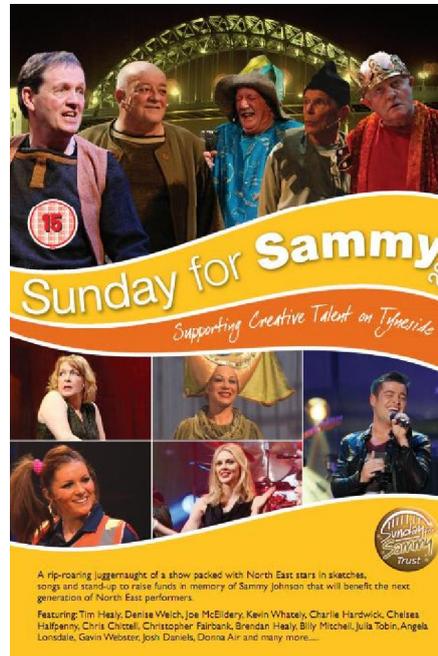




## PRESS RELEASE



**MWMDVD106 [5021541110695] UK PPD £10.00**

***A rip-roaring juggernaut of a show packed with North East stars in sketches, songs and stand-up to raise funds in memory of Sammy Johnson that will benefit the next generation of North East Performers.***

When Geordie actor Sammy Johnson, best known for his role as 'Stick' in the hit TV series 'Spender', died suddenly in 1998, his friends and colleagues decided to create a lasting tribute to his memory.

His fellow North East actors, Jimmy Nail and Tim Healy, set up the Sammy Johnson Memorial Fund to support young people from the region embarking on a career in the performing arts.

To do this, they needed to raise money and so, in 2000; they and a group of their friends – which includes some of the biggest names in showbusiness - decided to stage a concert at Newcastle City Hall. Theatres are traditionally closed on a Sunday so to make it easier for as many of Sammy's colleagues as possible to participate; the show was scheduled for a Sunday night. The event had its title.

The show was a resounding success and the Sunday for Sammy concerts, which take place every two years at Newcastle's City Hall, have become the hottest ticket in town as an ever increasing galaxy of stars from the worlds of TV, theatre and music takes to the stage.

As well as Tim and Jimmy, past performers have included Kevin Whately, Denise Welch, Timothy Spall, Brendan Healy, Brian Johnson, Charlie Hardwick, Billy Mitchell and Jill Halfpenny. Although many of the cast appear regularly in the show, the final bill is never made public and consequently the audiences have enjoyed many surprise guest appearances. In 2010 it was legendary Tyneside born guitarist and ex-Dire Straits frontman Mark Knopfler who walked on stage unannounced.

More than 160 talented performers from the region have received grants from money raised by the sale of Sunday for Sammy concert tickets and DVD's since the shows began in 2000. 75% of the profits from this DVD will benefit **The Sunday For Sammy Trust**.

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Issued on behalf of **Mawson & Wareham (Music) Ltd** by

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### Product Information

Where else but at a "Sunday for Sammy" show could you see Auf Wiedersehen Pet's **Tim Healy**, **Kevin Whatley**, **Chris Fairbank** and **Julia Tobin** in an hilarious sketch written by Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais that also featured Emmerdale's **Chris Chittell**, Loose Women's (and Celebrity Big Brother Winner) **Denise Welch** and Byker Grove's **Donna Air**, all playing the parts of King Arthur and his court and are kept in order by Merlin the Magician played by the inimitable **Brendan Healey**. Add to that the rapturous standing ovation for surprise guest **Joe McElderry** following his stunning rendition of "Nessun Dorma", another pair of side splitting sketches written by Ed Waugh and Trevor Wood featuring Emmerdale's **Charlie Hardwick** and **Chelsea Halfpenny**, plus The Bill's **Angie Lonsdale** and the RSC's **Peter Peverley**. Then there are brilliant young comedians **Gavin Webster** and **Josh Daniels** and a duet with a difference from **Billy Mitchell**, a very timely ode to a pasty from Tyneside Troubadour **Pete Scott**. Also included are cameo performances from grant recipients **Nathalie Stern** and **Adam Taylor** and the whole event is topped off with a selection of tunes from the house band, **Sammy Bandits**, with vocals from **Ray Stubbs**, **Tim Healey**, **Lorraine Crosby** and **Billy Mitchell**.

### The Production Team

**Geoff Wonfor** began his career in Britain as a cameraman and film editor, working for ITV and the BBC. In 1974 he became a freelance director working on documentaries, entertainment and music specials. During the mid-seventies he made short films with England's international soccer star Malcolm McDonald and world heavyweight boxing champion, Muhammad Ali.

In 1981 he was appointed Senior Director for a weekly rock show for Channel Four, which launched in 1982. 'The Tube' was a 90 minute 'live' show, with featured specials on location and filmed inserts. It ran for five years and consolidated Geoff's reputation for inventing new stylistic approaches. His output ranges from classical concerts through the great stars of popular music to the cutting edge of new and experimental bands.

Having worked with Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr individually, they chose Geoff to put together the acclaimed 'Beatles Anthology' for video and network television in the early '90s. He has also worked with Tina Turner, Stevie Wonder, Prince, Oasis, George Michael, Mick Jagger, Fats Domino, Sting, Dire Straits and Elton John, to name but a few. Geoff's other credits include: 'Stella' a profile of fashion designer Stella McCartney; 'Gorilla Gorilla,' an account of a project which introduces gorillas bred in captivity in the UK back into the wild; Jools Holland and Friends, a concert held at London's Royal Albert Hall and Band Aid 20, a film to mark the 20th anniversary of the Band Aid project.

**Ray Laidlaw** has been actively involved in music for many years achieving major international acclaim as the drummer with rock group Lindisfarne in the 1970's, taking responsibility for the group's visual output and establishing a strong relationship with TV director, Geoff Wonfor. In the 1980's Ray became the bands manager – as well as continuing as a band member. In the 1990's he opened his own recording studio and clients included Chas Chandler, Jimmy Nail and countless others. He has worked regularly over the years with Geoff Wonfor on visual projects as well as producing numerous live events across the North East.

### Press/Media and Further Information

Information about this DVD will be fully serviced to all appropriate UK music press and radio. For more details, and to request a review sample and/or an interview request, please contact John Cronin at Music & Media Consulting Limited.