanne's debut at the Grand was earlier this year in February where she had the pleasure to star alongside, Jim Casey, Eli Woods, Bernie Clifton, Jimmy Cricket, Jean Ferguson, Elaine Fossett, Tony Lidington, Katzenjammer, Syd Little, The Pierotters, Radio Wave's Leye and Norry, Steve Royle, Guy Barrett, Barrie Rutter, Tweedy the Clown and Tony Jo in *A Cavalcade of Variety*. Leanne is absolutely delighted to be invited back to perform at the beautiful Grand Theatre, and is looking forward to the summer season, working with her new theatrical family.





Mystery Guest Artiste

Each week *Variety At Night* will be presenting a guest artiste spot each week. The choice of line up could be magicians, comedians, singers or jugglers. Each star is guaranteed to be an audience pleaser!

Further information on the guest artistes will be announced each week.



Please Note: Cast photographs are available by email in .jpg format. Please contact Stephen Mercer on 01253 743213 or Adam Beckett on 01253 743252 email press@blackpoolgrand.co.uk with your requirements.