



# The Suitcase Royale THE BALLAD OF BACKBONE JOE

Arts House, Meat Market  
Thursday 13 – Saturday 15 August 2009

*"Visionary, emancipated and transformational... The Suitcase Royale create works of theatre achingly undiluted, joining the soul of madcap anarchy found in the best of the Marx Brothers to the self-sufficient purity found in travelling tent shows." - Pittsburgh City Paper*

## THE SUITCASE ROYALE

**The Suitcase Royale** is a Rag 'n' Bone band of three from Melbourne that has been creating and performing together since mid 2004. Their premiere work 'Felix Listens to the World' was presented as part of the 2005 Melbourne International Arts Festival and toured extensively in North America and Australia to great critical acclaim.

The collaborative creation of original works is the hallmark of **The Suitcase Royale**. Their self-styled form of 'junkyard theatre' employs multiple art forms and influences including dance, puppetry, slapstick, music, text and set design. Incorporating filmic techniques, **The Suitcase Royale** aim to revive the aesthetic of classic cinema. The company's work is underpinned by the ingenious use of found objects and the composition and performance of original music. It is an ensemble-based style of theatre making that approaches the work as a whole, with an eye to detail and an ambition to construct highly developed and complex performances that impart the simplest of tales.

**The Suitcase Royale**'s second work, 'Chronicles of a Sleepless Moon' was commissioned for Next Wave Festival and premiered in March 2006 as part of the Melbourne Commonwealth Games Cultural Festival. The show toured nationally

and internationally performing in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide, Pittsburgh USA, Edinburgh Fringe, Ruhrfestspiele Germany, Dublin Fringe Festival and Soho Theatre London.

In 2008, the company's first directorial collaboration with Neill Gladwin, 'The Ghosts of Ricketts Hill', won Melbourne International Comedy Festival's Golden Gibbo Award. In the same year, **The Suitcase Royale** collaborated with renowned UK performance duo Lone Twin on 'Newboys', commissioned and presented by Melbourne International Arts Festival.

**The Suitcase Royale** has recently returned from a European tour to festivals in Germany and to London where they were a resident company as part of Battersea Arts Centre's acclaimed BURST Festival.

**The Ballad of Backbone Joe** is the company's fourth work. Developed with the assistance of the Australia Council for the Arts, the Fed Square Puppet Lab initiative and the Arts Centre's Full Tilt program, this is the show's first Australian season in its finished form – thanks for comin' along, we hope you enjoy it and we'll see you at the bar!

**JOE, MILES and GLEN**  
Of The Suitcase Royale



## RED DRESS

She walked into my office on legs  
Just like cigarettes  
Yes they were long thin and white  
And the dress wrapped around them  
Led up to astounding breasts  
That kept that dress real tight  
"Lord strike me down now"  
I said to the clouds  
Quietly y'know, under my breath  
'Cos with a woman like that  
Boys you know it's a fact  
Trouble ain't Far behind Her dress

Trouble ain't far behind  
No trouble ain't far behind a dress

I gave her my left profile,  
The best side I know while  
I fumbled around for a pen  
She crossed the room like a feather  
Her slender hand held a letter  
That smelt particularly of the perfume of death  
And so it began, that's when she said

*You've been recommended by a friend who has claimed  
You're the best private eye  
This side of the river Thames  
Well I didn't know that you were so handsome  
But I'm beginning to see  
This letter is for my husband could you please deliver it for me?*

*My husband he's no angel  
He is a tent boxin' man  
He fights and he wins  
He lies and he sins for the sake of that  
Messy Dimes Dan  
It's not to far to that cold abattoir  
Where you'll find him poundin' flesh to the bone  
Tell him not to grieve for me  
Oh my dear oh my dear  
Dear back bone Joe*

I drove to that town booked the first hotel I found  
And sat down  
With a whisky on ice  
The bartender looked up  
He looked weary, leered at me  
And said boy do you want my advice?

Trouble ain't far behind  
Trouble ain't far behind a red dress

### Music and lyrics by The Suitcase Royale

**The Suitcase Royale has committed a collection of original songs and music to CD. Their debut, self-titled album will be launched on 10 September 2009 at the East Brunswick Club.**

For more information check us out at [www.thesuitcaseroyle.com](http://www.thesuitcaseroyle.com)  
Or join **The Suitcase Royale** on Myspace and Facebook

## TEAM MEAT

**The Suitcase Royale** is Joseph O'Farrell, Miles O'Neil and Glen Walton.

**The Ballad of Backbone Joe** is conceived, devised, designed and (mostly) operated by **The Suitcase Royale**

**Producer:** Fiona Pride

**Outside Eye and Mentor:** Neill Gladwin

**Set Consultant:** Kent Johnston

**The voice of Denise, the woman in the red dress. xox:** Simone Page Jones

**Lighting Consultant:** Thomas Salisbury

All music written and composed by **The Suitcase Royale**

## THANKS

All the above, especially Fiona, Neill and Simone Page Jones without whom the show would never have come together, John O'Neil photography, Bron "Power" Batten, Tom "the bulldog" Salisbury, Jonas Grawert, our wonderful supporting families, all friends and loved ones who offered eyes and feedbacks, Anto Macaroni, Federation Square, the Australia Council for the Arts, Arts Victoria, Vanessa & Sue at Full Tilt, the Sydney massive and the Imperial Panda Festival, L.I.L. at Safari Team for the carcass, Matt "the bacon buddy" Delbridge, Simon Fisher, Frank Woodley and finally Meatloaf, Bon Jovi and Springsteen for getting us out of bed.

Thanks also to Steven Richardson, Jude Gun, Kara Ward and all the team at Arts House.

**60 minutes no interval**

**Warning:** haze effects

## ARTS HOUSE

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Arts House develops, produces and presents dynamic cultural experiences, which enable people to make meaningful connections on a local, national and international level. Each year Arts House presents a curated program of contemporary art featuring performances, exhibitions, live art, installations and cultural events, which are programmed to inspire dynamic community engagement.

Australia is home to the oldest living culture on earth. Respect and engagement with this ancient culture and its contemporary lineage continues to make a unique contribution to creativity in this place and inspire our collective consciousness and understanding. The presenters acknowledge and respect the customs and traditions of Indigenous Australians and their special relationship with the land. The artists and organisers respectfully acknowledge that this program takes place on the land of the traditional owners of the Kulin Nation.

Arts House has made every effort to offer wheelchair and limited mobility access throughout the program. Please contact Arts House on 03 9322 3719 for further information.

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