

"People don't notice whether it's winter or summer when they're happy."

Anton Chekhov

Welcome...

...to the October issue of the Circular, the newsletter just for members of the SJT Circle.

These Majestic Creatures

"I really enjoyed the show. It was well staged and performed, and very thought-provoking."

"Very real. Very believable and poignant. More close to home than you will ever know(!). Well worked script delivered by two excellent actors – and the sound design was phenomenal – a character in its own right."

"Phenomenal attention to detail. Overall, well-paced, engaging, engrossing."

"Wonderful acting, true to life topic, the dialogue was spot on. A very talented playwright."

"Absolutely fantastic, great acting, wonderful writing (even if closer to home than expected) fantastic direction & amazing sound design."

"Absolutely fantastic, thought provoking and had me in tears at times. The casting was amazing and the character changes cleverly made, great set, brilliant writing. Highly recommended."

"Very good acting. Interesting story, showing the importance of talking about feelings."

"Absorbing, unusual, brilliantly acted, interesting storyline."



It's a little early to bring you reviews of our latest show, **These Majestic Creatures** – this issue of the Circular needed signing off the day after press night – but we thought you might enjoy some of our audiences' reactions to this powerful new show.

This tender and heartfelt new play by Emma Geraghty looks at the intricate and far-reaching relationships between several generations of the same family.

We were delighted to welcome back our former Carne Associate Director, Kash Arshad, to direct actors Ingrid Bolton-Gabrielsen and Andrina Carroll, between them playing three generations of the Vaughan family.

If you want to catch this moving new play, do hurry – you've only got until next Saturday, 4 November.



Christmas is a-coming – faster than you think!



OK, you're probably reading this two months before the big day, and calmly thinking that it's still way in the future – but for us, Christmas is just around the corner: **Beauty and the Beast** goes into rehearsal next week and opens in just over a month!

As ever, it will be the usual anarchic fun from one of our favourite writers, Nick Lane, directed by one of our favourite directors, Paul Robinson and – you've guessed it! – designed by one of our favourite designers, Helen Coyston.

Throw into that mix five fantastically talented performers – Oliver Mawdsley, who many of you will remember as Dromio in this spring's *The Comedy of Errors* (more or less), and four new-to-us faces (Amy Drake, Annie Kirkman, Kiara Nicole Pillai, Charlie Ryan) – and we'll be cooking up a real festive treat!

Yet MORE new shows!

Yet more exciting visiting shows for 2024 – and as a valued Circle member, you have priority booking from 10am on Friday 27 October until 10am on Wednesday 1 November, when the shows will go on sale to the general public. They are:

As SHE Likes It (31 January): Kiss the Hollywood happy ending goodbye! As *SHE Likes It* is inspired by the story of #MeToo pioneer Patricia Douglas. A darkly comedic explosion of multimedia, verbatim, cabaret and drag; a contemporary Brechtian-style play that poses the question: How much has changed between the Hollywood of yesteryear and now?

Barrie Rutter OBE – Shakespeare's Royals (1 March): Join Barrie Rutter OBE to celebrate the Bard's kings and queens – their achievements, conquests and foibles – with anecdotes and memories from a career of playing and directing Shakespeare's royals.

Lines (23 March): What connects five prisons over five decades in Uganda, Palestine and the UK? A homeowner struggling to keep ancient land. A queer woman teaching in Kampala. The son of Idi Amin's general. *Lines* looks through the bars of postcolonial life as told through stories in these diverging yet parallel worlds. Produced by Roots Mbili Theatre and Remote Theatre Project.

Flat & the Curves (26 April): After a sell-out show at the SJT in 2023, the award-winning powerhouse girl-band are back with their critically acclaimed, glittery cabaret of unbridled fun! Expect riotous original songs that address the feminine zeitgeist; calling on exceptional vocal ability to tackle some of life's big issues – no subject is off-limits! Expect big voices and bold statements in an evening of hilarity and full-frontal vulgarity.

Sam Jewison (27 April): Sam returns to us for one night only! His acclaimed interpretation of the Great American Songbook uniquely fuses elements of jazz, classical, and popular music in a captivating display of artistry: expect to hear new treatments of songs from the classic Broadway stage, Hollywood screen and golden age of American popular music.

Frozen Light: The Bar at the Edge of Time (30 April and 1 May): Frozen Light creates exciting and original multi-sensory theatre for audiences with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) and tours it to venues nationwide. The glasses are polished, the lights are down low, and time will be hopping. The Bar at the Edge of Time waits only for you, so what are you waiting for?

Luke Wright's Silver Jubilee (15 May): Crack out the bunting! Over 25 years, Luke Wright has built up a reputation as one of Britain's most popular live poets. This year he tries to celebrate his jubilee but ends up taking a deep dive into himself, throwing up questions about class, privilege and his adoption. An Edinburgh Fringe smash hit.

Ria Lina: Riawakening (19 June): In the aftermath of a global pandemic, comedian and scientist Ria Lina has had a Riawakening and sees the world differently. In her highly anticipated debut tour, Ria tackles coming out of a global pandemic, the new normal, divorce, dating in a new digital world, motherhood and what it really means to be a woman today.

We'll be announcing more shows for 2024 in the next issue of the Circular at the end of November, so keep watching this space!



November shows

As the nights inexorably draw in, resolve not to become a couch potato – instead treat yourself to a great night (or afternoon) out at the theatre (preferably ours!). We've got something for just about everyone this month, starting with family show **I Believe in Unicorns**. (2 and 3 November). This show has an amazing pedigree – based on the book by Michael 'Warhorse' Morpurgo, it's performed by one of the country's leading storytellers, Danyah Miller.



It's followed on 6 November by **You Heard Me**. Written and performed by Luca Rutherford, this is a true story about refusing to stay quiet and the power to re-make, re-mould and disrupt. This show exists because without using her voice, Luca wouldn't.



On 8 and 9 November, we welcome to the SJT for the first time comedian and writer Mark Thomas in **England & Son**: a stunning one-man show where capitalism, empire, stolen youth and stolen wealth merge into the simple tale of a working-class boy who just wants his dad to smile at him, fresh from a sell-out run at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe where it won five awards including the prestigious Fringe First award from *The Scotsman*.

And on 13 November, we welcome back old friends Tavaziva Dance with their new show, **Boy's Khaya**. Powerfully moving and personal, this account of choreographer Bawren Tavaziva's early life in Zimbabwe is told through a mesmerising combination of contemporary, ballet and African dance, with a spoken-word soundtrack and music.



Added to that is a quartet of shows for which we advise you to get your skates on if you want to see them: *Swinging at the Cotton Club* (10 November) is sold out, but you can ask our box office to add you to the waiting list; while **Sinatra: RAW** (16 November); **The Pretend Beatles** (18 November), **Buddy Holly** (13 December) and **Bridget Christie: Who Am I?** (23 November) are all on limited availability at time of writing.

For more information and to book, visit our website: **www.sjt.uk.com**

One for the family album



We were thrilled to see the brilliant Antony Eden win the award for Best Supporting Performance in a Musical or Play at this year's UK Theatre Awards for his star turn in last summer's Ayckbourn premiere, *Family Album*.

The only nationwide awards to celebrate outstanding achievements in theatre across the UK, the awards were announced at a ceremony London's historic Guildhall earlier this month, attended by our joint chief execs, Paul Robinson and Caroline Routh.

Antony couldn't be there, but sent a lovely speech to be read by his fellow *Family Album* company members Jude Deeno and David Lomond (who played the removal men), who also accepted the award on his behalf.

We thought you might enjoy it in all its glory!

"Thanks for this. I'm sorry I can't be here today but I am sadly (actually smugly) on my honeymoon. A quietly wise man once said it was a grave mistake to think theatre was better just because it happened in London. That has always rung true for me because we are lucky enough

in this country to have a thirst for theatre in our bones. Regional theatre doesn't need to rely on the celebrity zoo in the way London does and so the best theatre that this country has to offer is the true ensemble-driven theatre to be found regionally.

"The Stephen Joseph Theatre In Scarborough is a shining example of excellence in that regard, in my opinion the most important theatre for new writing in the country and I'd like to thank Paul and Caroline at the SJT for keeping that fire burning; my agent James Ireson at Narrow Road for constantly fighting the good fight and of course, that quietly wise man who, after being inspired by his words and his plays, I've been lucky enough to work with. I am deeply grateful for the generous-spirited, actor-driven, audience-focused plays he has written and continues to write and direct. Thank you, Sir Alan Ayckbourn."

We were also delighted to be nominated as Best Revival for our spring 2023 production of *The Comedy of Errors* (more or less); on the day, we were pipped to the post by the Lyric Theatre Belfast and Prime Cut's co-production of *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*

Raffle results

A huge thank you to all those of you who bought raffle tickets this summer, and to our tireless raffle volunteers: organisers Joyce Clibbens and Sue Wilkinson, plus Louise Coupar, Liz Curry, Eileen Hornsey and Alice Palmer. We raised over £2,000!

The raffle was drawn by our Artistic Director, Paul Robinson, on 9 October, and our winners were Deborah (no surname given), who won £125; Sue Wilkinson (£75) and Susan Wardell (£50). Congratulations to all three!

Evelyn Partners

A big welcome to our latest corporate partners, Evelyn Partners Financial Planning Ltd, providers of tax, accounting, financial planning and investment management services.

Director Gemma Helliwell says: *"We are delighted to support the SJT and its far-reaching, innovative work in and around Scarborough. The SJT is a unique resource, and we look forward to sharing in its vision for a thriving future of arts and culture in the community."*

Dates for your diary

Our packed October **Circle Café** saw members meet the cast and crew of *These Majestic Creatures* for some fascinating insights into how the show came together.

Our Circle Cafés are usually held on Thursdays, which is also matinee day for both live shows and in our cinema, so why not make a day of it? Your Circle membership entitles you to a generous 10% discount in Eat Me @ The SJT, and you could catch a show or a film afterwards.

Circle Cafes are getting increasingly popular, so **please** make sure you book a free place via the box office in advance so that we can predict numbers and make sure we have enough seats!

Circle Cafés (starting at 10.15am, so please aim to arrive between 10am and 10.15am) include:

Thursday 23 November: meet our Head of Production, Simon Bedwell

Thursday 14 December: meet the *Beauty and the Beast* company. Please note that, as the cast will actually be on stage performing at the usual 10.15am start time, this December Circle Café will be in the Boden Room, with a later start at 1pm – please try to arrive between 12.45pm and 1pm).

We're currently working on our programme of Circle Cafés for 2024, and hope to bring you a finalised programme next month – one good reason to make sure you've bought that new diary!