

**17 March 2020**

**Festival 2020: coronavirus update**

**A message from Kathy Bourne and Daniel Evans**

These are unprecedented times. The welfare of our audiences, artists and staff is paramount, and we also want to support the valiant efforts of our health service. So, we are taking action in line with Government advice and postponing the opening productions of Festival 2020: Brecht's *The Life of Galileo* (which was due to run in the Festival Theatre, 24 April – 16 May), Stoppard's *The Real Thing* (Minerva Theatre, 7 May – 6 June), Jay Presson Allen's *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (Festival Theatre, 29 May – 20 June) and Penelope Skinner's *The Village Bike* (Minerva Theatre, 12 June – 4 July).

All other events during this period are also cancelled and the Theatre building, including the Café, will be closed to the public after today (Tuesday 17 March).

*The Life of Galileo* and *The Real Thing* will be rescheduled for the autumn (new dates will be announced in due course), and we hope to mount the other two productions at some point in the future. We currently plan to go ahead with *South Pacific* (6 July – 29 August), *The Unfriend* (17 July – 22 August) and all the Festival 2020 productions thereafter. We may be able to re-open the building earlier.

Ticket holders will be contacted as soon as possible about ticket exchange, credit, donation or refund options. As you can imagine, the next few days will be very busy for our Box Office team, so we appreciate your patience at this time.

We are deeply sorry for the disappointment this will cause. Chichester Festival Theatre has been at the heart of West Sussex for almost 60 years, and we look forward to opening our doors and welcoming our audiences back as soon as we can.

In the meantime, we'll be considering how we might be able to help our community during this challenging time; and send our supporters, audiences and colleagues our encouragement, support and best wishes for their health and wellbeing.

Kathy Bourne, Executive Director

Daniel Evans, Artistic Director

*For further information please contact Lucinda Morrison, Head of Press on 01243 812917 or [lucinda.morrison@cft.org.uk](mailto:lucinda.morrison@cft.org.uk)*