

A CUT ABOVE



...ves' bassist, the quirkily monikered House of Lords rocks The Astoria on Tuesday

Picture: MATT GRAYSON

WHO WANTS TO PLAY HAMLET?

SUNDAY openings are the words of theatreland's lips. From the National Theatre to the Donmar Warehouse, plans are afoot to take to the stage on the industry's traditional day of rest.

Yet quietly in the background, another Sunday theatre revolution has already been taking place. Radical new theatre company The Factory has sold out different London hot spots every week this year with its take on Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

At each of the shows, audiences not only choose which actor they want to play which part, but also bring all the props – however ridiculous – for the actors to use on the otherwise empty stage.

With no publicity and the designated location only announced a week in advance, the group's movements can be tricky to follow. But this Sunday it is the turn of the Riverside Studios in Hammersmith to host the crazy capery.

"Fun for the audience and fun for ourselves has been the top priority from the start," says Tim Evans, 27, who began The Factory with friend Alex Hassell in early 2007.

"There's no set, no props, no costume. It's always *Hamlet*, but by letting the audience choose the actors'

characters and their props you never see the same performance twice."

For however outlandish it sounds, this is no amateur production. Tim Carroll, an associate director of the Shakespeare's Globe, is the director, and many of the 20 strong rolling cast are West End regulars.

Tim says: "We do our work during the week, but Sundays is our time to express ourselves freely."

● *Hamlet*, written by Shakespeare and adapted by The Factory, plays at the Riverside Studios, Crisp Road, Hammersmith, on Sunday March 2. £10. 5pm. Call 020 8237 1111. See www.riversidestudios.co.uk and www.seehamlet.co.uk

Christian McLaughlin

TO BE... Tim Evans

