

*"Step into Christmas, let's join together / We can watch the snow fall forever and ever / Eat, drink and be merry, come along with me..."*

– Elton John

## Welcome...



... to the December issue of the Circular! We're busy celebrating an outstanding 2024 and getting ready for a 2025 packed with brilliant entertainment.

If you'd like to book for any of the shows below, or anything else at the SJT, please visit our website: [www.sjt.uk.com](http://www.sjt.uk.com), call our box office on 01723 370 541, or drop in – our box office is open from 10am until at least 7pm (closing time depends on the start time of that night's show/film) every day except Sunday.

## A Christmas treat – for us!!



Would you like to give us a little Christmas present that's both extremely easy and free? We'd love you to vote for us in the annual WhatsOnStage Awards, where our show *Brassed Off* – a co-production with Theatre by the Lake and the Octagon Theatre Bolton – has been nominated as Best Regional Production and Best Musical Direction!

The award is decided by popular vote, so we need as many as possible – and it really is very simple. Just visit [here](#).

You'll need to enter your email at the top (this is just to ensure people don't vote multiple times), then scroll down. Simply click on the *Brassed Off* picture – a blue tick will appear. Then scroll to the very bottom, tick to confirm you're only voting once, choose whether or not you'd like WhatsOnStage newsletters, then click submit. And that's it!

You have until 9 January to vote, and the awards will be announced on 9 February.

Winning would be a wonderful start to 2025, but just being nominated is fabulous – especially as it comes hot on the heels of winning the UK Theatre Award for Best Show for Children and Young People for last Christmas's *Beauty and the Beast*.



# Aladdin

You still have time to catch *Aladdin*, our super-sparkly festive show which the critics have loved:

*"A mesmerising spectacle of enchantment and joy. It is not often us critics are left speechless, but after attending this outstanding theatrical event (perhaps SJT's best yet) one left the theatre feeling exhausted from what was an utterly enthralling experience, masterfully executed and bursting with brilliance."*

**The Reviews Hub (★★★★★)**

*"At its big, warm heart there are messages about truth, freedom and friendships... the audience also gets the chance to be silly and shout a lot."* **Yorkshire Post (★★★★★)**

*"It is magic on every level: it has more Christmas spirit than a supermarket booze aisle, festive sparkle to spare and yuletide cheer to warm the coldest of days."*

**Scarborough News**

*"Go. Go. Go. Be a part of the enchantment, the celebration, the utter joy of it all, for yourselves. You won't find a better way of conjuring up the Christmas spirit. Glittering crowns and sparkling light wands will get forgotten, but theatrical experiences of this standard are a gift that will linger in a child's heart long after the festive decorations have been packed away."* **On: Yorkshire magazine**

*"Taking the magnificent tradition of panto but delivering it in such a different way makes for a truly great evening out."*

**Scarborough.co.uk (★★★★★)**

Aladdin ends on 28 December and shows are filling up, especially once the school holidays start – if you haven't seen it yet, you can check out times, dates and availability [here](#).



# Captain Cliff & The Seagull Squad

"Bright, brilliant, cheerful, and full of song." [The Scarborough News](#)

There are only a few performances left of our fun-filled show for the smallest members of the family, *Captain Cliff & the Seagull Squad*, but we couldn't resist sharing these lovely production pictures with you, taken by our regular production photographer, Tony Bartholomew.

If you have a small relative or friend that you'd like to introduce to the magical world of theatre, this is perfect. More on current availability [here](#).



## James Norton

Well, wasn't he an absolute delight? From the moment James Norton strolled into the building alongside his mum and dad on Sunday 1 December, it was clear that, superstar or not, he was just an all-round nice person – or, as one besotted audience member put it: "Gorgeous. So self-deprecating."

Interviewed by a very safe pair of hands in the form of the BBC's BBC Media and Arts Correspondent (and very proud Scarboroughian!) David Sillito, James entertained us with stories of growing up near Malton, his early experiences of the stage in the school nativity, and tales from the set of *Happy Valley*.

We're hoping to see him again soon, so keep an eye out!





## Spotlight on... Hammonds Band (or, what's in a name?)



In 2023, Hammonds Band played their annual early January concert at the SJT for the 25th year, marking the occasion with a new CD, Scarborough Fayre, dedicated to their Scarborough audiences and celebrating that quarter-century.

But the band has been around for a lot longer than that – 170 years this year, to be precise! It was founded in 1855 as an amenity for the people of Saltaire, one of the famous ‘model villages’ built during the first half of the 19th century by wealthy and philanthropic industrialists. Saltaire, near Bradford, was the brainchild of mill owner Sir Titus Salt. These days – although still very much a living, working community – it’s a designated World Heritage Site for its gorgeous Italianate architecture and rich history.

The band, though, is now based in Huddersfield, a move reflected in its current name, which has evolved over the years from its first incarnation as the Saltaire Band, then the Hammonds Sauce Band after its sponsorship by the Hammonds Sauce Works in 1946 (surely a very early example of corporate sponsorship). After the Sauce Works closed down in the early 1990s, the Yorkshire Building Society began sponsoring the band and the name changed yet again – the band was now the Yorkshire Building Society Band.

In 2004 that sponsorship ended, and the band became the YBS Band, then in January 2009, the Hammonds Saltaire Band. In 2021, the band decided to call themselves as Hammonds Band due to no longer being associated with Saltaire.

Whatever they’re called, they bring in an enthusiastic audience each January for their stirring Sunday afternoon sounds. If you fancy starting 2025 on an uplifting note, why not come along? There are still a couple of tickets left, and, as always, we can add you to our waiting list – tickets do get returned. Please book [here](#).

# Dates for your diary

If you joined us for our December Circle Café, you'll know what fun these events can be! The Aladdin cast talked us through the challenges of playing a chicken, bringing a last-minute 'cover' actor up to speed, and their Christmas Day plans.

Our Circle Cafés are getting busier and busier by the month – we've had record numbers this year – so it really helps us if you can make sure you **book your tickets in advance**. That way, we arrive for the day knowing how many people to expect, and therefore how many chairs to lay out, how much coffee to make – all the important stuff! Thanks for your help.

We're still working on dates/guests for 2025, so keep an eye out for your January Circular which, as ever, will head your way towards the end of the month.

## And finally...

We can't quite believe 2024 is nearly over!

It's been our busiest year ever, and we're looking forward to an equally exciting 2025 with lots to entertain you. Thanks for being with us – we hope you have a wonderful Christmas and a joyous New Year.