

War Horse: the epic sellout show comes to Edinburgh



War Horse the epic, award winning stage play opens tonight to a total sell-out run at the Festival Theatre. This is part of a UK wide tour that will run until September. Since its World Premier at the National Theatre in London, it has been seen by over 3 million people world-wide in its stage-form and many more as featured in the Movie version.

War Horse is the powerful story of a young boy called Albert and his beloved horse, Joey, who has been requisitioned to fight for the British in World War I. Caught in enemy crossfire, Joey ends up serving on both sides during the war before landing in No Man's Land, while Albert, not old enough to enlist, embarks on a treacherous mission to find his horse and bring him home. A remarkable tale of courage, loyalty and friendship, *War Horse* features ground-breaking puppetry work by South Africa's Handspring Puppet Company, which brings breathing and galloping horses to life on stage.

The Puppetry in the show is extremely complicated and is nothing like anything else on stage in the UK. It takes 8 weeks to train an actor to be part of the team of 3 that is needed to animate each horse. The finished horse puppets weigh approximately 43kg for the body including the puppeteers' backpacks and another 7.7kg for the head. They are made of cane, leather and Tyvec, a material used in book binding (for manes and tails). 14 craftsmen and women need 8 months to create the 23 puppets required for the show.



(Photography: www.thomashaywood.com)

After the show, the Reporter was able to have a short chat with Katie Henry (associate director) and David Fleeshman (who plays Arthur Narracott)

<http://www.theedinburghreporter.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Warhorse-Interview.mp3>