



[Welcome to Paradise](#) @ 3MT

by A Ship of Fools Company

Reviewed by [John Waterhouse](#) November 2017

How to describe *Welcome to Paradise*? It can hardly be described as play and does not qualify as stand-up comedy. It is certainly inane and in fact extremely puerile. There are no jokes as such, to call it low-budget would be an insult to productions that actually have a low

budget and it would be correct to call it witless, banal, silly and very bad. It is also rightly said to be an insult to Christmas shows, and Father Christmas may well have already spoken to his lawyers. And yet somehow, in spite of all this, or possibly even because of it,

Welcome to Paradise

is so bad it's actually very good!!

It might seem odd to liken *Welcome to Paradise* to a bumble bee, but there are two parallels. By the laws of physics a bee should not be able to fly, and by the laws of comedy

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should not be funny - and yet a bee flies very well and this show is extremely funny. The other parallel is that a bee can sting when you least expect it and so does

Welcome to Paradise

Welcome to Paradise is in essence a curious blend of anarchic tomfoolery and it is actually edgy, but in an unconventional way. There are countless comedians who trade in explicit filth, political satire or bang on about the latest right-on cause. It's all been done, and just as the Sex Pistols did with music, things have been taken so far that it's almost impossible to shock anymore.

Welcome to Paradise is a welcome return to a less sophisticated time of comedy, before political correctness took so much comedy out of comedy.

This show *does* at times have one character constantly ridiculing a weaker individual and yes it can be viewed as bullying, even to a point of a merciless flogging! There *is* a racial stereotype in the show and not even the audience is safe from falling victim to the on-stage buffonery, but behind all, this is genuine innocence, devoid of any desire to hurt or attack and basically just playing for laughs, and the audience loved it. This is a show in the glorious tradition of Little Britain which largely traded on being as political incorrect as possible and surprise, surprise, was a massive success.



Like *Little Britain*, the influences of ***Welcome to Paradise*** are clearly rooted in the 60's and 70's, with the likes of the Peter Sellers, *Round the Horne*, *Monty Python*, the *Goodies* and most notably *Spike Milligan* - all likely sources of inspiration to the writers. Anyone who remembers the *Spike Milligan 'Q'* series in the 70s will recognise certain aspects in this show, and though the humour could sometimes come across as outrageous and brutal, surely nobody would ever accuse *Spike* of having had a malicious bone in his body.

Welcome to Paradise is a reminder of what has been lost in simple, basic, honest humour. There is no double act on TV remotely comparable to *The Two Ronnies* or *Morecombe and Wise*, and nothing remotely like *Python* or the *Goodies* which does not have political agendas mixed in. There has been no real successor to the likes of *Norman Wisdom*, *Frankie Howerd* or even *Sid James*, who does not try to weave in agendas of one form or another. Only *Fools and Horses* was perhaps the last great sitcom and that finished around twenty years ago.

Avoid this show if you are looking for humour which helps you view the world in a new light, or

challenges accepted prejudices or social injustice. All this show attempts to do is to make you laugh and if the audience reaction at 3MT was anything to go by, **Welcome to Paradise** richly succeeds in doing this.

Welcome to Paradise is touring to the following venues. For more details, see <http://www.ashipoffools.co.uk>

- Bishop Auckland Town Hall 18 Nov
- Chester University 29 Nov
- Washington Arts Centre 30 Nov
- Sheffield University 01 Dec
- Leicester 08 Dec
- Exeter Bike Shed Theatre 20-23 Dec