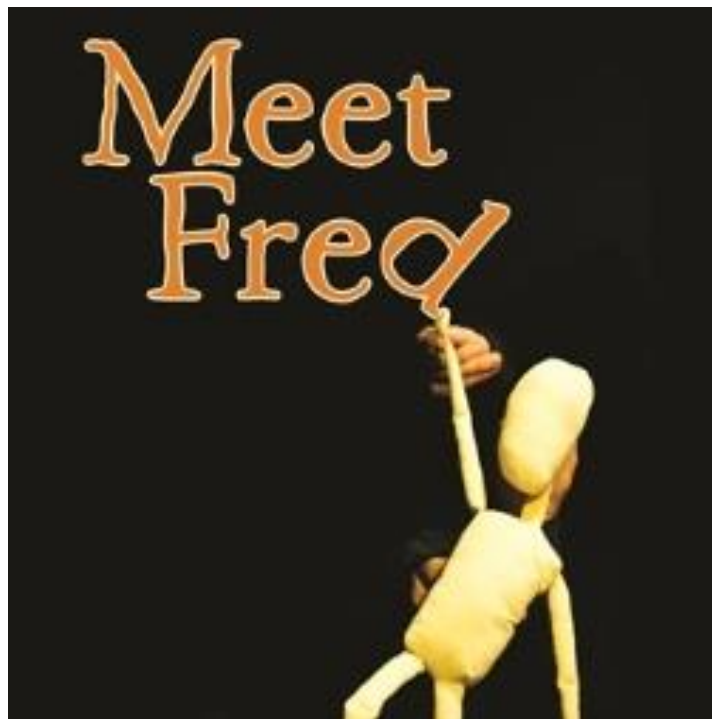




In association with

BLind SumMiT



## Venue Pack

For more information about this production or to book please contact Jacqui Onions on  
+44 (0)29 2030 0331 or email [jacqui.onions@hijinx.org.uk](mailto:jacqui.onions@hijinx.org.uk)

## Personnel

**Director/performer: Ben Pettitt-Wade**

**Devised by the company**

**Performers: Richard Newnham,**

**Lindsay Foster, Martin Vick,**

**Dan McGowan, Morgan Thomas,**

**Jon Kidd**

**Puppetry Dramaturgs: Tom Espina, Giulia Innocenti (from Blind Summit)**

**Lighting Design/Production Manager: Ceri James**

**Technician: Tom Aires**

**Puppets made by Blind Summit**

**Theme music: Jonathan Dunn**

**Production and rehearsal photos: Tom Beardshaw**



## Background

### Hijinx and Inclusion

Hijinx is an inclusive theatre company based in Cardiff, all our productions include learning disabled performers alongside performers without learning disability. To support our work we have a network of Academies around Wales that train learning disabled performers in a variety of skills. We provide this training because it is virtually impossible for an actor with learning disability to access more traditional drama schools or universities. When ready, students from our Academies join us on our professional productions. This ensures that our work is always of the highest quality, with all artists starting a process on an equal footing. Meet Fred features three of our performers with learning disability, all of whom were heavily involved in the devising of the production.

### Blind Summit

Based in London, Blind Summit is recognised as one of the UK's most exciting companies working with puppetry. They have had huge success with productions such as *The Table* and *Citizen Puppet*, and often work with companies such as Complicite and ENO. Hijinx came into contact with Blind Summit in April 2014 when we invited them to run a week's training in puppetry for our Academy students in Cardiff. We were joined by three of their artists, including Artistic Director Mark Down, it was during this week

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that the seed for making an inclusive production with a puppet was sown. Blind Summit have supported us throughout the process, from their designers making a set of puppets for us to train and explore with, and providing associate artists Tom Espina and Giulia Innocenti to work with us during the research and development stage for the project and rehearsals.

### **The Process**

As we explored the concept of creating an inclusive show with a puppet, the parallels between life for a puppet, and the learning disabled artists that we work with quickly became apparent. Just as many of the people that we work with rely on support in order to live an independent life, so Fred relies on his three puppeteers simply to exist. The relationship of dependence and interdependence that exists between Fred and his puppeteers is the exact same situation that many people with learning disability and disability in general face in their everyday life.

Inevitably during a devising process it is the people that you have in the room that ultimately influence in what direction a piece may go, and crucially what their experience is of the world at any given time. As we were making this show, many of our learning disabled performers were living through the current overhaul of the benefits system by our wonderful Tory government. We began to explore how life would be for Fred if he also lived in this environment, what would happen if Fred is threatened with losing his Puppetry Living Allowance, what would Fred be without his puppeteers, would he even survive? Suddenly, instead of the whimsical, light puppet show we had envisaged, we had a serious political message on our hands, but one that could be presented with hilarity and made seem all the more ridiculous when seen through the eyes of our puppet hero Fred.



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## Marketing Copy

### Hijinx Theatre in association with Blind Summit

#### Meet Fred

When threatened with losing his Puppetry Living Allowance, Fred's life begins to spiral out of control. "Highly entertaining, moving, and brilliantly produced" (Wales Arts Review), "the puppetry is sublime" (Arts Scene Wales) Contains strong language and puppet nudity **40 words**

#### Meet Fred

*"Prejudice against puppetry is the only acceptable form of prejudice"* (David Sefton, Artistic Director, Adelaide International Festival).

A cloth puppet fights prejudice every day. Fred just wants to be part of the real world, get a job and meet a girl, but when threatened with losing his PLA (Puppetry Living Allowance), Fred's life begins to spiral out of his control. Contains strong language and puppet nudity.

*"Striking visual inventiveness - Both funny and poignant"* (British Theatre Guide).

*"A highly entertaining, moving and brilliantly produced piece of theatre"* (Wales Arts Review).

*"The puppetry here is sublime"* (Arts Scene Wales). **100 words**

#### Meet Fred

*"Prejudice against puppetry is the only acceptable form of prejudice"*  
(David Sefton, Artistic Director, Adelaide International Festival)

Meet Fred, the two foot tall cloth puppet that fights prejudice every day. He just wants to be a regular guy, part of the real world, to get a job and meet a girl, but when threatened with losing his PLA (Puppetry Living Allowance), Fred's life begins to spiral out of his control. Contains strong language and puppet nudity.

*"A highly entertaining, moving and brilliantly produced piece of theatre"* (Wales Arts Review)

*"The puppetry here is sublime"* (Arts Scene Wales)

*"Striking visual inventiveness - Both funny and poignant"* (British Theatre Guide)

*"Have you met Fred yet? If not, you should"* (Disability Arts Online) **122 words**

## **Links to videos, reviews and social media comments**

### **Videos**

Trailer - <http://www.hijinx.org.uk/meet-fred/>

Teaser - <https://youtu.be/8oQP5ELCmgE>

Full show - <https://vimeo.com/158094841> (password: meetfred2016)

Audience comments - <https://youtu.be/y4aKBmakGeY>

### **Photos**

Rehearsal photographs - <http://www.hijinx.org.uk/meet-fred-1/>

### **Reviews**

Arts Scene in Wales - <http://www.asiw.co.uk/reviews/meet-fred-hijinx-blind-summit>

The Nerdy Theatre blog - <http://linkis.com/blogspot.co.uk/lAtyX>

British Theatre Guide - <http://www.britishtheatreguide.info/reviews/meet-fred-chapter-cardif-12622>

Wales Arts Review - <http://linkis.com/walesartsreview.org/O7xZq>

Disability Arts Online - <http://www.disabilityartsonline.org.uk/Hijinx-Meet-Fred>

### **Social Media Feedback**

<https://storify.com/HijinxTheatre/meet-fred-social-media-comments>

<https://storify.com/HijinxTheatre/meet-fred-social-media-comments-56d97aa21c9e91dc125b4634>

<https://storify.com/HijinxTheatre/meet-fred-social-media-comments-part-3>

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## Box Office Information

Age Guidance: 14+ contains strong language, adult themes and puppet nudity.  
Running time: 80 minutes, plus interval. The show can also run without an interval if preferred.

## Technical Specifications

General: Meet Fred is a puppet show performed by 3 puppeteers and 4 other members of cast. It is most suited to studio spaces, with tiered seating, of capacity 80-200.

Get in time: 3 hours

Get out time: 1 hour

Set: Five 6x8ft flats and two flight cases (both fitted with batteries and supply 12v power for birdies), two chairs, a wooden ladder and various props.

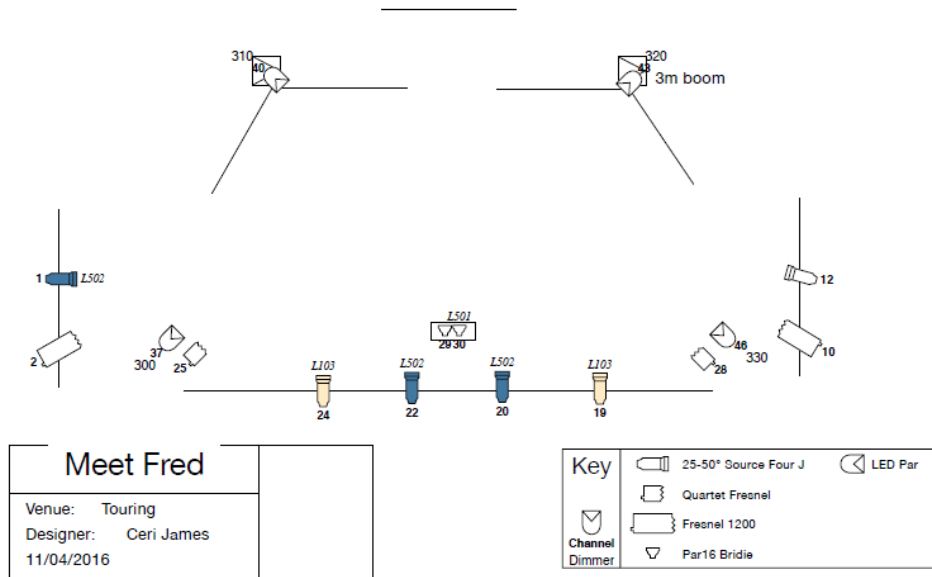
Stage requirements: Minimum – 5m width, 4m depth, 3m height,  
A “Black Box” style theatre space is most effective. Black stage surface preferred. Black or similar dark coloured walls or drapes surrounding the stage with a minimum of 1 entrance/exit to backstage.

Sound: All sound playback is cued from a laptop /iPad at the lighting op position. There is no live sound in the production. No fallback is required on stage

LX: Please see LX plan below. We will bring our own LX desk and all fixtures on the floor/booms. Where possible, if the venue can pre-rig the FOH and side bars, this is desired.  
This plan can also be adapted to suit the requirements in the venue (please contact first)

Misc: A smoke machine/hazer will be used for two short burst during the performance. This will be supplied by us.  
There is no strobe lighting in the performance.

# Lighting plan



# Set



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## Costs and touring information

Currently taking bookings for:

September 16<sup>th</sup> – October 30<sup>th</sup> 2016 (Edinburgh 60min version)

January 26<sup>th</sup> – April 28<sup>th</sup> 2017 (full length 80min version)

However, please speak with us if you are interested in dates outside of these. We are also interested in talking with venues about Autumn 2017 into 2018.

Fee per day:                    1 day £1000  
                                      2 days £1800  
                                      3 days £2600  
                                      (inclusive of travel, accommodation and per diems)  
                                      Maximum 2 shows per day  
                                      We are not VAT registered

Workshops:                    Within this fee there is the potential for a 3 hour puppetry workshop, led by Hijinx Artistic Director and one other cast member, for up to 18 participants on a two day booking, or 6 hour workshop on a three day bookings.

Touring Party:                9 Adults (7 Performers, 1 Technician, 1 support worker)

Dressing Rooms:            1 male for 6 adults, 1 female for 1 adult.

### Example schedule for two days:

#### Day 1

Travel to venue:            AM  
Arrive at venue:            2pm  
Get in:                        2pm – 5pm  
1<sup>st</sup> Performance:            7:30pm  
1<sup>st</sup> night's accommodation

#### Day 2

Puppetry workshop:        10am – 1pm  
2<sup>nd</sup> performance:            2.30pm  
3<sup>rd</sup> performance:            7:30pm  
2<sup>nd</sup> night's accommodation

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## Contacts

Hijinx office number: 02920300331

For Bookings:

Ben Pettitt-Wade

[ben.pettitt-wade@hijinx.org.uk](mailto:ben.pettitt-wade@hijinx.org.uk)

07976218385

Jacqui Onions

[Jacqui.onions@hijinx.org.uk](mailto:Jacqui.onions@hijinx.org.uk)

Ellis J-Wright

[Ellis.wright@hijinx.org.uk](mailto:Ellis.wright@hijinx.org.uk)

02920 655622

For Marketing/Press:

Zoe King (maternity cover to August 2016)

[Zoe.King@hijinx.org.uk](mailto:Zoe.King@hijinx.org.uk)

Vanessa Morse (from September 2016)

[Vanessa.morse@hijinx.org.uk](mailto:Vanessa.morse@hijinx.org.uk)

For technical:

Tom Ayres

[tom@cellb.org](mailto:tom@cellb.org)

07584417998

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