

The *Foules* would like to express their gratitude to...

Our very good friends at the *Schnürschuhtheater* for housing us yet again

Prof. Elisabeth Arend and Prof. Norbert Schaffeld for continuing support of theatre-focussed activities

Dr. Jana Nittel, Katja Müller and Dr. Janet Sutherland for unstinting support in so many ways over the past weeks.

Sting (no, really!) for inspiration to put together a Christmas programme, after watching the DVD of his stunning Christmas-focussed concert: *A Winter's Night...Live from Durham Cathedral*. Get it, and give it to others this Christmas!

Michael also expresses great gratitude to David Date and Harold Jones, his choirmasters when he was at school, who embedded in him a love of singing and taught him all he knows about music.

Our closing song is inspired by the legendary travels of the relics of the Three Magi, or Three Wise Men, or Three Kings, as they are variously known. The earliest published version of these lines appeared in 1666.

We'd love it if you joined in on the 2nd and 4th lines, which are identical in every verse!

*I saw three ships come sailing in
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day,
I saw three ships come sailing in
On Christmas Day in the morning.*

*And what was in those ships all three
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day,
And what was in those ships all three
On Christmas Day in the morning?*

*Our Saviour Christ and his lady,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day,
Our Saviour Christ and his lady,
On Christmas Day in the morning.*

*Pray, whither sailed those ships all
three,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day,
Pray, whither sailed those ships all
three
On Christmas Day in the morning?*

*O they sailed into Bethlehem
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day,
O they sailed into Bethlehem
On Christmas Day in the morning.*

*And all the bells on earth shall ring
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day,
And all the bells on earth shall ring
On Christmas Day in the morning.*

*And all the angels in heaven shall sing
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day,
And all the angels in heaven shall sing
On Christmas Day in the morning.*

*And all the souls on earth shall sing
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day,
And all the souls on earth shall sing
On Christmas Day in the morning.*

*Then let us all rejoice again
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day,
Then let us all rejoice again
On Christmas Day in the morning.*

We wish you a Merry Christmas
And a Happy New Year!

© Another disaffrighting production 2013

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The 12 Tales of Christmas

A Christmas Revue

performed by
The Parlement of Foules

Bremen University's English- and
American-Studies Drama Group

20th and 21st November
25th and 26th 2013

performances start 7pm
doors open 6.30pm

Theaterhaus Schnürschuh

Buntentorsteinweg 145
28201 Bremen

tickets (€12; €8 for pupils and
students) from the theatre
at (0421) 55 54 10



 **Universität Bremen**



The
Parlement
of Foules

THE TWELVE FOULES OF CHRISTMAS:

actors and songbirds	LEMYA DEMIRKAPI KATHALINA KOPKA VERENA MERTZ FRANZISKA PTOK	HELENA GACIBIZ JULIANE REICHMANN	ALEXANDRA KIND MARLENA MELZIAN CHRISTINE MÜLLER MICHAEL CLARIDGE
costumes & make-up	SASKIA WIELAND	lighting & lighting design	JULIA ARROSA DA SILVA

There will be one interval of 20 minutes. A bell will sound three minutes before the performance continues to warn you.

Please switch **mobile phones** and **peeping watches off**; actors and neighbours will be greatly distracted by any bleeping and use of them (including SMS-ing) during the performance. If you wish to take photographs, please note that the use of flash (*Blitzgeräte*) is **strictly forbidden**: the flash itself and any 'pre-flash' programme is extremely distracting. We will be making a video recording of a performance and can provide you with a copy on request. In the interests of other members of the audience and the cast, anyone using a mobile phone or flash will be requested to leave the theatre immediately.

THE TWELVE TALES OF CHRISTMAS Comments on some of the tales

We have adapted the opening tale, that of the shepherds as they are visited by the angels as they sleep at night, and then go to Bethlehem to experience the Nativity, from the so-called 'Second Shepherds' Pageant' in the fifteenth-century Towneley Cycle (more commonly known as the 'Wakefield Group') of mystery plays. These were short plays on biblical topics produced and performed out of doors by the trade guilds and craftsmen of the town on certain religious holidays.

The tale takes as its basis many of the details about the Nativity to be found in the Gospel according to St. Luke, but portrays the shepherds in a much more humanizing manner: they are simple men, driven by poverty yet high-spirited, and deeply devout. The authors have added a comic story involving a stolen sheep, taking the figure of Mak the sheep-stealer from folklore, and resulting in a close-knit blend of comic and serious scenes. The magic spell that Mak casts upon the shepherds to induce sleep while he steals their sheep, followed by their awakening, reflects the motif of death and rebirth to be found in folk custom and literature, while the supposed newborn 'child' of Mak and Gill – actually the stolen sheep – contrasts with the shepherds' worship of Christ, the Lamb of God, later in the tale.

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Our tale based on the traditional carol "The Twelve Days of Christmas" is entitled *A Partridge in a Pear Tree*, and is by Lowell Swortzell. The play is published by Samuel French, Inc.

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The two tales that bookend the second half, *Where's Baby Jesus* and *The First Christmas, a.k.a. Christmas Goes Pantomime*, are both by Michelle Fogg (<http://www.richmondparkchurch.org.uk/>).

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The grumpy person in the second half who attacks Christmas vigorously is George Bernard Shaw!

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Almost all of the songs are traditional Christmas carols, the exception being *Present Face* in the second half, by Garfunkel & Oates. See [their](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMWTs0YT28) version at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMWTs0YT28>

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THE TWELVE TALES OF CHRISTMAS Further credits

Lighting advice and technical expertise:

Nicholas Graf

Video work & photography: **Jacqueline Sprindt & Nehle Jungkrüger**

Publicity: **Dr. Jana Nittel, Jacqueline Sprindt, Ulrich Achenbach & Ian Watson**, aided and abetted by the *Foules*

The Parlement of Foules have a new logo, Archibald the Owl, designed by **Alexandra Kind!** Alex also designed this production's poster.

Directed by Michael Claridge

Who – what – are *The Parlement of Foules*?

They comprise a flock of students of English & American Studies, English-Speaking Cultures (BA) and Transnational Literature Studies (MA) at the University of Bremen. This is the seventeenth year of Foule activities; *The Twelve Tales of Christmas* is their twenty-first production.

The name (*das Vogelparlament*) comes from a dream-poem by Geoffrey Chaucer, centring on a conference of birds – or fowls – to choose their mates on St. Valentine's Day. It is thought to have been written in celebration of a marriage, perhaps that of the young King Richard II to Anne of Bohemia in 1382. At the end of the poem, the debate is unresolved, and the birds agree to assemble a year later to decide. (Anyone interested in following up a German link should consult the traditional folksong entitled *Die Vogelhochzeit*.)

Our "Parlement of Foules" assembles twice a year, in fully fledged form with performances in mid-summer and in a slimmed-down version with performances in November. We look forward to seeing you here in the Schnürschuhtheater again, observing our 'debate'. If interested, contact Michael Claridge at claridge@uni-bremen.de.

Our next performances will be here in the first week of July, 2014, three weeks before school holidays begin. Since 2014 is the 450th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, expect the summer production to be Shakespeare-related!

If you would like details of future productions, send an email to the above email address, so that we can add you to the mailing list of the Bremen English Drama Network, informing lovers of English-language drama (not only in schools) about relevant activities, workshops, performances, guest lectures etc. in and around Bremen. We usually provide a schools' pack for productions with helpful notes for teachers and activities to use in class before and after attending a performance.

Bremen University's Faculty of Languages and Literatures MA degree in "Transnational Literature: Literature, Theatre, Film" contains the option to focus primarily (but not exclusively) on theatre. This includes the possibility of practical work on a stage production in French or English, work that can focus on acting, assistant direction, publicity and many other areas. We believe Bremen is the only university in Germany offering such a qualification within modern foreign languages.

The "English-Speaking Cultures" BA degree includes a biennial course entitled "Shakespeare's London and Shakespeare's Globe" with a week-long excursion to London and workshops in Shakespeare's Globe, as well as the opportunity to participate in *Parlement of Foules* productions.

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