

Starring role for Colourful Coffins

Colourful Coffins is taking a starring role in a new TV programme being shown for the first time this summer.

Actor Richard O'Brien has teamed up with TV production company Televisionary to search for strange, unusual and alternative death-related tales in Richard O'Brien's Dead Strange.

Most famous for writing the cult musical The Rocky Horror Show and starring in its film adaptation The Rocky Horror Picture Show, O'Brien will be investigating bizarre and unexplained deaths, weird wills and fantastic funerals.

And it was the latter which led the camera crew to Colourful Coffins, UK leaders in bespoke and personalised coffins, where they spent a morning filming and interviewing managing director Mary Tomes and her team.

"We thought taking part in the programme was a wonderful idea," said Mary. "They were very interested to hear about how and why we set up our business and to see some of the wonderful designs which we've done for families.

"They were particularly keen on finding out more about the technical and training aspects of the design and production side and about the great lengths we go to to ensure every one of our coffins is absolutely quality perfect before it leaves our premises.

"We were also able to describe how we see peoples' attitudes to death slowly changing and the fact that we have such wonderful feedback from people who tell us how our coffin has helped to really make a difference on one of the saddest days of their life."

One such example is the increasing popularity of the pre-design service, recently launched by Colourful Coffins, which allows individuals to pre-plan their own coffin design, and Mary explained how many people now see it as a lasting gift to leave their family. Flowers, sporting themes, hobbies and family photos are, she said, already proving popular choices. Mary also underlined the fact that all pre-design orders are then passed to funeral directors who offer Colourful Coffins, emphasising that the new service is a real benefit to the trade.

"In TV terms, death is the last great taboo," said series producer Jeremy Hibbard. "Of course every death is a tragedy, but sometimes those who've gone leave us with puzzles or even something to smile at and there'll be plenty of people out there who are already planning ahead for when they go.

"We felt the approach taken by Colourful Coffins was an excellent example of this and were delighted to be able to include them in the programme."

Keeping it in the family, director Bal Croce also spoke to Mary's husband Kevin, chief designer, son Bob Tomes

and daughter Kate Parchment about their roles and their reaction when Mary announced she was planning to set up the business.

Bob and Kate head up the sales team, visiting funeral directors around the country to talk to them about the Colourful Coffins range and Kate was filmed delivering a finished coffin to a local branch of The Co-operative Funeralcare, which is part of The Midcounties Co-operative in Cowley, Oxford.

Back at Colourful Coffins' base, production team members Ian Patterson, Steve Richards, Simon Turnbull and Jamie Mitchell were also interviewed about their roles, together with designer Scott Palmer, who told Bal that he's already started work on his own pre-design coffin featuring his car.

Plans for the programme, which begins on ITV Westcountry in July, will also include interviews with funeral directors and grave diggers, as well as speaking to families who have chosen a more unusual send-off for their loved one.

Notes to editors

1. Colourful Coffins (www.colourfulcoffins.com) is a family-owned and run business, based in Oxford, and the leading provider of bespoke picture coffins for the UK market. It offers a wide range of distinctive and personalised designs, each expertly crafted and hand-finished by the in-house team.
2. Colourful Coffins supplies and works closely with a network of funeral directors across the country, providing support and advice to both funeral businesses and their clients. It also provides one-to-one advice to families to help them make a very personal design choice.
3. Managing director, Mary Tomes, is available to talk to the media on a variety of issues, including: the changing face of the coffin market; how personalising a coffin can help a family say a special, final goodbye; and the most popular themes for bespoke coffins.
4. A selection of images from the filming is available on request.

For media information, please contact Alison Dewar at Oxford Marketing
Tel: 01235 527506 or 07801 234261
Email: alison@oxfordmarketing.co.uk

To find out more:

Tel: 01865 779172 or visit www.colourfulcoffins.com

Colourful Coffins, Printworks, Crescent Road, Cowley, Oxford OX4 2PB

CO₂ emissions
offsetting by
climatecare
International Patents Pending

