

# British Theatre Guide

News, reviews, features and podcast on theatre across the UK

## Goldilock, Stock and Three Smoking Bears

Devised by Andrew Kingston, Harry Humberstone, Emma Keaveney-Roys, Lotte Allan, Adam Fuller and Matthew Whittle

The Wardrobe Theatre

The Drum, Theatre Royal Plymouth

5–24 December 2017

Seasonal silliness abounds as the highly original, beautifully derivative, alternative Christmas offering *Goldilock, Stock and Three Smoking Bears* opens in Plymouth. It's fresh out of the Wardrobe Theatre stable from which *Oedipuss In Boots*, *Reservoir Cats*, *Se7en Dwarfs* and more have previously been released to general delight.

The gangsterland / fairytale hybrid kicks off with Cockney bird Goldilock trying to turn an almost honest penny flogging stuff to the audience from her dodgy dingy market stall before a superb freeze frame *Lock, Stock* voice-over pastiche introduces the thugs: Harry (Harry Humberstone) the chair fetishist mobster, Sally his long-suffering moll (Alice Lamb), strong arm love interest Barry (Peter Baker) and heart-throb ex footballer Vinnie (Andrew Kingston).

So Harry wants Barry to extract rent from unsuspecting new tenants, Sally wants to extract herself from her marriage, Barry wants to extract a lasting promise from Harry and Vinnie wants to buy music lessons for little Vinnie. OK, all on Guy Richie point so far. But the tenants are a chair short and someone needs to do the legwork.

A swift costume change and a couple of simple props later, and enter the elements of Robert Southey's much loved classic fairytale. But heavily in disguise.

Pots of porridge (which, despite being made at the same time, seemingly cool at differing rates notes a sleepy Goldilock) are on sale at an artisan outlet where the secret ingredient is doomed to die as a cash-chewing Uncle steadfastly resists all attempts to extract it from his avaricious CPR-expert family.

The three smoking and more bears (effete Rupe, bumbling bruiser Paddy and space cadet Winston) have the munchies after a particularly wild drug-infused evening and need their oats while Goldilock, tricked into debt in a fabulous re-enactment of *Lock, Stock*'s poker game, has a chair to deliver, a hunger to assuage and a market stall full of bodies.

Confused? Who cares? Frantic fun and subtle stabs at both genres, this is not for the easily offended but the spectacle of tripping nursery characters is alone worth the ticket price. I'd go again.

Reviewer: [Karen Bussell](#)