

S.J.T Stephen Joseph Theatre

Annual Report

What YOU made happen in 2025/26

Once again – huge thanks to you!

We're so grateful for your generous support during 2025–2026. Everything we do, from the shows on our stages to our work in the local community, is underpinned by your kindness.

I'm pleased to share with you our impact report from April 2025 to March 2026. Do read on to find out more about the work you've contributed to, and if you have any questions or thoughts, do please contact me on:

Stephanie.dattani@sjt.uk.com or 01723 356645

We hope we can continue to work with you in the future.

Thank you again!



The year's impact in figures

In the financial year 2025/2026…

We staged **300** live performances, and screened **413** films and live streamings in our cinema

This included **52** visiting shows, with **87** performances

83,382 tickets were sold

4,804 people visited us for the first time

65,106 people watched a live event, and **18,276** cinema-goers watched a screening in the McCarthy

We staged **24** accessible performances, including BSL interpreted, relaxed, audio described and captioned. Twenty of these were our own productions, and four were performed in early March by Frozen Light, a company which creates multi-sensory theatre for audiences with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD). Frozen Light's visit was kindly subsidised by North Yorkshire Council via Councillor David Chance, who allocated the show £1,200 from his NYC Locality Budget

We sold **1,121** tickets to customers with access requirements

We issued **754** discounted cinema and theatre tickets to NHS employees

We continued our £1 ticket scheme, making **853** available through our partner organisations

We increased our Circle membership to **1,018** and held **24** members' events, including our hugely popular monthly Circle Cafes

Once again, we worked with the Westway Open Arms social action centre at Christmas to bring a busload of **100** Eastfield residents to come and see *Sleeping Beauty*…

…and provided **319** tickets for FEAST, North Yorkshire Council's school holiday scheme providing free places and a free meal for children and young people receiving benefits-related free school meals

We staged **4** dementia-friendly theatre performances

There were **243** accessible screenings

We received over **5,000** donations

Our Creative Engagement team attended **2** careers fairs, engaging with over **1000** students

They worked with **30** artists, delivering **918** workshops for **3,899** individual participants and created **23,374** opportunities to take part.

Our Breaking the Mould – Reshaping Artistic Leadership scheme was nominated for the **Excellence in Workplace Culture Award** in 2025's UK Theatre Awards.

In the community

Your ongoing generosity has allowed our Creative Engagement team to further develop their vital and much appreciated work within the community.

Arts in Eastfield

We've had a presence in Eastfield for some years, contributing to civic events and delivering arts and cultural activities within the community. Historically, this work largely took the form of enrichment or diversionary activity. In 2023, however, we shifted our approach to prioritise targeted intervention, with the aim of creating a more meaningful and lasting impact on the lives of the people we work with.

The programme delivered significant outcomes in its first year, and we're delighted to report that its second year has exceeded expectations. The strength of engagement has also generated some important secondary benefits, including a major new collaboration with Westway ABC (Boxing Club), celebrating the club's outstanding community engagement work in Eastfield (read our case study on the moving film we made about the Club at the end of this report). This partnership emerged from connections established through *Battleground*, the first production created through this programme.

Our Head of Creative Engagement, Rob Salmon says: *"What year one demonstrated is that young people in Eastfield want their voices to be heard, and when they are, it changes more than how they see themselves – it changes how they engage with their community. Listening has real impact. The response to this work has also shown that when a community and an arts organisation collaborate with purpose, the result is not only meaningful change but powerful theatre. This award-winning project has now attracted national press attention, inspired others and strengthened the Stephen Joseph Theatre's partnerships with grassroots organisations across Eastfield."*

Listening has real impact.

There are three core strands of activity:

Raising Aspirations

A year-round programme of workshops on achieving your ambitions

We've continued to deliver weekly workshops in each of the three Eastfield Primary schools: Braeburn Nursery & Primary Academy (Year 6), St George's RC Primary School (Years 3 to 6), and Overdale Community Primary School (Years 5 and 6).



The programme gives students in transition and pre-transition years access to a guided 'space' in which

In the community

to explore their ambitions for the future, and to increase their understanding and confidence of the language of aspiration.

Workshop sessions - **91**
Weeks of delivery - **32**
Participant numbers - **198**
Opportunities to take part - **1994**

Participants demonstrate increased confidence in expressing themselves.

Rob Salmon says: *"The regular delivery of weekly workshops has continued to strengthen relationships between the practitioners and the participants. In this second year, those established relationships have allowed the work to deepen, enabling the team to adapt and refine the activity in response to the evolving needs of the schools involved.*

"With trust now embedded, sessions have moved beyond initial engagement towards more reflective conversations about identity, opportunity and future ambitions. Across the participating schools, staff continue to report that many students begin with complex or limited assumptions about their future prospects. In some cases, pupils express an expectation that their adult lives will be defined by unemployment or reliance on the benefits system.

"Through sustained creative activity, discussion and play, the project has continued to challenge these assumptions while developing the language of aspiration. In this second year we have seen clear progression in outcomes. Participants demonstrate increased confidence in expressing themselves, stronger collaboration within groups, and teachers have also reported noticeable improvements in focus and engagement during the sessions."

Listened To Project – *Feral*

A six-month programme of intervention through drama in school



We worked with Year 9 students at George Pindar School to research and develop a sequel to *Battleground* (2024), exploring their self-image and how their community has shaped their sense of identity. Through workshops students contributed ideas and experiences that informed the new piece. The work premiered at the Scarborough Fringe before being presented in school to the entire Year 9 cohort.

Rehearsal hours - **75**
Performances - **4**
Workshops - **15**
Audiences / participations - **755**

Rob Salmon says: *"In 2024 we identified a young theatre-maker from the town, Keane Liley. He had recently left school with limited*

In the community

qualifications, but he wasn't short on things to say about why young people in Eastfield were viewed through such a negative lens.

"We built a team around him of working-class theatre makers with shared experience of social housing, poverty and resilience. This led to Battleground, a short play made for students at his former school, George Pindar (GPS), exploring how it feels to be defined by prejudice rather than potential.

"Keane's voice brought an authenticity that triggered an immediate shift in students' attitudes towards themselves. The project evolved into Feral, *a new play asking whether you can ever truly leave the place that shaped you. Keane took the lead as writer, supported by the SJT artistic team.*

"After premiering at the Scarborough Fringe – where it won Best Theatre and Best New Writing awards – it returned to GPS. The impact has been tangible: more GPS boys choosing Drama at GCSE, renewed civic pride, and the once-dominant narrative of 'feral youths' has been replaced online by coverage celebrating the creative achievements of Eastfield's young people. The Guardian recently featured an article about this work in their Against the Tide *series, a year-long project reporting on the lives of young people in coastal communities across England and Wales – [you can read it here.]*



We're now following up with the final part of the trilogy, Besieged, *to be presented in 2026."*

After-school clubs

A year-round programme of drama after school

After-school drama clubs delivered in Eastfield's three primary schools – Years 3 to 6 at St George's and Braeburn, and Years 3 and 5 at Overdale – and created a space where pupils could express themselves outside the classroom. The sessions encouraged imagination, collaboration and risk-taking, allowing them to share ideas freely and discover new strengths in an environment where creativity, rather than attainment, was the focus.

The sessions encouraged imagination, collaboration and risk-taking

Workshop sessions - **89**
Weeks of delivery - **30**
Participants - **55**
Opportunities to take part - **1161**

In the community



Rob Salmon says: *"We delivered a transformative after-school drama programme for 55 children aged 8 to 12 across the three Eastfield schools: Overdale, St George's and Braeburn The programme focused on musical theatre, improvisation, narrative building, direct audience address, and expressive techniques.*

"It was designed to support confidence, resilience, teamwork, and emotional literacy, particularly for children from high-deprivation areas and with neurodiverse profiles.

"Benefits include:

- *Confidence and communication: students now initiate eye contact, share ideas, and lead warm-ups.*
- *Resilience and emotional growth: children now handle setbacks constructively and articulate their emotions.*
- *Teamwork and social integration: students collaborate across year groups and neurodiverse profiles.*
- *Academic spillover: teachers report improved classroom behaviour, problem-solving, and peer co-operation. 100% of students reported increased confidence."*

These activities are complemented by a number of one-off interactions in support of civic events across the year, including the very popular £1 tickets for people experiencing hardship to access our annual Christmas production and other SJT-produced work, workshops and readings at the annual Eastfield Fairs, staff attendance at the Big Clean events, and more.

Together it represents an ongoing increase in participation on previous years, with almost 4,000 opportunities to take part. This underlines the continuity of our commitment to improving outcomes in Eastfield.

This work is only possible because of generous funding from McCain, who support Raising Aspirations, the Listened To Project and After-School Clubs.

£1 ticket scheme

We're still expanding our £1 ticket scheme, which offers heavily subsidised tickets to local charities and organisations to help us include people who might not usually be able to attend the theatre. In 2025/26, we issued **853** of these tickets via our partners organisations (see below).

Last Christmas, we were also able to offer £1 tickets for *Sleeping Beauty* to **over 100** members of the Eastfield community and were able to split the cost of a bus to bring them here with Westway Open Arms.

In the community

We also worked with North Yorkshire Council's FEAST scheme for families with children on free school meals, bringing a group of children on complimentary tickets to our Christmas show.

The following groups have been part of the £1 ticket scheme in 2025/26:

North Yorkshire Council (FEAST)	Beyond Housing
Carers Plus Yorkshire	Scarborough Survivors
Yorkshire Coast Families	Westway Open Arms
The Rainbow Centre	St Catherine's Hospice
The Wilf Ward Family Trust	Adoption UK

Dementia-friendly work

We're delighted that our work with people living with dementia continues. This includes dementia-friendly classes, film screenings and performances of shows.

In 2025/26, we:

- Ran **36** dementia-friendly movement workshops
- Presented **12** dementia-friendly film screenings
- Produced **5** dementia-friendly performances of our SJT productions (*Love's Labour's Lost (more or less)*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Noises Off*, *Earth Angel* and *Sleeping Beauty*).
- Overall, there were at least **700** participations in dementia-focused activities.



Classes

Kate Paul continues to deliver our weekly dementia-friendly movement classes, using gentle activities involving music and objects such as colourful silk 'parachutes' and soft balls.

Aimed at improving participants' mental health and mobility, the popular classes are followed by social sessions with free tea, coffee and cake.

Films

We were delighted to see our dementia-friendly films featured on the BBC website earlier this year. Reporter Fiona Callow spoke with our Head of Creative Engagment, Rob Salmon, St Cecilia Care Group owner Mike Padgham, and with Tim Tubbs who, with musical partner Bill Scott, hosts the musical films. She then attended a screening – it was December, so the film was Miracle on 34th Street.

Do read her lovely report here!

We're delighted to thank all of you, but in particular, Sue Standard-Sheader and Councillor Richard Maw, for your ongoing and generous support of our dementia-friendly work.

In the community

FUSE

Supported by a local trust and free to attend, FUSE is an inclusive theatre group for young people with additional needs and young people in mainstream education aged 15–plus that meets weekly during term time.

Members enjoy regular drama workshops designed to develop social and interpersonal skills in a supportive environment. The group aims to help them grow confidence and explore where they belong in the world and what they'd like their future to look like. Participants who need one-to-one or personal care can bring their own support or carer along.



Making stories – and moves!

Now in its second year, Story Maker is a hugely popular morning activity for pre-schoolers. The monthly story-telling sessions are held in the Meeting Point, with each session followed by a creative activity linked to the theme of that month's book.

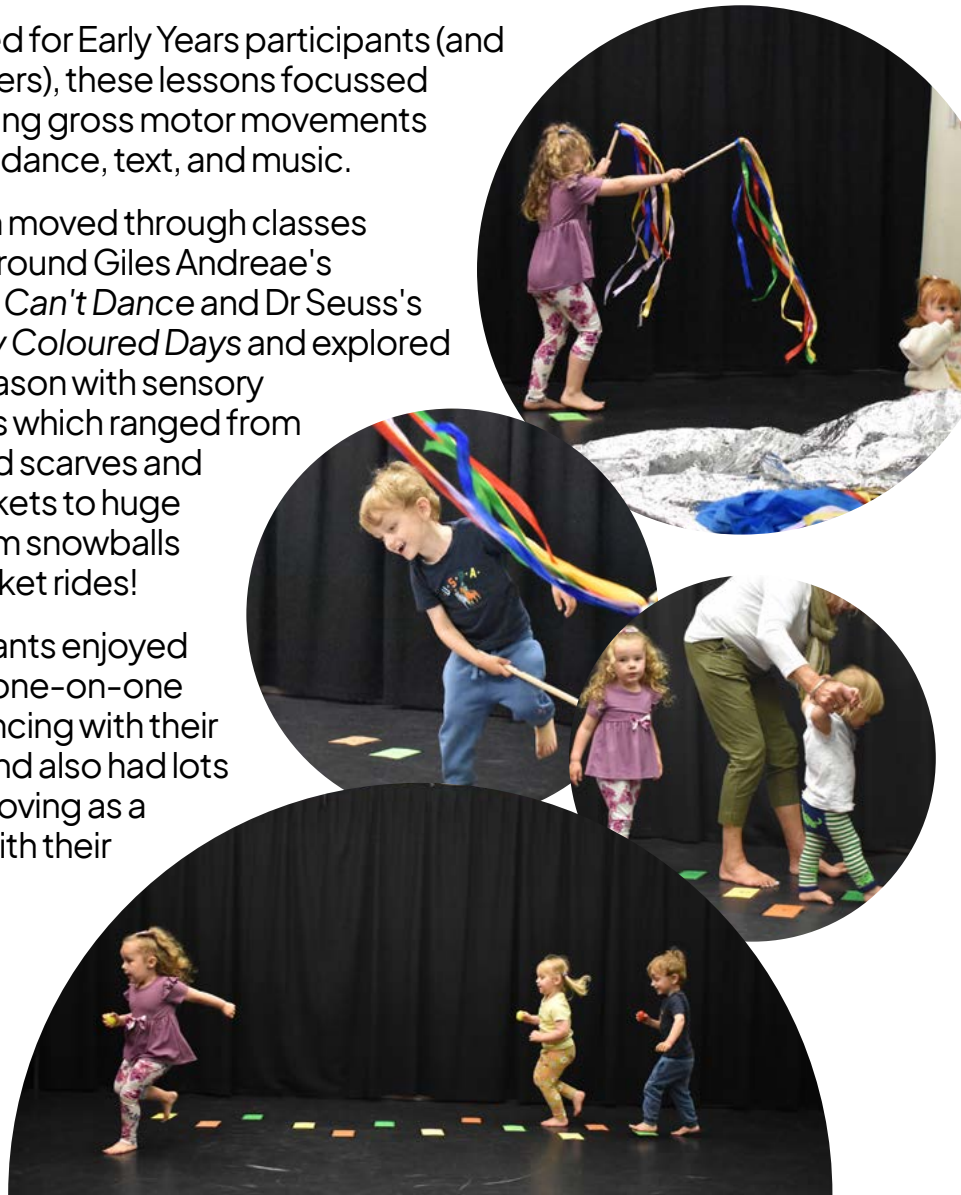
Story Maker is generously supported by Judi Watkinson and runs in partnership with the National Literacy Trust.

To accompany Story Maker, throughout 2025 and 26 we also delivered **Mover Maker**.

Designed for Early Years participants (and their carers), these lessons focussed on building gross motor movements through dance, text, and music.

Children moved through classes based around Giles Andreae's *Giraffes Can't Dance* and Dr Seuss's *My Many Coloured Days* and explored each season with sensory prompts which ranged from coloured scarves and foil blankets to huge pompom snowballs and bucket rides!

Participants enjoyed special one-on-one time dancing with their carers and also had lots of fun moving as a group with their friends.



In the community

GP sessions at the SJT

For several years now, we've worked with doctors who work locally, but who may hail from across the globe. Freelance practitioner Laura Hawley runs popular sessions aimed at giving them confidence and improving their communication skills. They also act as informal get-togethers for GPs who might not otherwise not get to meet.

The Meeting Point

It's only been running for just over a year now, but already the Meeting Point is a crucial hub for activities in the town centre.

The former OutReach offices on Northway were converted during 2024 into:

- A function room for small groups to hold discussions, meetings and events
- A breakout space for creative people working in our small rehearsal room
- A green room for artists and performance makers looking for a place to connect
- The home of our new community cafes – public events based around a need or a skill... and a cuppa!
- A small public space, available for free (or a small donation) with tea, coffee, cordial, and a never-ending supply of biscuits (until they run out!).

We're grateful to the Kirkby Foundation for their generous financial support of The Meeting Point.

Users during 2025/26 include:

National Literacy Trust - Comic Club and World Book Day
Local actors' groups
Dementia Forward
Home Instead Community Cafe
Immersive Theatre Workshops
Kinship
Mind - Volunteers Befriending Café
Playwrights Room
Pride
Propel
GP Trainee Workshops
Scarborough Theatre Company
Story Maker
Scarborough Fringe rehearsals
Mencap workshops
Brownies workshop
Dementia-friendly Movement Classes
Creative Engagment Masterclasses and Backstage skills

In the community

workshops
British Film Academy
Drama Clubs 1,2 and 3
Youth Theatre 3
Fuse Youth Theatre
Young Company
Teachers' Network
Scarborough 6th Form College
Global Voices choir
Adult Dance classes

Schools

In 2025/26, we provided the following workshops in schools and colleges and on site here at the SJT:

After-school clubs at Braeburn, Overdale and St George's
Raising Aspirations workshops at Braeburn, Overdale and St George's
STEAM project at Braeburn School
Curriculum projects at Overdale and St George's
West Heslerton drama after-school club
Seamer and Irton space workshops
Seamer and Irton drumming workshops
Seamer and Irton explorers' workshops
Whitby School SFX make-up workshop
East Ayton African drumming workshops
CU - various workshops
Filey Juniors drama club
Gladstone Road EYFS music project
Hatton's School of Performing Arts workshops
Lady Lumley's theatre experience day
Malton School careers fair
Scarborough Sixth Form careers fair
George Pindar 'Listened To' project
Propel work experience programme
Scarborough TEC industry talk
St Augustine's Animal Farm workshops
Fyling Hall drama workshop
Woodlands School drama workshops

On our stages

New Work

Our six main SJT productions last year were a healthy mix of new work and new versions of classics.

We started the year with

Love's Labour's Lost (More or Less)

- our second Shakespeare co-produced with the new(ish) Shakespeare North Playhouse in Prescot, and adapted again by Nick Lane and Elizabeth Godber.

Our audiences said:

We all loved it. It was really good. As well as the high standard of the acting and backstage team, we were particularly impressed by the energy that all eight actors put into their roles – we felt that it took an already entertaining production to an even higher level.

This take on Shakespeare was fantastic, we saw Loves Labour Lost done by the RSC last year so knew the original story well - what a fantastic up to date version!

It's always a treat to come to SJT. Efficient, clean and organised. I love the round theatre experience. The performance was absolutely brilliant.

It is always a joy to be at the SJT! The friendliest and most welcoming theatre.

Just brilliant- funny, clever, entertaining, joyous. Highly recommended.

One of the best shows I've ever seen, including London theatre productions. Such multi talented performers, with fantastic choreography, dancing singing & Shakespearean mirth. An exhausting vibrant show with much to laugh about

Remembered the last one and just had to come again all the way from Suffolk... absolutely brilliant. Such incredible talent. So slick so together just stunning Shakespeare.

Fantastic production. Well done all. We loved it and it was a joy to be back in the SJT on a visit to Scarborough again.

Really loved this show. The actors were fantastic and the script was both funny and very clever. Add superb singing and dancing and you've got a real belter!! To quote Shakespeare - I am smitten; I am in deep smit! Congratulations to you all!!!!

Thank you Stephen Joseph Theatre for bringing this joyous production to our little town. It was superlative. Well done to everyone involved, we can't wait to see what you do next!









On our stages

Next up was PRIDE & PREJUDICE – our annual co-production with our friends at the Octagon Bolton and Theatre by the Lake in Keswick. This adaptation of Jane Austen's classic wasn't exactly new – adaptor Kate Hamill is American, and her Austen adaptations are performed regularly over the pond – but it was new to the UK.

Our audiences said:

We saw this production last night, it was wonderful, real laugh out loud funny at times but still faithful to the Austen story. Well done to all concerned both on stage and behind the scenes.

Another superb performance at our beloved SJT 👏

I had an absolute blast, it was a superb evening. My hubby said it was the first time he really got the story

Thoroughly enjoyable: perfectly paced with an energetic cast, particularly the leads. Loved the baroque versions of pop music.

A real tonic, laughed all the way though then a tear of joy and laughter at the end, amazing thank you.

Travelled from Southampton just to see it - well worth all the miles!! The final scene with Elizabeth and Darcy, actually kissing in the rain - pure genius!!! Well worth the journey - wish I could watch it all over again.

Absolutely fantastic performance from everyone involved. It brought P&P to life in such a creative and humorous way and really told the story so well. Have been recommending it to everybody! Well done!

I have just been to see this tonight with friends and had an amazing evening. I have some mobility issues and was really well looked after by the staff at the theatre and really enjoyed the show, brilliant cast and Mr Darcy at the end didn't fail to disappoint in his wet white shirt.

Absolutely fabulous .. it's not every play that gives you the impression that the actors are all really enjoying themselves. A wonderful afternoon thank you.

What an amazing cast - each and every one was perfection personified. Mr. Collin's and Lady Catherine often stole the scenes they were in, but always we were waiting for the moment of Elisabeth and Darcy's coming together. And what a moment it was. It practically brought the house down as the roars of approval from the audience rang out loud and clear.

Superb! Excellent casting. Highly entertaining. Cannot recommend highly enough. Very witty production.









On our stages

Our midsummer show was a firm favourite with theatre audiences – Michael Frayn's

NOISES OFF

...in its first-ever in-the-round staging! Far from a new show, of course, but we thought you might enjoy our audiences' reactions:

More than a show; it's a joy-delivery system, beaming laughter straight into people's lives

The set changes were superbly choreographed, with clearly a lot of thought that had gone into the designs, in particular the transformation of the coffee table into a flight of stairs leading to the basement was ingenious.

A great ensemble piece of theatre with a talented cast of actors, imaginative creative team; with a special mention to the crew who changed the complex set twice.

Absolutely brilliant! The cast were amazing and the scenery changes were incredible. Just magical!

Our faces ache from laughing so much

It's an incredible achievement. Hilariously funny, great acting from the whole cast & the choreography of the scene changes between the acts is quite something to watch in itself. What a stage team!

Quite literally brilliant. Unbelievable timing. Works so well in the round.

My first visit to the SJT, and my GOODNESS - it was superb! The show was absolutely spectacular (Noises Off), and everything FOH was just lovely! Thank you!

Sheer theatrical wizardry! It was like watching a farce on steroids, powered by rocket fuel, conducted by a maestro with a stopwatch.

We were 3 generations of theatre lovers watching and we all loved it. Congratulations on a brilliant show.

The whole thing - the professionalism, brilliant acting, timing, the fabulous script - funniest thing we have seen in ages. Very clever writing!

A fantastic fast paced and very funny show. Yet another great night at SJT

This is one of the best plays by far!! Hilarious, proper old style belly laughing comedy!









On our stages

That was followed by our annual world premiere from our Director Emeritus, Alan Ayckbourn.

Earth Angel ...was a poignant study of grief and trust which really struck a chord with our audiences – they said:

The play was very well crafted - the end a bit of a surprise!!! Our seats were almost IN the living room of the set,so we felt part of the drama.A close-up view of the casts' facial expressions made everything so believable!!!

Quality of the writing and acting was excellent. Stage settings were impressive as were the changeovers between acts.

The performance and the performers were beyond excellent.

It is wonderful to celebrate the work of SirvAlan Ayckbourn every year when a new play appears. I am almost his age and love supporting him and the theatre.

We went on the opening night with no idea of the cast or plot. It was hugely entertaining, poignant, funny. Huge twist in the last few minutes. Brilliant!

I watched this last night. A beautiful set and incredible script and acting. Russell Richardson is a powerhouse as Gerald.

We loved this play, the acting was superb. Thank you to Alan, every September we have a new masterpiece to look forward to.

Saw it last night - great acting! Excellent production. Loved it!

Truly excellent. Can thoroughly recommend it. Ayckbourn's writing is still razor sharp and brilliantly observed.

Well-acted, brilliantly staged - I don't get nearly enough good theatre and v little theatre in the round.

Clever staging, beautiful script and cleverly casted characters. A great show about families, vulnerability and suspicions. Loved every word.

Brilliant, thoughtful play and excellently performed.

Interesting and creative set and fantastic acting from all involved with a great Alan Ayckbourn play which had a very poignant message.

So good. Typical later AA play ..witty , often hilarious and with a bit of a black side, performed by a brilliantly talented cast. Thank you all.









On our stages

And our final new show for the year was, as ever, a magical mystery tour of a classic fairy tale from the imagination of Nick Lane –

SLEEPING BEAUTY

was Nick's tenth Christmas show in a row for us – it won't be long now before some of the children who saw his first are bringing their own youngsters!

Our audiences said:

Brilliant to see some of the performers using sign language in a very natural and inclusive way - I found it really inspiring and moving

Excellent show. Watched it tonight and really loved the cast and how they encouraged the audience to join in. Sweet dreams everyone.

Once again, a daft delightful pleasure I'm glad to have seen. A great cast, imaginative production and a load of good old fashioned fun. Who could ask for more?

ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT!!!

Absolutely loved it – I wouldn't see a panto anywhere else after three years of coming to the SJT.

The TikTok dance off was absolutely EPIC.

I brought my 3 grandchildren last night, they loved it and were singing along.

It was amazing! My little boy absolutely loved it from start to finish. I've already lost count of how many times he's asked to watch it again

It was absolutely fantastic, festive fun! Great production! Well done everyone!

The SJT Christmas show is always excellent, with lots of jokes and deeper meaning for children of all ages, including pensioners like us! I've already booked our seats for Puss in Boots next year.

We come every year and loved it. My ten year old was laughing so hard, and so were we

Excellent, as someone 45+ [ahem] 😳 *on my tod and looking for something to do, I thoroughly enjoyed it. Some of the stuff the kids were shouting had me in stitches, lovely staff too* 😍

Always a different take on traditional panto and always brilliant

We went today with my 6 year old daughter and LOVED IT!

Love how the cast make everyone in the audience feel involved in the performance. The round works brilliantly for the performers to be able to use all areas of the stage & exits to enhance how dynamic the show feels.









Youth shows

Meanwhile, our show in the McCarthy for pre-schoolers was the delightful



- a brand new show by our Playwrights '73 writer in residence, Kat Rose-Martin.

Our audiences said:

An excellent show for the tiny people to enjoy, although we big people really enjoyed it too!!

Thank you!! It was so much fun!! 🎉

My 2.5 year old grandson loved it.

We watched this today, absolutely brilliant & fun 🤩 *the grandchildren thought it was was so funny, gets better every year. Well played by all the actors* 👍🏻😊

High energy kids show. Well priced for the target audience.

A well-produced and enthusiastic performance which was a great introduction to theatre for our 3 year old granddaughter.

Amazing.

Well done to you all. Loved it.

A wonderful show, we all had a great time , thank you all .

A great show. Everyone was excellent, the children loved it!!

Brought my grandchildren today, they loved it. We all had a great time, thank you.

My 3 year old was absolutely spellbound throughout. Amazing energy xx

A fabulous show! 🤩⭐

Well done all of you fantastic xx ❤️

Congratulations!!!!

Well done all of you incredible show xxx

Just popped in today. What a cracking show and cast.

A lovely time was had by everyone! Thanks so much Stephen Joseph Theatre













Visiting work

Our Creative Engagement department goes from strength to strength in its work with young people, putting on at least three shows a year.

In 2025/26, only one of those shows fell within the parameters of this report – *A Night at the Movies* and *Woyzeck* were in April and May, so look out for those in next year's report.

But two shows from our talented Youth Theatre do fall within this report, and both were absolute delights – *The Owl and the Pussycat Went to See* in May 2025, and *The Wind in the Willows* in February 2026.

Here's what audiences thought about

The Owl and the Pussycat went to See

Congratulations! Outstanding joyful performance from everyone!

We were absolutely blown away by how you all brought the parts to life in such a humorous and charismatic way!

We enjoyed your amazing performance- pace, fun, super music (special congrats to the Band Trio for playing instruments whilst walking AND singing their own compositions!). Great show all round.

I was thrilled to see my grand daughter look so happy and at home on stage.

And about

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS





A wonderful production with a very talented cast of young actors who sang and acted beautifully and played musical instruments and they really kept the audience engaged and entertained. My sister and I brought our daughters aged 10 and 11 to see it last night and we all loved it.

The set looked fabulous well done to designer/ artist and builder.Bravo to all involved at the SJT you should all be very proud ⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐



Superb production, everyone in the cast was good from the ebullient Toad down to the smallest hedgehog.

BIG CONGRATULATIONS INDEED on the superb production of Wind in the Willows

Wonderful production, your youth cast should be very proud of their stage deliverance throughout, kept the audience entertained and captivated. Beautiful singing, very talented young people playing the instruments which was a lovely touch.

We loved this wonderful production thank you!



Visiting work

Our visiting programme was as busy as ever, with over 50 shows heading our way, ranging from mid-scale tours playing six shows over four days to one-night stand-up comedy gigs.

As ever, we try to provide a broad range of entertainment where we hope everyone will find something to suit – in 2025/26, our programme included:

Drama from the John Godber Company (*Do I Love You?, Teechers and Black Tie Ball*), Rabble Theatre (*Glitch*), Blackeyed Theatre (*The Hunt for Moriarty*), Frozen Light (*The Ancient Oak of Baldor*) and Claybody Theatre (*The Grand Babylon Hotel*).

Comedy from Lydia Murray, *The Dad's Army Radio Show*, *Round the Horne*, Grace Petrie, Baga Chipz, Rob Rouse and Daniel Kitson.

Music from Raven, Sam Jewison, Pulman and Stilgoe, Holly at Christmas and Hammonds Band, plus tributes to The Carpenters and Rod Stewart.

Dance including *PopOdyssey*, Tavaziva's *Greed* and *Into the Light*.

Children's shows including *Detective Dog* and *Once Upon a Fairytale*

Magic from Kevin Quantum.

In total, we welcomed **52** visiting shows, playing **87** performances between them.



















Thank you...

Thank you all so much for playing your crucial part in making all of this possible – we've said it again and again, but it's still true: we couldn't do it without you!

With your help, we're so much more than a theatre – thank you from all your friends here at the SJT!

Read on for extras:

- **Our Westway Boxing Club film**
- **Our Youth Company in The Guardian!**

Appendix One:

More Than a Boxing Club – Westway ABC

A new documentary about Eastfield's Westway Boxing Club, created by SJT Associate Director and boxing coach Chantell Walker, and local filmmaker Matthew Storm, proved a knockout in our cinema in January.

The SJT collaborated with the club and North Yorkshire Council to create the short documentary, More Than a Boxing Club – Westway ABC.

Boxing clubs like Westway aren't there just to create champions. Grassroots boxing clubs can give young people a sense of purpose and belonging. Boxing gyms can be a home and a safe space for many.



The film highlights the important work the club does with the community of Eastfield and raises awareness of the importance of grassroots boxing clubs to their local communities, including valuable work with those living with Parkinson's.

Westway coach Ryan Ashworth says: *"It's been an incredible experience letting people in to see the magic of boxing and how it's used for the greater good. This film was the perfect platform to share the gym's journey and myself becoming a level 3 coach. It's also an honour to share the relationship between myself and Geroge Rhodes Snr, my mentor and founder of the club and how he'll be passing on the torch to me to lead the next generation at Westway."*

Director Chantell Walker says: *"It's been a privilege directing this film about Westway Boxing Club. I'm so thankful to Ryan, George and everyone at the club who made me and Matt feel so welcome and allowed us to capture the true nature of the club and the array of people that walk through those doors. It came as no surprise as I grew up in boxing clubs, first as an amateur boxer and now turned coach myself. I know how welcoming and accessible boxing clubs are and the important work they do for their communities. This is my film directorial debut and I'm incredibly grateful it's about something so close to my heart."*

We're really proud of the film – why not watch it for yourself?

Appendix Two:

The Eastfield Trilogy

You'll probably remember us bringing you news in previous reports of our Young Company member Keane Liley and his sterling work debunking prejudices around his childhood home, Eastfield, on the outskirts of Scarborough.

Back in 2024, Keane worked with our Head of Creative Engagement Rob Salmon and writer Josh Overton to create *Battleground*, a one-person show performed by Keane as Tom, an 18–year-old who is everything people assume a typical Eastfield teenager – but is also so much more. You can watch a film of *Battleground* here.



That was followed by *Feral*, which was based on his personal experiences and has resonated deeply with audiences — particularly young people — in Scarborough and beyond. *Feral* won two awards at the Scarborough Fringe Festival in 2025: Best Theatre and the Chris Mellor Award for New Writing in Theatre.

Throughout the early part of this year, Keane worked with fellow Youth Company members and fellow Eastfielders Jack Pickering and Charlie Wright on *Besieged*, the explosive final chapter in the trilogy – it was first performed in June 2026, so look out for more on that in next year's report.

All three shows were developed as part of the SJT's Arts in Eastfield programme, supported by McCain UK.

We were thrilled when The Guardian picked up the story earlier this year and featured Keane, Jack and Charlie in their *Against the Tide* series. These features, a year-long project from the Guardian's Seascape series, report on the lives of young people in coastal communities across England and Wales. You can find out what our trio had to say here.

And if you happen to be in Bristol before 27 September 2026, pop into the Arnolfini gallery, where photographer Polly Braden's *Against the Tide* images are on display - info here.

The exhibition will also be at Firstsite in Colchester from 1 October 2026 to 1 February 2027.



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