

## **The House at Little Angel Theatre**

By [James Buxton](#) th.13 July 2012

If you thought puppets were just for children, think again. Award winning Danish puppeteer Sophie Krog and Spanish puppeteer, David Faraco, have created an ensemble of weird and wonderful puppets each one more bizarre than the last, all united by the story of *The House*; a character in itself. The House has been designed and developed by Krog and Faraco, which sits on a rotating stage, allowing it to be viewed from the front and the back; like a huge run down, dolls house on two floors, it features balconies, windows, curtains and a sign for the Crematorium. With its very own disembodied voice it tells the story of the family who run the Funeral Home. For this House is no ordinary house, it is the home of Mrs Ezperanza, a rich old woman who on her deathbed, decides to change the beneficiaries of her will, from her nephew Henry and his wife, Flora, to Tony and Bruno, two bumbling orphans who hang around the house. However when Flora hears about her husband's change in fortune, she hatches a dastardly plan.

Krog and Faraco have lovingly created an incredibly detailed and beautifully realized puppet world, the likes of which are on a par with the Wallace & Gromit series of film, while the incredibly atmospheric soundtrack is highly reminiscent of the excellent, *Belleville Rendez Vous*. The puppets are brought to life with such expert skill that it is hard to believe they are actually being controlled by only 4 sets of hands beneath the stage. At times they act with such effortless movement and mannerisms, that they seem to have developed their own autonomy, capable of actually sharing human emotions. The movements of the puppet are hilarious, ranging from Tony and Bruno's petrified ducking and diving around the house, as they spy on the strange goings on at the Crematorium, to the Lawyers loping march in time to the ominous soundtrack, which heralds his arrival to the house. The Dog is especially loveable, and Krog's barking, sniffing and panting from beneath the stage bring him to life with unbelievable skill. The Dog is closely related to Nick Park's Gromit, both sharing a higher IQ than their owners, they sniff out the danger well before anyone else has cottoned on.

The attention to detail in *The House* is quite simply stunning, from Flora's Victorian garb to the Lawyers top hat, each character is brilliantly defined and brought to life not only in body but also in soul. For in *The House*, when the lights are dimmed and the set rotates to reveal its inner workings, the souls of the departed hover over the stage, like tiny fairies peppering the show with the kind of numinous magic usually reserved for children.

The tour will visit:

Little Angel Theatre - London

Norwich Puppet Theater

Norden Farm Centre for the Arts

The Meet - Bury

Beverley Puppet Festival

<http://www.littleangeltheatre.com/lat/whatson/forthcoming/MjI2>

<http://www.sofiekrog.com/www.sofiekrog.com/Home.html>