

GRUMPY GUIDE TO CHRISTMAS

Following the success of the long-running Grumpy Old Men and Grumpy Old Women series, a host of inveterate Grumps of both sexes (and varying ages) vent their collective spleen at the festive season this year in brand-new, hour-long special Grumpy Guide to Christmas. For those of a disgruntled disposition, Christmas and the accompanying brouhaha cause no end of exasperation, so this irascible cast are sure to be on particularly grouchy form as they get stuck into a sackful of seasonal grumbles.

Narrated by GEOFFREY PALMER, the show tackles the full gamut of holiday horrors, from parties and pantos to the pressures of forced jollity and SIR CLIFF RICHARD's 'Mistletoe and Wine', with bellyaching from OZZY OSBOURNE, PENNY SMITH, AL MURRAY, NEIL MORRISSEY, ALISTAIR MCGOWAN, RONNI ANCONA, JOHN THOMSON, SHAPPI KHORSANDI, HUEY MORGAN, RUSSELL KANE, MARK RADCLIFFE, BOBBY DAVRO, DONNA MCPHAIL, MARK STEEL, ANDI OLIVER, MATTHEW LE TISSIER and TERRY CHRISTIAN.

As MARK RADCLIFFE points out, *"There is a great relief if you've got family Christmas over with and no-one's punched each other."* In order to avoid familial fisticuffs you'll first have to plough through turkey and cranberry sauce, which according to RONNI ANCONA is *"basically chicken with jam"* served up with Brussels Sprouts *"which are the grapes of the devil"*. Then, of course, there's the exchange of presents – here's AL MURRAY on the 'joy' of giving: *"Oh p**s off. The joy is the frenzied unwrapping, like a crazed velociraptor tearing its prey apart ... giving sucks."* As Christmas becomes more commercialised, perhaps the saddest thing is that *"a lot of youngsters don't know the true meaning of Christmas"*, notes ALISTAIR MCGOWAN. *"They genuinely don't know that it's the time we celebrate the birth and the life and the work of Morecambe and Wise"*. But the definitive Grumpy take on Christmas comes courtesy of OZZY OSBOURNE, who actually considers himself lucky to have missed the whole thing one year following a horrific quad bike injury ... *"it's not goodwill and peace to all mankind, it's just b****cks."*

Grumpy Guide to Christmas is a Liberty Bell production. The film is produced and directed by PIP BANYARD, with STUART PREBBLE the Executive Producer for Liberty Bell and GILLY HALL the Executive Producer for the BBC.

Grumpy Guide to Christmas will air over the Christmas holiday on BBC Two, schedule TBC

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LIBERTY BELL PRODUCTIONS

Liberty Bell Productions, which was formed in autumn 2002, is based in Newcastle and London, and specialises in the production of television documentaries and features, factual entertainment, current affairs, drama-documentary and youth programming. Recent productions include: Life and Death on the NHS (ITV1), Portillo on Thatcher: The Lady's Not For Spurning (BBC FOUR), The Alastair Campbell Diaries (BBC TWO), Three Men In Another Boat (BBC TWO), The Grumpy Guides to... (BBC TWO), Grumpy Old Men (BBC TWO), Grumpy Old Women (BBC TWO), Why We Went to War (More 4), Don't Get Me Started (Five), Real Life: Beating Breast Cancer (ITV1), The Meaning of Life (BBC ONE), and The Widow's Tale (BBC TWO).

WHAT THE PRESS HAVE SAID ABOUT PREVIOUS LIBERTY BELL PRODUCTIONS:

Life and Death on the NHS

"A startling, beautiful documentary following the experiences of a clutch of patients in hospital: a simple idea related with colour and subtlety and it was incredibly moving without ever exploiting its subjects...This wasn't a political documentary and it wasn't a feather-brained concocted set-up. It was sober and tightly edited documentary making. It didn't patronise you, it simply showed three diverse experiences of patients and the professionalism and skill of those doctors and nurses who helped care for them – and O'Brien directed it with the brevity and sensitivity of whatever the television equivalent of fine short storytelling."

Tim Teeman, The Times

Portillo on Thatcher: The Lady's Not For Spurning

"Gordon Brown and David Cameron should watch it. Tony Blair should get a hold of a tape and reflect on what might have been. Media bosses who only commission films if they portray politicians as corrupt and mad should take note also... I know people with only a passing interest in politics who were gripped."

Steve Richards, The Independent

The Alastair Campbell Diaries

"Just as DVD extras allow you to see the human fallibility that lies behind the polished exterior of the finished film, Campbell's diary fills in the engrossing trivia of off-stage politics... it is completely engrossing."

Thomas Sutcliffe, The Independent

The Widow's Tale

"This complex and moving film is one of the television highlights of the year so far."

Andrew Male, The Sunday Times

Grumpy Old Men

"The whole programme put me into an uncharacteristically, seethingly good mood... Wonderful stuff"

A.A. Gill, The Sunday Times