

PRESS RELEASE

Gideon Productions Presents...

MRS THOMSON ALMOST LIVE

An award-winning script, a Corrie star's mother, and a bunch of grapes...

Mrs Thomson Almost Live contains the perfect ingredients required to be justifiably seen as one of the most side-splitting comedy productions of the year.

For the winner of the 'Best Play' award at the Bury Festival of Plays in March 2006, the next stop is the Edinburgh Festival, where audiences will be in uproar thanks to a dialogue that experts have described as "absurdly hilarious and relentlessly funny".

Writer **Hayley Read** and her on-stage partner **Judy Sanderson** – mother to Nikki, of Coronation Street and Celebrity X-Factor fame – are transformed into Dorothy and Millicent in a play that oozes Lancastrian humour as the pair pay a visit to hospital-bound Mrs Thomson... but is Mrs Thomson actually there?

The duologue provides an exploration into the minds of two women who know an awful lot about nothing, with the narrative driven by their pseudo academic conversations which debate everything from astrology to fate and their unusual thoughts on bungee jumping and plastic surgery.

The bedside conversation becomes increasingly bizarre and ridiculously hilarious as poor old Mrs Thomson remains ignored in the background – and all her grapes are eaten – in a creation that looks set to become a hit on a national stage.

The actresses can point to supportive offspring as the inspiration for this masterpiece, with Judy's acting career enjoying a new lease of life since daughter Nikki's rise to fame as Coronation Street's Candice, while Hayley claims she may never have made it as an actress if it hadn't been for the intervention of sons Ben, 19, and Sam, 17. She admitted:

"I was never that keen on being an actress at school – in fact I always used to shy away from having to go on stage! However, my sons started to attend the Carole Godby Theatre Workshop in Bury, and when they heard that an adult class was starting they encouraged me to have a go.

"That was about four years ago, and for the last two years the plays I've written have won the 'Best Play' at the Bury Festival of Plays. I'm thrilled that we're now going to get the chance to take Mrs Thomson to the Edinburgh Festival as it's going to be a lot of fun for everyone."

Judy knows her family's success means she has a lot to live up to when she takes to the stage, but Mrs Thomson Almost Live could be the spark that brings another Sanderson into the spotlight. She claimed:

"My son made a few TV appearances when he was younger and obviously Nikki has done very well for herself, so I'm looking forward to getting on stage as Millicent who's a bit outrageous and says exactly what she thinks!

"Hayley loves writing and I love performing, so I hope that together we've produced the sort of play that many people will enjoy. Everyone's really loved the play so far and fundraising for the production has been going very well.

"Nikki has been very supportive, and performed a few numbers when we had a comedy and entertainment evening recently. She's certainly not embarrassed by me pretending to be a bit of a busybody dressed up in 60's clothing!"

The latest fundraising effort takes place at the **Bury FC Social Club** on **Gigg Lane, Bury**, on **Wednesday 19th July**, when a performance of Mrs Thomson Almost Live provides the focal point of an event that also features numerous performances from many of the region's top entertainers.

Press and media representatives wishing to attend are welcome to a complimentary ticket, with the festivities commencing at 7.30pm. General admission tickets are available now from the Box Office at a special price of just £4 – call 07776 306 900 or e-mail GideonReeves@hotmail.com for more information and to purchase tickets. The same contact details apply for all enquiries relating to press tickets.

Mrs Thomson Almost Live: Edinburgh Listings Information

Dates: 20th – 27th August 2006 at 21.15.

Venue: The Underbelly (Iron Belly), Cowgate

Tickets: £7.50 / Cons £6.50

Venue Box Office: 0870 745 3083

Fringe Box Office: 0131 226 0000

www.underbelly.co.uk

Please contact Gideon Reeves on 0161 959 1177 or 07776 306 900 for any further information relating to this press release. Photo opportunities can be arranged on request.