

INTERVIEW: XAVIERA HOLLANDER, THEATRE PRODUCER

"I want to put Marbella on the map for cultural events"

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Xaviera Hollander has been coming to her villa in Marbella for the last 35 years but admits to being "bored out of my brains" with the cultural programme the area has to offer. Now the woman who made a name for herself in the seventies as "The Happy Hooker" is attempting to fill this void by bringing her own productions to the Black Box Theatre.

Tell us about the cabaret show you are putting on this weekend.

Continental Carrousel Cabaret stars the duo, Fifi L'Amour and Rodolfo Ravissant. Fifi was originally an Australian stripper who turned out to be a talented singer and Rodolfo is a classical pianist who improvises freely and incorporates musical jokes in his playing. They've been doing cabaret all over Amsterdam, all over the world really, and they're a delightful couple I've known for 14 years.

So they've come to Spain especially for this show.

Yes. They're good friends of mine and they've performed in many of my theatre productions, birthday parties or whatever. They're very cheerful and bright. Continental Carrousel is an intellectual cabaret with wit, naughtiness - but not too risqué, we don't want to shock people - and me! I read a few funnies. The show is at the Black Box Theatre on December 12th and 13th at 9 p.m. It's perfect for Christmas time; with all this recession going on people need something to laugh at.

What other theatre productions have you brought to Marbella?

Sherry Midas, who I work with, discovered the Black Box Theatre about half a year ago. She has just put on a play called "Slaves of Starbuck", but that was half full, probably because it was almost too intellectual for this town. I intend to bring more fun things. In January we're putting on "Mourning Glory" with comic singer David Benson, also at the Black Box theatre. This is about the death of Lady Di. It's a sad subject but it's also hilarious. Then the next week he does Star Struck which is a very happy play. What put me on the map here was the first play I did in cooperation with Sherry. It was called "Nijinsky's Last Dance" that we put on about four months ago and that was a total sell-out. It was a one-man show with a young gay actor from Puerto Rico. He played three or four roles brilliantly.

How long have you been producing theatre?

For the last 12 years. I enjoy putting on performances at my home in Amsterdam and I've taken plays to Ireland, Mexico and the Edinburgh Festival. My plays vary from Jewish content to humour but if something strikes a note in me or makes me either laugh a lot or cry a lot I'll produce it.

What made you decide to bring shows to Marbella?

What Sherry and I really want to do is put Marbella on the the map for cultural events. Apart from flamenco and the usual classical concerts there was nothing here. I thought that Marbella, having this beautiful theatre, really



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needed a bit of a plug. But I can only do this once every three or four months because I live in Amsterdam. What I want to do is get this thing going on the Costa del Sol. If I don't get the people then I'll stop and then again Marbella will be starved of cultural plays.