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SF PERUSALS

Treasure Island, the Panto

A pantomime

Richard Lloyd

Samuel French — London
New York - Toronto - Hollywood



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TREASURE ISLAND, THE PANTO

First performed as *Panto Walks the Plank* by Theatre Workshop Coulsdon on Saturday, 9th December 1995 at Coulsdon Youth and Social Centre, with the following cast:

THE QUALITY

Squire Polperro	Timothy Young
The Honourable Nancy Polperro	Kimberley Argles
Dr Liversausage	Christopher Argles
Captain Smellit	Bruce Montgomery

THE SCUM OF THE SEVEN SEAS

Billy Fishbones	Derek Crouch
Long John Slither	Neil Grew
Pink Dog	Lisa Lloyd
Blind Puke	Paul M Ford
Israel Feet	Peter Bird
George Merry	Matthew Marsh
Seamus "Groundbait" O'Flaherty	Daniel Ireson

T'OTHERS

Jim Ladd	Claire Andreadis
Mrs Ladd	Michael Brown
Bodmin	Paul Breden
Newquay	Simon Crouch
Bertha Gunn	Tina Bretman
Captain Haddock	Penelope Simeone

LOS ESPAGNOLS

Don Iguana Del Anaconda Con Queso	Richard Lloyd
Donna Estella Del Torremolinos y Chimichanga	Victoria Gunstone

Assorted pirates, belike Tatiana Alison, Jonathan Wales, Elaine Marsh, Caitriona Farrell, Laura Morley, Ross Dunleavy, Sean Young

UPON THE QUARTER DECK

The Skipper (Director) Richard Lloyd
The First Mate (Assistant Director: shanties, jigs and suchlike) Tatiana Alison
The Bosun (Moosical Director, d'ye see?) Mark Taylor
Ship's Carpenter (Technical Director) Mark Hobbs

YE OLDE CAST OF CHARACTERS, BY THUNDER, AND YE MAY LAY TO THAT

Billy Fishbones, an inebriated old ex-pirate
Jim Ladd, a brisk young spark, and principal boy
Mrs Ladd, Jim's mum and pantomime dame
Dr Liversausage, a seafaring quack
Squire Polperro, Oons sirrah! An archetypal product of the public school system
The Honourable Nancy Polperro, Squire Polperro's adorable daughter, and principal girl
Newquay } the Squire's faithful (but completely useless) lackeys
Bodmin }
Captain Smellit, a taciturn sea captain
Long John Slither, a charming (but wholly untrustworthy) amputee, ha ha!
Captain Haddock, a Guatemalan crimson parakeet
Israel Feet, a pirate
Seamus "Groundbait" O'Flaherty, an Irish buccaneer
Blind Puke, a visually-challenged pirate
Pink Dog, a thoroughly villainous female pirate
George Merry (who isn't), a pirate
Don Iguana Del Anaconda Con Queso, His Most Catholic Excellency, the Spanish Ambassador to Guadeloupe
Donna Estella Del Torremolinos y Chimichanga, a sumptuous Hispanic beauty
Bertha Gunn, a potty old ex-pirate and tea lady
Other assorted **Pirates**, belike

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

PROLOGUE	A snug
SCENE 1	Without *The Admirable Bimbo Inn*
SCENE 2	The taproom of *The Spyglass Inn*, Bristol Docks
SCENE 3	The saloon of *The Admirable Bimbo Inn*
SCENE 4	Squire Polperro's drawing-room
SCENE 5	The taproom of *The Spyglass Inn*
SCENE 6	Aboard *The Grand Pianola*
SCENE 7	The same, four weeks later
SCENE 8	Hard by Captain Smellit's cabin
SCENE 9	On deck, briefly aboard a jolly boat, back on deck again, and finally on a beach

ACT II

SCENE 1	On deck, along a plank, and ultimately in the salt sea
SCENE 2	Without a stockade ashore
SCENE 3	Another part of the island
SCENE 4	And another part of the island
SCENE 5	Yet another part of the island
SCENE 6	Ditto
SCENE 7	Still without a stockade

SONGS AND MUSIC

The original production ran for two hours and fifteen minutes including a fifteen minute interval. If this duration is deemed too long, songs number 2 and 10 (solos for Jim and Donna Estella respectively) may be omitted without undue detriment.

In addition to the songs listed, a good deal of incidental music is called for (indicated throughout the script), and will help any production along enormously.

ACT I

No. 1 Slither (Fifteen Men — traditional)
No. 2 Jim
No. 3 Slither and Pirates
No. 4 Nancy
No. 5 Slither and Pirates
No. 6 Dame
No. 7 The Company
No. 8 The Company

ACT II

No. 9 Pirates
No. 10 Donna Estella
No. 11 Audience participation song with Bertha, Nancy and Dame
No. 12 Jim and Donna Estella
No. 13 The Company
No. 14 The Company

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PREFACE

Whilst *Treasure Island*, that perennial favourite of British children since its first publication, may seem an obvious candidate for panto treatment, actually arriving at a well-rounded pantomime, incorporating all the essential elements of that genre, whilst also sticking fairly strictly to the plot and characters of Stevenson's great novel, does pose a few problems!

So whilst the present script gets underway as a close pastiche of *Treasure Island,* you will notice it change tack part way through, in order to accommodate a boarding party of pirate clichés inspired by a wider literature.

Any fan of the Hollywood pirate epics of the 30s and 40s will tell you that *Treasure Island*, indisputably the most famous adventure in English literature, is nonetheless fatally flawed as a pirate story. For one thing, there's absolutely no love interest! In fact there are no women at all. (With the honourable exception of Mrs Hawkins — who is written out of the plot by page 27!)

Now, no good pirate movie is truly complete without the love interest — usually represented by Maureen O'Hara. Nor without the leering presence of the rascally Spaniards.

In fact, these two elements are so quintessential, that they are habitually combined through the well-worn cinematic device of "Swashbuckling hero falls for wicked Spanish Governor's haughty (but gorgeous) daughter — whom he has inadvertantly taken captive, the handsome dog!"

There are other important omissions from *Treasure Island* which undermine its credentials as a bona fide, all round pirate story. For instance, absolutely nobody walks the plank!

Now as it happens, nobody ever *did* walk the plank — Pirate buffs will tell you that this infamous punishment was simply a macabre whimsy of our Victorian ancestors, with their overheated imaginations. However, if you're indulging in a blood and thunder tale of skullduggery upon the high seas, you *expect* to see people walking the plank — it's part of the tradition.

The requirements of pantomime also necessitate other minor diversions from the real *Treasure Island* — nobody is horribly murdered for one thing. Gratuitous violence is purely of the slapstick variety!

You will also notice that the names of most characters have been altered slightly. Thus, Israel Hands becomes Israel Feet, Dr Livesey becomes Dr Liversausage, Smollett, Smellit, and so on. I must confess to experiencing certain prickings of conscience about tinkering with the names of some of the

most famous (and infamous) characters in English literature. If this was just an excuse for cheap gags based on the comic potential of silly names, it would probably be unforgivable.

The truth however, is that this spoof is by no means the real *Treasure Island*, and all the characters differ in certain respects from their progenitors. A greater sin would have been to trivialize Stevenson's consummately three-dimensional originals, by trying to locate them in a genre as frivolous as pantomime.

Of course, Long John's famous parrot serves perfectly as a pantomime animal — it even talks! And a "crimson parrot" does have a certain resonance with a particularly awful 1950s B-movie starring Burt Lancaster, and rejoicing in the title *The Crimson Pirate*. (Yes, it was filmed in "Glorious Technicolor".)

In conclusion, I must acknowledge the works of George Farquhar as my principal source for the copious supply of genuine eighteenth-century imprecations. What a shame no-one ever uses colourful and inoffensive expletives like "Oons!" "Garzoon!" or "Rat me!" any more.

Mind you, they probably *were* offensive at the time ...

Richard Lloyd

Other titles by Richard Lloyd
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A Christmas Cavalier
Smut's Saga, or Santa and the Vikings

To Morgan

ACT I

PROLOGUE

Overture

The corner of a darkened snug

Outside, the wind howls and rain lashes down. A single candle gutters fitfully on top of an upturned barrel, casting an unearthly glow on to a ring of villainous faces. A whispering voice is crooning in the near darkness

Song 1 (Slither)

Slither Fifteen men, on a dead man's chest,
Yo ho ho! And a bottle of rum!
Drink and the Devil had done for the rest,
Yo ho ho! And a bottle of rum!

Ay ... I were there when he went ashore, lads. Him, the treasure chest, and six strong sailormen to carry it. 'Twas first light they made landfall. And at dusk, back comes the cap'n — and all alone. And the six strong sailormen all dead and buried ... Not a man Jack aboard could work out how he done it — nor where he buried that treasure. But done it he had, and made a map into the bargain. And that, my lads, I means to have. Come hell or high water I'll have Squint's map — or my name ain't Long John Slither! Ha ha ha ha!

Audience participation as the wicked laughter gradually dies away, drowned out by thunder, lightning, and storm effects. The candle is extinguished, and Lights fade to Black-out

SCENE 1

Outside "The Admirable Bimbo Inn", somewhere in the west country

A creaking inn sign overhead depicts said bimbo

Jim Ladd, a rather prepossessing youth, enters. He whistles a merry seafaring tune as he goes about his chores, chalking up the chef's special on the blackboard beside the inn doorway

Jim (*to himself*) Now then, let's see, today's special, what have we got? (*Glancing at a piece of paper*) Fisherman's pie, or — nothing. Just the same as all the other days in fact. (*He sings*)

Song 2 (Jim)

A beautiful young lady, gorgeously attired, and of manifest quality enters. It is Nancy, lovely young daughter of Squire Polperro

Nancy Jim!
Jim Nancy!
Nancy Oh Jim!
Jim Oh Nancy, you shouldn't have come. Your father will be livid if he finds out.
Nancy Oh devil take Father! I just had to come, Jim. I had to see you.
Jim But you know he doesn't think I'm a suitable match. What with my mother owning this ramshackle pot house — and your father owning the entire county.
Nancy I don't care about that, Jim. Let's run away together. We'll take ship for the Spanish Main, to find love, honour, and to make our fortunes.
Jim Yes, well — that's all very well for you to say. You've already got a fortune to come back to. All I'd have to fall back on would be a cold plate of fisherman's pie!
Nancy (*completely carried away*) Oh Jim! Fisherman's pie needn't stop us. Think of it! The adventure. The passion. The romance ...

Music swells up to introduce a hugely over-the-top romantic number — forestalled just in the nick of time by a gravelly shout from off stage

Gruff voice (*off*) Belay that row!
Nancy Someone's coming! I must away! (*She kisses his cheek*) Farewell, sweet Jim — until tonight ...
Jim Tonight! But Nancy, I'm not sure that I want to ... Oh bother.

She flees off R

Moments later, Billy Fishbones, a decrepit old nut-brown seafarer, enters L, *sporting the ubiquitous tarry pigtail, and dragging a monster sea chest behind him*

Billy Ahoy there! Shipmate! Lend an 'and will 'ee?

Readers will quickly come to identify all pirates or ex-pirates by this distinctive mode of speech, featuring a characteristic excess of apostrophes

Jim Of course, sir. Let me help you with that trunk.
Billy Aaar. That be right kind of 'ee, shipmate. Thank 'ee kindly. Now then, what manner o' place might this be, as I've fetched up in?
Jim Oh. You haven't fetched up have you, sir? I'll get a mop.
Billy Just answer the question, laddie — I'll do the gags.
Jim Fair enough. Well ... erm ... actually, it's an inn — *The Admirable Bimbo.*
Billy Shiver me timbers! Ye don't say! Why now, here's a stroke o' luck! For it just so happens, as I needs a berth to rest me weary old sea-legs for a while, somewhere I won't be disturbed by no — unwelcome callers. D'ye follow?
Jim Er, well, not really no ...
Billy Never mind! Now tell me, lad — what h'accomodation d'ye have available?
Jim Hold on. I'll have to find out. (*Calling*) Mother! Mother!
Dame (*off*) Coming!
Billy (*while they're waiting*) What name d'ye go by, lad?
Jim Jim.
Billy Aaar. Jim ... Jim lad.
Jim That's right.
Billy Eh?

The Dame enters, carrying a tray of steaming fisherman's pies

Dame Oh there you are, Jim. I just had to bring these pies out to develop a nice crust ... Well, what is it? Ooooh! I say! Company! Hallo sailor! And look, Jim! All these people! How unexpected! (*To the audience*) Ahoy there, mateys!

Audience titters nervously

Oh now come on! Let's try that again! I say: "Ahoy there mateys!", and you *don't* say: "Oh ruddy hell, they want us to join in" — no, you say: "Avast behind!" Then I do this visual gag see ... (*She turns around and bends over to flash her enormous bloomers at them*) A vast behind — geddit?

Boom Boom! — Groans likely

Yes, well, I feel the same way, dears, but it's better to get it over and done with at the beginning of the show. Saves cracking the same crummy gag all the way through. Right then! Let's try again shall we? Here we go then, after three — One. Two. Three! (*Bellowing*) Ahoy there, mateys!
Audience Avast behind!

Dame duly flourishes her bottom at them

Dame Right. Good. Thank heavens we've got that out of the way! Here! I know! Let's just try a couple of other things while I've got your attention. I call this my "audience participation workout". Also known as rabble-rousing! Just to get you in the mood for the rest of the evening! Let's start with some cheering, shall we? Here we are, Jim, strike a pose, dear.

Jim slaps his thigh. The audience cheer weakly

Oh blimey! I said *cheering*, not *jeering*. Let's try again. After three. One. Two. Three.

Jim slaps his thigh again. The audience cheer more convincingly

Very good — Mr Motivator, eat your heart out! All right, let's try *booing*. One. Two. Three.

The audience boo

Oh, spot on. Hissing?

The audience hiss

Clapping?

The audience clap

Well, you won't be doing that again tonight! Oh you're very good at this, aren't you? Tell you what, you're so good, I'm going to let you be in the play! Yes! You can play the part of Mob — this is the eighteenth century after all! Oh, it'll be just like being at *Les Misérables!* Well, not quite the same as *Les Misérables,* I must admit — but then, these aren't West End prices, are they? Now then, where were we ... Ah yes. (*Turning back to Billy Fishbones*) Hallo sailor, care to step inside and heave to?

Jim He's already "fetched up", I don't think he needs to "heave to" as well.

Billy (*ignoring Jim*) Top o' the day t'ye, mum. Might an old seafaring man make so bold as to enquire after your name?

Dame He might, and don't call me mum.

Billy Well, what is it then?

Dame Mrs Ladd.

Billy I see ... And your son is — —?

Dame Jim Ladd.

Billy Of course.
Dame And my husband — Jim's father, Gawd rest his soul — was ——
Billy (*hazarding a guess*) Mr Ladd?
Dame S'right.
Billy Don't tell me — Alan?
Dame Nope. Jack. Well, Jack *The* actually.
Billy Jack the Ladd ... Oh yes, o'course. I knowed him right well.
Dame Did you really? (*Aside*) Blimey! That's more than I did. Anyway Mr ——?
Billy Fishbones — Billy Fishbones, at your service, mum.
Dame Well Mr Fishbones, what can I do for you?
Billy (*conspiratorially*) Board. Lodgin'. That head out there to watch ships off. And no questions asked.
Dame How much?
Billy Five gold pieces. In a h'advance.
Dame Done.

They spit on their palms and shake on it

Jim, take his trunk up. Room number seven. It's not *en-suite* I'm afraid, but you know what it's like this time of year — sails conferences and so on. (*To the audience*) *Sails* conferences, see? *SALES* conferences ... It's a joke! Oh, never mind.
Billy (*to Jim*) Wait up, lad. Afore ye go, I want to ask a favour of ye. Keep a weather eye open for a seafarin' man with only one leg. An' if you should spy him out, you comes for me first, understand me?
Jim Perfectly, sir.
Billy Aaar. Good boy, good boy. Here's a bright threepenny-bit for ye. And another every week, if ye keep your eyes skinned for that one-legged devil. Now then. Grog!
Jim I'm sorry?
Billy Grog! Grog, ye swab! Fetch me a mug o' grog, lad!
Jim Er, I don't think we keep that, sir. How about a G and T?
Billy Nar. I needs a man's drink! Got 'ny Campari and soda?
Jim Oh yes, sir.
Billy Wi' a slice o' lemon, and one o' they little umbrellies?
Jim Absolutely.
Billy Right. That'll do.

They go into the inn, lugging the sea chest between them

Dame (*to the audience*) Grog? Swabs? Seafaring men with one leg? I don't think I like the sound of this! (*She turns to pick up the tray of fisherman's pie*)

Bodmin and Newquay, two liveried footmen, enter

Oh hallo. More visitors. Now what?

Bodmin Good-day to you, my good woman.

Dame Oh. It's you. Hallo, Mr Bodmin. Have you come for your usual? (*nudging him*) — only I'm a bit busy as it goes ... guests, swabs, and so on.

Bodmin (*flustered*) No, ma'am. I regret I'm here upon business, not — pleasure.

Dame Oh, shame.

Newquay (*inquisitive*) What's "the usual"?

Bodmin Never you mind.

Newquay No — what? Go on. Tell me.

Dame (*holding up the tray*) Fisherman's pie of course. What did you think?

Newquay Doesn't matter.

Bodmin (*importantly*) We are sent to relay a missive to you from his worship, Squire Polperro.

Dame Oh yes?

Newquay (*unrolling a lengthy parchment*) It reads as follows: (*reading*) "Madam. Keep your ill-bred guttersnipe of a brat away from my noble daughter or I'll have him flogged through the shire and transported. Signed, George Polperro, MP, JP, etc., etc."

Dame Is that it?

Newquay (*nervously*) Er ... Yes.

Dame Well, can't say fairer than that, can you?

Newquay (*relieved*) No. Very generous of the squire I thought.

Bodmin Absolutely. Any chance of that fisherman's pie now?

Dame No. Bog off.

Bodmin But I thought — —

Dame (*exploding*) You think you can come down here and threaten me, and I'm going to feed you up on my best dogfish pie by way of a thank you? All right — you want one? (*To the audience*) Shall I? Shall I!

Audience participation. The Dame splurges a dish of fisherman's pie into Bodmin's face

Squire Pol-ruddy-perro! It's his hoity-toity little madam of a daughter who's pesterin' my Jim! Who does he think he is anyway? Does he think he owns the place?

Newquay He does own the place. He owns everything for fifty miles in any direction.

Dame Well not this inn he don't, so there! Now buzz off!

She goes inside and slams the door behind her

Newquay and Bodmin stand looking at each other — Bodmin blinking through a mask of mashed potato

Newquay (*after a pause*) Well, I think that went rather well.
Bodmin Oh, shut up.

Bodmin splats the other fisherman's pie in Newquay's face, and stomps off

The Lights fade down. In the Black-out "The Admirable Bimbo" inn sign is turned around to display out "The Spyglass Inn"

Scene 2

The taproom of "The Spyglass Inn", Bristol Docks

The Lights come up on the Pirates, which include Israel Feet, George Merry and Groundbait, and Long John Slither, a charming but wholly untrustworthy amputee with a crutch

Raucous music leads into a pirate dance number with much swinging around, whooping, waving of cutlasses, and banging of tankards

As the music ends, Blind Puke enters, dressed in beggar's tatters, his eyes bandaged with a filthy rag, and accompanied by the tapping of his white stick

Blind Puke Ahoy there! Long John!
Slither I'm here. What news, Puke?
Blind Puke Not a blessed sign of him anywhere, John — He's clean vanished, and the map with him.
Slither T'ain't possible, shipmate. No man vanishes. We'll find him before many tides, and you may lay to that! And when we do, why, Billy Fishbones is as good as shark bait! Ha ha ha ha!

Audience participation

Well, well. Look 'ee here. 'Tis an unruly mob. They reminds me o' nothing so much as an abundance of plankton!

Audience participation

Oho! Now that ain't nice, is it?

He manages to look hurt and may even attract a few "aaahs"

Taking the rise out o' a man wi' only one leg? T'ain't right, shipmates. T'ain't proper. Not to pick on a disabled man ...

Pause. A wicked grin spreads slowly across his face

Ha ha ha! Well! That made you stop and think, didn't it? Shut you up for a minute. Ha ha ha! Oh, don't you waste no sympathy on me, shipmates, for I've twice the mischief in me as any two-legged man — as you shall presently see! Ha ha ha! Here now, why don't I interduce ye to the rest o' the crew. As likely a parcel o' rogues as ye may never wish to meet on a dark night! Ha ha ha!

He clumps along the line of glowering pirates, stopping first next to Blind Puke

This here is Blind Puke. Blind — for like me, he sacrificed his own good health for the sake o' King George, God bless him. Puke — because in twenty years before the mast, he never did find his sea legs! Ha ha ha!

The Pirates guffaw and jostle Puke. Slither moves along to Israel Feet

And this here is Israel — Israel Feet — on account o' his paddles stinkin' worse than a barrel o'ripe Gorganzola!

He passes along to George Merry

This is George. We calls him George Merry — 'cos he isn't! Ha ha ha!

The Pirates hoot and jostle at Merry who continues to glower. Slither reaches the end of the front row

And Seamus O' Flaherty so 'tis, also known as Groundbait. For he can't hold his grog upon the billow.

Slither gives Groundbait a shove and sends him sprawling

Oh and many more, shipmates. Too noomerous to mention. But every man jack o' them a' burstin' to get their flippers on Billy Fishbones' worthless neck! Ha ha ha! And we'll have him soon enough, don't you worry. For I'll have you know, that I've put my best man on the job — in a manner o'speakin'. Ha ha ha!

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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