

chichester festival theatre

12 February 2026

Download imagery from:
www.cft.org.uk/pressimages
password: festivalpress

World Premiere

David Haig and **Hadley Fraser** in
MAGIC

By **David Haig**

Directed by **Lucy Bailey**

24 April – 16 May, Festival Theatre

Press night: Tuesday 5 May

A new play by **David Haig**, *Magic* has its world premiere at Chichester Festival Theatre from 24 April – 16 May, with a press night on 5 May. The cast is led by **David Haig** and **Hadley Fraser**, directed by **Lucy Bailey**. Based on extraordinary historical events – 2026 marks the 100th anniversary of Houdini's death – *Magic* asks what we're prepared to believe, and why.



Harry Houdini is the greatest illusionist the world has ever known. Arthur Conan Doyle is the creator of literature's most brilliant detective, Sherlock Holmes.

Their mutual admiration blossoms into a profound friendship, even as they discover a shared obsession with spiritualism. Conan Doyle believes fervently in the psychic world and the promise of reunion with his dead son; Houdini is determined to demonstrate it's a cruel fraud. Which of these sparring partners will be proved right: the genius writer of fiction or the infallible magician?

David Haig's play *Pressure* (in which he also starred) premiered at Chichester in 2014 and went on to West End and international success; the movie will be released this year. An award-winning actor whose many credits include *Yes, Prime Minister* and *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* at Chichester, and on screen *Killing Eve*, *COBRA*, *Etoile* and *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, David Haig will also play Conan Doyle.

Hadley Fraser plays Houdini, returning to Chichester where he last appeared in *The Deep Blue Sea*; his London credits include *The Lehman Trilogy*, *2:22* and *City of Angels*.

The company also includes **Jenna Augen** (*Kyoto, Nachtland, Leopoldstadt*) as Bess Houdini, **Ben Jones**, **Claire Price** (*The Capture, In Praise of Love, King Lear*) as Jean Conan Doyle, **Marc Serratos**, **Ella Tekere**, **François Testory**, **Jade Williams** and **Kristin Wei Wong**.

Director **Lucy Bailey** returns to Chichester where her previous work includes *The Other Boleyn Girl* and *Tonight at 8.30*.

The designer is **Joanna Parker**, lighting designer **Aideen Malone**, illusion designer **John Bulleid**, composer **Orlando Gough**, sound designer **Beth Duke**, video designer **Dick Straker**, movement director **Ayse Tashkiran**, fight director **Kate Waters** and casting director **Ginny Schiller CDG**.

ENDS

BOOKING INFORMATION

Priority booking for Friends & Champions of Chichester Festival Theatre opens:

Saturday 21 February (online and booking forms only)

Tuesday 24 February (phone and in person)

Booking for Groups and Schools opens:

Thursday 26 February

General booking opens:

Saturday 28 February (online only)

Tuesday 3 March (phone and in person)

Tickets from £10

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

Prologue: £5 tickets for 16 – 30s

10,000 £5 tickets are available for 16 to 30 year-olds across all Festival 2026 productions; sign up for free at **cft.org.uk/prologue**.

Images can be downloaded from cft.org.uk/pressimages, password: festivalpress

For further information, please contact:

Lucinda Morrison, Head of Press & Publications: lucinda.morrison@cft.org.uk

Stephanie McKelvey-Aves, Marketing & Communications Officer:

stephanie.mckelvey-aves@cft.org.uk