

13 May 2021

**CHICHESTER FESTIVAL THEATRE ANNOUNCES COMPLETE  
FESTIVAL 2021 SEASON**

**FOUR DRAMAS TO FOLLOW *SOUTH PACIFIC* INCLUDING TWO WORLD PREMIERES BY  
SUHAYLA EL-BUSHRA AND ZOE COOPER**

**MAJOR REVIVALS OF PLAYS BY MARTIN McDONAGH AND DAVID STOREY**

**FOUR DIRECTORS NEW TO CFT**

**FULL CAST AND STREAMING DATES FOR *SOUTH PACIFIC***

Four new productions to follow *South Pacific* in Chichester's Festival 2021 have today been announced by Artistic Director Daniel Evans and Executive Director Kathy Bourne.

- Two world premieres:
  - *THE LONG SONG*, a new adaptation by Suhayla El-Bushra based on Andrea Levy's novel, directed by Charlotte Gwinner
  - *THE FLOCK* by Zoe Cooper, directed by Guy Jones
- Revivals of two great modern dramas:
  - Rachel O'Riordan directs Martin McDonagh's *THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF LEENANE* in a co-production with Lyric Hammersmith Theatre
  - *HOME* by David Storey, directed by Josh Roche
- Full cast and streaming dates announced for Daniel Evans's new production of Rodgers & Hammerstein's *SOUTH PACIFIC*
- Open Air Weekend and Minerva Cabaret in June
- Chichester Festival Youth Theatre's production of *PINOCCHIO* by Anna Ledwich returns for Christmas 2021
- New partnership with Ecologi offering patrons option to carbon-offset travel as part of CFT's green strategy
- Tickets held at 2019 prices; 14,500 tickets at £10 in the Festival Theatre and 6,000 £5 PROLOGUE tickets for 16 – 30 year olds

Daniel Evans and Kathy Bourne said:

'We're delighted to announce four new productions to add to our summer musical, *South Pacific*. *The Long Song*, Suhayla El-Bushra's new adaptation of Andrea Levy's great novel, follows *South Pacific* into the Festival Theatre, while Zoe Cooper's new play *The Flock* joins Martin McDonagh's *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* (in a co-production with the Lyric Hammersmith) and David Storey's *Home* in a stimulating line-up in the Minerva Theatre.

'These plays – each with a director new to CFT at the helm – take us from the South Pacific to Jamaica, rural Ireland, the North-East of England and back to the Home Counties. All engage,

in varying ways, with the differences that divide us – from racial prejudice to warring families, social mores and conflicting beliefs – and whether tolerance and understanding can bring us together.

‘And before we open the Festival Theatre in July, we look forward to welcoming audiences to our Open Air Weekend in Oaklands Park with socially distanced picnic plots for all the family.

‘Our commitment to our local community has remained undimmed over the past year. If anything, this work has grown and deepened, notably through initiatives such as Young Carers Connect, and this – alongside our greatly expanded digital presence – will continue.

‘While we’re all looking forward to a thoroughly good night out, it is important we welcome audiences back safely. We’re continuing to offer a choice of socially distanced performances in both theatres in July and August. And everyone can book with confidence, knowing that should we have to cancel, they’ll be entitled to a full refund.

‘After a challenging year, we can’t wait to reopen our doors – and to see Chichester productions reaching audiences far beyond West Sussex again. In addition to our film of *Crave* (streaming 18 – 29 May), *Caroline, Or Change* is now scheduled for New York in the autumn and *Singin’ in the Rain* splashes down in London later this summer.’

## **FESTIVAL 2021 PRODUCTIONS – JULY TO OCTOBER**

**Gina Beck, Julian Ovenden,  
Joanna Ampil, Keir Charles and Rob Houchen in  
Rodgers & Hammerstein’s  
SOUTH PACIFIC**

Music by **Richard Rodgers**

Lyrics by **Oscar Hammerstein II**

Book by Oscar Hammerstein II and Joshua Logan

Adapted from the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *Tales of the South Pacific* by James A. Michener

Directed by **Daniel Evans**

5 July – 4 September 2021, live in the Festival Theatre

Streamed as live on 4, 9, 14, 18, 21, 26, 31 August & 3 September

Press performance: Tuesday 13 July at 7.00pm

The full company has been confirmed for **Daniel Evans’s** new production of **Rodgers & Hammerstein’s *South Pacific***. Led by **Gina Beck** (*Matilda, Show Boat, Wicked, Phantom of the Opera*) as Nellie, **Julian Ovenden** (*Bridgerton, Downton Abbey, Merrily We Roll Along, Grand Hotel, BBC Proms*) as Emile, **Joanna Ampil** (*Avenue Q, Les Misérables, Miss Saigon*) as Bloody Mary, **Keir Charles** (*Quiz, Back To Life*) as Luther Billis and **Rob Houchen** (*Les Misérables, The Light in the Piazza*) as Cable, it also includes **Iroy Abesamis, Lindsay Atherton, Carl Au, Rosanna Bates, David Birrell, Leslie Garcia Bowman, Taylor Bradshaw, Bobbie Chambers, Charlotte Coggin, Danny Collins, Oliver Edward, Sergio Giacomelli, Shailan Gohil, Adrian Grove, Zack Guest, Cameron Bernard Jones, Amanda Lindgren, Matthew Maddison, Sera Maehara** (as Liat), **Melissa Nettleford, Rachel Jayne Picar, Kate Playdon, Pierce Rogan, Clancy Ryan, Charlie Waddell** and **James Wilkinson-Jones**, with children’s roles played by Lana Lakha, Kami Lieu, David Ngara-O’Dwyer and Alexander Quinlan.

This much-loved, Tony and Pulitzer Prize-winning musical opened in 1949 to huge success, becoming one of Broadway’s longest running hit shows. It boasts one of Rodgers & Hammerstein’s most memorable scores, featuring songs such as *Some Enchanted Evening, I’m Gonna Wash That Man Right Outa My Hair* and *Bali Ha’i*.

1943. On an archipelago in the South Pacific Ocean, US troops are kicking their heels amid the cacao groves while restlessly waiting for the war to reach them.

Nellie Forbush, a navy nurse from Arkansas, finds herself falling for the French plantation owner, Emile de Becque – a man with a mysterious past. The scheming sailor Luther Billis runs a makeshift laundry to earn a quick buck, but he's no match for the Polynesian Bloody Mary who's intent on exploiting these foreigners.

When young Princeton graduate Lieutenant Joe Cable is flown in on a dangerous reconnaissance mission, love and fear become entwined as the island's battle for hearts and minds begins.

The production is directed by Artistic Director **Daniel Evans** whose previous Chichester productions include *This Is My Family*, *Quiz* and *Fiddler on the Roof*.

The set and costume designer is **Peter McKintosh**, and the choreographer and movement director is **Ann Yee**. Musical supervision is by **Nigel Lilley**, with musical direction by **Cat Beveridge**, orchestrations by **David Cullen**, lighting design by **Howard Harrison**, sound design by **Paul Groothuis**, video design by **Gillian Tan**, additional arrangements by **Theo Jamieson**, and casting by **Charlotte Sutton**.

*South Pacific* will be **streamed as live** on selected dates in August and September, visit website for details. One performance of *South Pacific* each week will be **socially distanced**. There will be a **Dementia Friendly performance** on 1 September at 2.30pm, welcoming individuals living with dementia, as well as their friends, families and carers.

*South Pacific* is sponsored by R.L. Austen

### **THE FLOCK**

A new play by **Zoe Cooper**

Directed by **Guy Jones**

6 – 28 August, Minerva Theatre

Press night: Thursday 12 August

The parishioners of All Hallows Church are putting on a production of *Noah's Ark*, one of a cycle of mystery plays performed by all the local parishes. The Bishop is hopeful the project will help paper over the cracks revealed by an unfortunate incident involving an evangelical, a glass of wine and an angry liberal.

Rory, All Hallows' vicar, wants to keep a low profile, and his partner Simon is happy to provide musical accompaniment but would rather he wasn't given any lines, thank you very much.

The congregation, however, have other plans. For Patricia, the show is an opportunity to show off the church's artistic talents, while the curate, Hannah, hopes it will give her a chance to get to know the parishioners better. Meanwhile, Fin becomes ever more infuriated at Rory's hands-off approach and teenager Erin just hopes that this is a family where she might find a home.

Above all, Rory wants to keep the ship – and his relationship – afloat. Can this battered vessel still offer its clergy and congregation sanctuary in the storm?

Compassionate and funny, *The Flock* depicts the bumpy road to inclusion for this community, asking how we can live and worship alongside one another when our differences are so marked. How do we remain together when we're so far apart?

**Zoe Cooper's** plays include the award-winning *Jess and Joe Forever*, and *Out of Water* (Orange Tree/RSC) which – directed by **Guy Jones** – was a Susan Smith Blackburn Prize finalist and shortlisted for the Evening Standard Award for Most Promising Playwright.

**Selina Cadell** (Patricia) makes a welcome return to Chichester, where her appearances include *The Dresser* and *The Government Inspector*. Her theatre work also includes *People* and *The Habit of Art* (National Theatre) and *Humble Boy* (Orange Tree), while her extensive TV roles include Mrs Tishell in all 10 series of *Doc Martin*.

*The Flock* will be designed by **Natasha Jenkins**, with lighting by **Zoe Spurr**, sound design by **Alexandra Faye Braithwaite** and casting by **Charlotte Sutton**.

One performance each week will be **socially distanced**.

*The Flock* is sponsored by Genesis Town Planning.

### **THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF LEENANE**

By **Martin McDonagh**

Directed by **Rachel O'Riordan**

A co-production with **Lyric Hammersmith Theatre**

3 September – 2 October, Minerva Theatre

Press night: Thursday 9 September

In the mountains of Connemara, County Galway, Maureen Folan – a plain, lonely woman, tied to her manipulative and ageing mother, Mag – comes alive at her first and possibly last prospect of a loving relationship. But Mag has other ideas; and her interference sets in motion a train of events that leads inexorably towards the play's breathtaking conclusion.

**Rachel O'Riordan** directs a major revival of this darkly comic, award-winning play by **Martin McDonagh**, whose work includes the films *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri* and *In Bruges*; and the plays *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* and *Hangmen*.

**Ingrid Craigie** plays Mag. Her many credits include *Sweet Bird of Youth* (CFT), *The Cripple of Inishmaan* (West End/Broadway) and TV's *Roadkill*. **Kwaku Fortune** (*Line of Duty*, *Normal People*) makes his Chichester debut as Ray.

Rachel O'Riordan is Artistic Director of the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and formerly of Cardiff's Sherman Theatre. Her directing credits include Tanika Gupta's adaptation of *A Doll's House* (Lyric) and the Olivier Award-winning *Killology* (Sherman/Royal Court).

The production will be designed by **Good Teeth Theatre**, with lighting designed by **Kevin Treacy**, music and sound designed by **Anna Clock**, and casting by **Sam Stevenson**.

Suitable for ages 14+

*The Beauty Queen of Leenane* is a co-production with Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, where it will play immediately following its Chichester run, from 9 October – 6 November.

At Chichester, the production is sponsored by ITD Consultants.

## **THE LONG SONG**

A new adaptation by **Suhayla El-Bushra**

Based on the novel by **Andrea Levy**

Directed by **Charlotte Gwinner**

1 – 23 October, Festival Theatre

Press night: Thursday 7 October

'You do not know me yet but I am the heroine of this drama. I am told that here I must give a taste of what is to unfold. I am to convey that this tale is set in Jamaica during the last turbulent days of slavery and the early years of freedom.

'I was born a slave upon a sugar plantation named Amity. I was there when the Baptist War raged in 1831, and when slavery was declared no more. It tells of my mama Kitty, of the negroes enslaved, of Caroline Mortimer the woman who owned me. I am to say that it is a true and thrilling journey through that unsettled time.

'Cha, I say, what fuss-fuss. Come, let them just see it for themselves.'

Miss July is born into slavery in Jamaica and is brutally parted from both her mother, and her name. But what she retains is resilience, charisma and a subversive, spirited wit. This ebullient and life-affirming play finds humanity, resistance and hope in the darkest of times.

*The Long Song* is adapted from **Andrea Levy's** award-winning novel by **Suhayla El-Bushra**, formerly writer in residence at the National Theatre Studio and whose work includes *The Suicide* (NT), *Arabian Nights* (Lyceum, Edinburgh), and Channel 4's *Hollyoaks* and *Ackley Bridge*.

Director **Charlotte Gwinner** was Associate Director at the Bush Theatre, Liverpool Everyman & Playhouse and Sheffield Theatres 2014-16, where her productions included *Waiting for Godot*, the Sarah Kane season and *The Distance*.

The production will be designed by **Frankie Bradshaw**, with lighting by **Mark Doubleday**, musical direction, vocal arrangements and additional composition by **Michael Henry**, sound by **Helen Skiera**, video by **Dick Straker**, movement by **Angela Gasparetto**, fights by **Kev McCurdy** and casting by **Charlotte Sutton** with **Chandra Ruegg**.

*The Long Song* is sponsored by Seaward and by Wiley.

## **HOME**

By **David Storey**

Directed by **Josh Roche**

8 October – 6 November, Minerva Theatre

Press night: Wednesday 13 October

Harry and Jack. Marjorie and Kathleen. Alfred.

In a neglected garden, small talk oscillates between the weather, the neighbours, reminiscences of friends and family, and anecdotes of past exploits in love and war.

But this quintet of characters, with their foibles and failings, are not what they seem to be, and nor is their home. And overhead, the clouds are gathering.

**David Storey's** award-winning 1970 play has become a modern classic – a heartrendingly funny, haunting and deeply humane study of hearts, minds and England: islands adrift.

Director **Josh Roche** won the JMK Award for his production of *My Name Is Rachel Corrie* at the Young Vic with Erin Doherty in the title role. He has directed productions for Audible UK, BBC Arts, and has worked extensively at the RSC and Shakespeare's Globe. He is the co-founder of OpenHire.

The production designer will be **Sophie Thomas**, with casting by **Charlotte Sutton**.

Other members of the creative team will be appointed in accordance with OpenHire's principles of publicly advertising freelance opportunities and a transparent recruitment process.

*Home* is sponsored by Henry Adams.

### **Chichester Festival Youth Theatre**

#### ***PINOCCHIO***

A new adaptation by **Anna Ledwich**

Music by **Tom Brady**

From the original novel *The Adventures of Pinocchio* by **Carlo Collodi**

Directed by **Dale Rooks**

18 December – 1 January, Festival Theatre

Press night: Wednesday 22 December

**Chichester Festival Youth Theatre's** brand new version of this classic tale by **Anna Ledwich** had just 15 live performances in 2020 before it was streamed globally during lockdown. It returns for Christmas 2021 again directed by **Dale Rooks**, who brings her trademark visual flair and gift for storytelling to this darkly magical reinvention.

Geppetto the boatmaker tosses aside a piece of wood; it's only good for the fire. To his amazement, a voice answers him back. Geppetto picks up the wood and begins to carve – and a small wooden boy is revealed. A puppet, which he names Pinocchio.

And that's when the mayhem begins. Pinocchio can't stop getting into trouble, despite the best efforts of the Fairy and the Cricket to keep him on track. His intentions may be good – he truly wants to go to school like real boys and girls – but the temptation to discover the wonders of the world and make his fortune keep getting in the way.

Pinocchio encounters a host of fascinating characters, from Punch and Judy to the wily Fox and Cat and the strange Sea Monster, as he journeys to Wonderland and the world beneath the sea. But he discovers that it isn't easy hiding the truth – especially when your nose gets longer with every lie you tell...

The set is designed by **Simon Higlett**, with costumes by **Ryan Dawson Laight**, lighting by **James Whiteside**, musical direction by **Colin Billing** and sound by **Gregory Clarke**.

Recommended for ages 7+. There will be a **Relaxed performance** of *Pinocchio* on 23 December at 2pm, and a **Polish-translated** performance on 22 December at 2pm.

*Pinocchio* is sponsored by Henry Adams and by Mercer.

### **OPEN AIR WEEKEND, CRAVE, MINERVA CABARET & FESTIVAL 2021 EVENTS**

**Carly Bawden**, **Ako Mitchell** and **Sharon Rose** are among the West End stars who'll be appearing at CFT's **Concerts in the Park** from 3 – 6 June, part of CFT's Open Air Weekend. CBBC BAFTA Award-winner **Emily Burnett** headlines **Family Fun in the Park** on 4 & 5 June.

There's also another chance for audiences at home to experience a specially made film of the production that defied lockdown. Directed by **Tinuke Craig**, **Sarah Kane's** *Crave* was live

streamed to thousands in 50 countries around the globe as the cast of four performed in Chichester Festival Theatre's empty auditorium. This film is a new edit of the live stream, with remastered sound and incorporating new footage, available to watch from 18 – 29 May.

Before we open Festival 2021, two highly acclaimed companies return for a mini Cabaret season at the Minerva Theatre in June. Following their sold-out runs in the 2019 Spiegel tent season, **The Black Cat Cabaret** presents *Salon des Artistes* (10-12 June) and there's another chance to see **Barely Methodical Troupe's** *Bromance* (17-19 June).

A lively programme of talks and activities will complement Festival 2021. Highlights include an interview with **Kate Mosse** on her personal story of being a carer; discussions on **Martin McDonagh's** international range, and the legacy of **Andrea Levy**; the **NT Connections 2021** South East festival; and **DigitAll**, our annual celebration of performances created by people with additional needs, which moves online.

Free Pre- and Post-Show Discussions, with the director and cast members, are held for each production.

### **TREE PLANTING AND CARBON OFF-SETTING**

CFT is currently developing a new and robust green strategy which will set a pathway for the Theatre to reach carbon net zero, led by our staff 'Green Committee' who champion our sustainability agenda and develop new initiatives.

From 2021, one of the ways in which we will reduce our impact is by supporting tree planting projects locally and internationally. In place of traditional opening night gifts and cards, we will plant a tree for each production to support local tree planting initiatives. We began in 2020 with the planting of five trees in Oaklands Park, in partnership with Chichester District Council, to celebrate our Youth Theatre production, *Pinocchio*.

We encourage patrons and staff to minimise car travel, but recognise that driving to the theatre may be the only available option for some. We have established a partnership with UK social enterprise Ecologi to offer audience members the option to carbon-offset the impact of their journey, at the point of purchasing a ticket. All contributions go directly to Ecologi to support carbon off-setting projects and international tree-planting programmes. Carbon off-setting is just a small part of what we're doing, and needs to work alongside other meaningful action to cut our carbon emissions.

### **BOOKING INFORMATION**

Priority booking for Friends of Chichester Festival Theatre opens:

**Saturday 22 May** (online and booking forms only)

**Tuesday 25 May** (phone and in person)

Booking for Groups and Schools opens:

**Thursday 27 May**

General booking opens:

**Saturday 29 May** (online only)

**Tuesday 1 June** (phone and in person)

**cft.org.uk** Box Office **01243 781312**

**Tickets from £10**

**Prologue: £5 tickets for 16 – 30s**

6,000 £5 tickets are available for 16 to 30 year-olds for all productions throughout Festival 2021; sign up for free at [cft.org.uk/prologue](http://cft.org.uk/prologue). Members also have access to a range of exclusive events.

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#Festival2021

### **Festival 2021 press nights**

<i>South Pacific</i> , Festival Theatre	Tuesday 13 July, 7.00pm
<i>The Flock</i> , Minerva Theatre	Thursday 12 August, 7.00pm
<i>The Beauty Queen of Leenane</i> , Minerva Theatre	Thursday 9 September, 7.00pm
<i>The Long Song</i> , Festival Theatre	Thursday 7 October, 7.00pm
<i>Home</i> , Minerva Theatre	Wednesday 13 October, 7.00pm
<i>Pinocchio</i> , Festival Theatre	Wednesday 22 December, 7.00pm

**Images** can be downloaded from [cft.org.uk/pressimages](http://cft.org.uk/pressimages), password: festivalpress

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)