

# **The Singing Nun**

## **Press & Media Pack**

**Edinburgh Festival  
2005**

**[www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk](http://www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk)  
07899 872215**

**Johnny Haunt  
presents**

# **The Singing Nun**

An obsessive fan of the suicidal Singing Nun relives her bid for fame in a fabulous comedy about love, cults and pop songs.

**'see the divine become the truly ridiculous'**

*Arundel Festival 2004*

**Written and Performed by**

# **Richard Talbot**

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# Contacts

Press: Deborah Martin-Williams  
55 Hartington Crescent  
Coventry  
West Midlands  
UK  
CV5 6FU  
**07815 909086**  
deborah.martin-williams@virgin.net

Office: Herbert Art Gallery  
Jordan Well  
Coventry  
CV1 5QP  
UK  
024 7678 5170  
024 7678 2410  
07770 601533  
**frederick@ninaandfrederick.co.uk**  
www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk

Richard Talbot 07899 872215

The Underbelly Press Office: Penny Sims  
Press and Marketing Manager  
0870 745 3078  
[penny@smirnoffunderbelly.co.uk](mailto:penny@smirnoffunderbelly.co.uk)  
or  
[pennysims@hotmail.com](mailto:pennysims@hotmail.com)  
  
<http://www.theunderbelly.co.uk/2005/pressreleases/index.html>  
<http://www.smirnoffunderbelly.co.uk/>

The Fringe Office: [press@edfringe.com](mailto:press@edfringe.com)  
[www.edfringe.com/shows](http://www.edfringe.com/shows)

**www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk**  
**07899 872215**

# Where & When

**Venue:** **Smirnoff Underbelly**  
Venue 61  
Cowgate, George IV Bridge

Performance Space: Big Belly  
Seating Capacity: 60  
Venue manager: Ed Bartlam

**Time:** 18:40 (60mins)

**Dates:** 4 - 28 August

**No performance:** 15 August

**Ticket Prices:**  
Aug 4-5 (Previews) £5.00  
Aug 6-7,12-14,19-21,26-28 £9.50(£8.50)  
Aug 8-11,16-18,22-25 £8.50(£7.50)

**Box office number:** 0870 745 3083  
**Press tickets:** 0870 745 3078

# Images

## Downloads

Available at

[http://www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk/g\\_singingnun.html](http://www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk/g_singingnun.html)

### Peeping Image

Low Res JPEG	(258KB)	492 x 737 pixels
Hi Res JPEG	(3.33MB)	2048 x 3072 pixels

### Bell Image

Low Res JPEG	(280KB)	588 x 737 pixels
Hi Res JPEG	(3.86MB)	2448 x 3072 pixels

### Singing Nun Logo

EPS Format	(205KB)
PNG Format	(30KB)

## CD-R

jpg, gif and tiff formatted production and publicity shots available

Call: 07899 872215 for CD-R

Email: [frederick@ninaandfrederick.co.uk](mailto:frederick@ninaandfrederick.co.uk)

## DVD

10 min DVD preview available

Call: 07899 872215

Email: [frederick@ninaandfrederick.co.uk](mailto:frederick@ninaandfrederick.co.uk)

**[www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk](http://www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk)**  
**07899 872215**

# Press release

Pdf and word formats available

Download: [http://www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk/w\\_singingnun.html](http://www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk/w_singingnun.html)

Request press release:

Richard Talbot:

07899 872215

[frederick@ninaandfrederick.co.uk](mailto:frederick@ninaandfrederick.co.uk)

or

Deborah Martin-Williams (press):

07815 909086

[deborah.martin-williams@virgin.net](mailto:deborah.martin-williams@virgin.net)

Also available from

The Underbelly Press Office:

Penny Sims

Press and Marketing Manager

0131 622 6566

[penny@smirnoffunderbelly.co.uk](mailto:penny@smirnoffunderbelly.co.uk)

or

[pennysims@hotmail.com](mailto:pennysims@hotmail.com)

<http://www.theunderbelly.co.uk/2005/pressreleases/index.html>

<http://www.smirnoffunderbelly.co.uk/>

The Fringe Office:

[press@edfringe.com](mailto:press@edfringe.com)

[www.edfringe.com/shows](http://www.edfringe.com/shows)

**[www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk](http://www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk)**

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# Richard Talbot

**Richard Talbot** (Johnny Haunt/The Nun) has been working as a performer and writer across theatre and live art since 1994. He was last seen in Edinburgh in “Looking for The Tallyman” (Triangle) (“stunning”, Lyn Gardner \*\*\**Guardian* 1999). He has appeared in films - ‘Tribute’ (dir Debbie Isitt, 2002) ‘delirious in every sense’, *Times*; TV – ‘Noble & Silver’ (Channel 4), and toured internationally with comic duo Ridiculusmus (The Exhibitionists/How To Be Funny, 2004). He is artistic director of Nina and Frederick, a performance company producing “funny live art” about failed artists. He has appeared at theatres across the country including Theatre Royal Bath, ICA, and Haymarket Theatre Nottingham and has toured Europe, Japan, and USA.

**‘you’ll never see anything like that again –  
unless you come tomorrow’**  
*Audience member, The Singing Nun -Warwick Arts Centre*

**Richard Talbot** first heard The Singing Nun’s hit song “Dominique” on the radio and immediately became addicted. He travelled to Belgium and spent several days with Singing Nun fans, who played him more records, read excerpts from her diaries, and tried to sell him stuff. He lived with a silent order of nuns for four days in Easter and has spent 3 years researching The Singing Nun’s amazing and tragic biography for this show. In his nun guise he has cycled round Malawi and spent time with homeless alcoholics in various British towns.

“I’m fascinated by the relationship between artists and their fans and how they come together through these strange pop songs”

The Singing Nun is his second project about “kitsch” 1960s singers. Since 1997 Richard Talbot has been creating work about “Nina and Frederick”, with Carran Waterfield. As Nina and Frederick, they have tracked down Nina, sailed on Frederik’s boat, have performed alongside DJ Jean Jaques Smoothie, and toured Denmark (singing in Danish). When they invaded Granada TV studios to demand an appearance on Stars in Their Eyes, it was filmed and turned in to a feature documentary film, starring Mathew Kelly.

In 2005 Richard Talbot and Carran Waterfield won the **Museum & Heritage Award for Excellence** and the **Curiosity & Imagination Award** for their innovative and playful treatment of biographies and histories.

Talbot is artist-in-residence at The Herbert Art Gallery, Coventry, where he co-founded an interdisciplinary arts group for children. Previously he was artist-in-residence at Warwick University, and The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry.

Talbot trained in dance-derived “choreographic” improvisation, and clownesque performance traditions, with Pierre Byland (Burlesk Centre), Anne Bogart (SITI New York), and Enrique Pardo (PanTheatre, Roy Hart Theatre) He has also translated the Popular Japanese comedy “Murder In Atami” (1975) by Tsuka Kohei.

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# Introduction to the show

In 1963, **The Singing Nun** sparked off a craze for strumming sisters and pop star priests.

Deckers' fame was all too brief, and apart from occasional remixes of Dominique, she was only to hit the headlines again after her dramatic suicide, twenty years ago this Easter.

**Johnny Haunt** is the leader of the International Singing Nun e-group. This biography is "his tribute" to the nun. He says he is her biggest fan and he's looking for converts, but membership comes at a price.

As Johnny's devotion and the nun's ambitions crank themselves into overdrive, the nun and her fan meet in a ridiculous double suicide attempt. It could be the biggest, most creative thing they have ever done.

Visit Johnny Haunt's favourite website: [www.geocities.com/jeanne\\_deckers](http://www.geocities.com/jeanne_deckers)

After a bleak childhood void of love and affection, and a brief, unsuccessful bout as a teacher,

**Jeanine Deckers** entered the Dominican order at Fichermont convent in Wavre, Belgium in 1959. As Sr. Luc-Gabriel she entertained the other sisters with the songs she had written on her guitar, Sister Adele. The superiors decided that these merry songs could be used in their foreign missions and on October 24, 1961 Sister Luc-Gabriel recorded 'Dominique' at Philips studio in Brussels. As Soeur Sourire (Sister Smile), Deckers won the hearts of Europeans and the hearts of Americans as The Singing Nun. But Deckers already harbored doubts about her religious career, believing the monastic life to be outdated and left the order in July 1966. Philips soon terminated her contract and Deckers found herself without a name and a career as the pseudonym of Sister Smile belonged only to Fichermont convent. Attempts to record music under the name Luc Dominique produced little income. The questionable contract she signed when she left the convent came back to haunt her when the Belgian tax department claimed she owed an enormous amount of back taxes on royalties earned from Dominique. Already plagued by drug and alcohol addictions, depression and sexual confusion, Deckers begins a downward spiral that will end with her suicide on March 29, 1985 along with her friend of twenty-five years, Annie Pécher.

Chadwick, D.A. & Delaporte, F. (2004) Music from the Soul: The Singing Nun Story  
[www.deckers66.homestead.com](http://www.deckers66.homestead.com)

**www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk**  
**07899 872215**

# **Nina and Frederick (Productions)**

The Singing Nun is produced by Richard Talbot & Carran Waterfield. **Call 07899 872215**

Since 1997, as “Nina and Frederick”, Richard Talbot & Carran Waterfield have built a reputation for a prolific output of site-specific performances that are “real” and somehow familiar, but also unnervingly strange.

Recent work includes a feature documentary, *Tribute* (2002) starring Matthew Kelly, and a cabaret performance in Danish, *På Genhør Med Nina og Frederick* (2003). In 2005 they are developing a new performance/installation for theatres and galleries, *Chico Talks*, about a clown who loses his memory.

**‘Terrific, delirious in every sense’**

*James Christopher, Times (Tribute, 2002)*

Visit Nina and Frederick’s free web fantasy: [www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk](http://www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk)

Receive text and video phone performances: [www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk/contact.php](http://www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk/contact.php)

Find details and dates of other performances: [www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk/diary.php](http://www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk/diary.php)

Join the free mailing list: [www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk/contact.php](http://www.ninaandfrederick.co.uk/contact.php)

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# Production Credits

<b>Richard Talbot</b>	Writer /performer
<b>Carran Waterfield</b>	Associate Artist (Triangle)
<b>David Woods</b>	Visiting Director (Ridiculusmus)
<b>Luca Gatti</b>	Sound
<b>Graham Kirk</b>	Lighting
<b>Ali Maclaurin &amp; The Company</b>	Design
<b>Pixeltrix</b>	Publicity Design & Photography
<b>Andrew Moore</b>	Publicity Photography
<b>Gareth Lloyd-Evans &amp; Steve Jones</b>	Production Photography
<b>Deborah Martin-Williams</b>	Press
<b>Production</b>	Nina and Frederick/Triangle

# Biographies

## Associate Artist

**Carran Waterfield** has collaborated with Richard Talbot since 1997, as co-creator of Nina and Frederick and The Little Herberts a children-centred performance and visual arts project. Carran is performer, founder and Artistic Director of Triangle (founded in 1988) and has created several award-winning solo productions. Recently she directed and devised a new play *7777 All Good Girlies Go To Heaven*. She is currently working with a new Birmingham based company Kindle Theatre creating *Beastly Beauties* in the style of her award-winning solo work. She has been a visiting artist to several UK universities and has presented at international conferences including Transit (Denmark) and Mythic Journeys (USA).

## Visiting Director

**David Woods** studied English & Drama at Sheffield University, acting at the Poor School, and has since studied Clown and Bouffons, Commedia Dell'Arte and Contemporary Dance. He co-founded the multi award-winning Ridiculusmus in 1992. The company is now one of the most respected and prolific independent theatre companies in the UK, frequently touring internationally. David has taught and directed at the Poor School, Trinity College Dublin, the Universities of Brighton, Belfast, Edinburgh, Kent and Wolverhampton and Ulster.

## Voice Training

**Robert Harvey** was born in Australia, performed in Musical Theatre in London in the 1950s before leaving to join The Roy Hart Theatre in France. The company made its debut with "The Bacchae" by Euripides at the World Festival of Nancy, demonstrating a distinctive and groundbreaking approach to the voice, then undertook a number of foreign tours, notably Jean-Louis Barrault's invitation to the "Theatre des Nations". Robert now teaches Extended Voice and singing, and directs.

## Sound Designer

**Gianluca Gatti** studied at the University of Music & Arts Rome, The School of Songwriting CET Avigliano Umbro, Italy and Morley College London (Music for Film & Video). He is a musician, composer & sound engineer. He regularly performs at Dingwalls, The Borderline, La Scala, Momo's 100 Club, Vibe Bar, London, and has managed international touring for bands (BMG etc) in Spain, Denmark, Italy, Germany & USA

## Lighting Designer

**Graham Kirk** has been Production Manager for Hull Truck Theatre Company for the last eight years. He now works independently on scenic construction and lighting design projects for a wide range of theatre companies including Ambassador, ARC, and West Yorkshire Playhouse. Clients in TV and film include BBC and Maverick TV.

## Set Design/Construction

**Ali Maclaurin (Edinburgh-based designer) & The Company** specialises in theatre in non-theatre settings and site-specific work. Designed Listen to the Ocean (*Nina and Frederick* 2000) author of 'Design for Devising', Loughborough University Press.

## Tour Assistant

**James Waterfield** is interested in a variety of arts, ranging from independent music to comic theatre. To further his understanding of a theatre company on tour, he is undergoing unique work experience with the Nina and Frederick & Richard Talbot.

## Production Partners

Roger Vaughan, Coventry City Arts & Heritage Officer; The Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry; The Nottingham Trent University Performance & Live Art Research Unit.

# Reviews

**'...draws you in, makes you feel secure, then does something extraordinary...'**  
***Lucia Hogg, Programmer, The Junction Arts Centre, Cambridge***

**'draws you in and repels you at the same time'**  
***Andrew Smaje, Artistic Director, Ustinov Studio, Theatre Royal Bath***

**'...It certainly is a technique I have never seen used before in theatre. It transforms a simply narrative, however funny and engaging into something much more complex and rich...'**  
***Clive Barker (d.2005) Author Theatre Gamers, 1977 and member of Joan Littlewood Company***

**'...Just wanted to let you know that I enjoyed the performance at The Hexagon very much... entertaining and funny and surprising...'**  
***Sally Rew Assistant Drama Officer, Arts Council West Midlands***

**'...I cannot believe how much it has remained in my thoughts. My mind was whirling with how you layered the piece...'**  
***Sharon Barnsley, Student, Loughborough University***

**'...Funny and ironic without bitterness...'**  
***Kazuko Hohki, Live Artist (Nina and Frederick, 2004)***

**'...Talbot is a huge and terrifying cross between a Mikado and a roadworker...'**  
***Susan Elkin, Stage, Sea of Silence (2004)***

**'...Talbot ..Unbelievably dog -like in the role of Pongo...'**  
***Katy Stirland Bedworth Echo The 101 Dalmatians (2000)***

**'...Pongo..played winningly by Talbot...'**  
***Kate Bassett, Daily Telegraph The 101 Dalmatians (2000)***

**'..One of the most terrifying, disturbing and powerful plays on the Fringe...'**  
***Zoe Green, Independent, Looking for the Tallyman (1999)***