

Stephen Joseph Theatre and Tara Finney Productions present



BUILD A ROCKET

tara finney productions

BY CHRISTOPHER YORK
DIRECTED BY PAUL ROBINSON
STARRING SERENA MANTEGHI AS YASMIN
DESIGNER HELEN COYSTON
LIGHTING DESIGNER BEN COWENS
COMPOSER AND SOUND DESIGNER SIMON SLATER
STAGE MANAGER BENEDICT JONES

Running time: 75 minutes (no interval) | Age guidance: 14+ (Contains some strong language and adult themes)
Tell us what you thought: @thesjt | @tara_finney | #BuildARocket

CHRISTOPHER YORK

Build a Rocket was Christopher's debut play. After winning HighTide's First Commissions Award, the text was developed in conjunction with HighTide, Women at RADA and the SJT. It debuted at the SJT in 2018, and subsequently won The Holden Street Award at The Edinburgh Festival, the Adelaide Fringe Best Theatre Weekly Award and was named as The Sunday Mail's Best Female Solo Show.



Christopher's adaptation of *The Pit and the Pendulum* also premiered in 2018, set in the modern day Middle East, it scrutinised the attire laws that oppress women in those areas. It opened in Oxford's Bodleian Libraries' historical Convocation House before transferring to The Omnibus in London.

His new play *212* is an Arts Council England's supported project. It received a rehearsed reading at Soho Theatre earlier this year. His short plays *Jimbo*, *A Million Little Hands*, *Act 6*, *Jesus is a Rochdale Girl* and *Seven People* have all been performed at London venues including The Arcola, Southwark Playhouse and The Arts Theatre.

Another of his jukebox inspired titles, *All Delighted People*, which celebrated 40 years of youth theatre in Scarborough, premiered at the SJT in June 2018. The Scarborough-born playwright and actor is a graduate of The University of York and Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts. He is an ensemble member of The Faction and was shortlisted for the Old Vic 12 in 2016.

PAUL ROBINSON

Paul is Artistic Director of the SJT. He trained as a director at The Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, then received an Arts Council Directing Bursary at The Manchester Royal Exchange. He was selected to attend the National Theatre's Advanced Directors' Course and was then Staff Director at the NT for three years. Paul was Joint Artistic Director of Theatre503 from 2007 to 2012, when the theatre was turned into a multi-award-winning new writing powerhouse. Credits for Theatre503 include: *Salt Meets Wound*, *They Have Oak Trees in North Carolina* (also Radio 4), *The Lifesavers* (TMA nominated), *This Charming Man*, *Desolate Heaven* and *The Life of Stuff*.

Paul took on sole leadership of Theatre503 from 2012, introducing the Trafalgar Transfer season and the Theatre503 International Playwriting Award. He has been twice nominated for Best Artistic Director at the Off West End Awards. His productions of *And Then Come the Nightjars*, *A Handful of Stars* and *Land of Our Fathers* all received huge critical acclaim and garnered a total of 12 Off West End Award nominations, including Best Director. The latter was made into a feature-length film. Other credits include *Breakfast with Mugabe* (Bath Theatre Royal), *The Swallowing Dark* (Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse – TMA Award winner) and the much-lauded *My Mother Said I Never Should* starring Maureen Lipman (St James' Theatre).

For the SJT he has directed *Pinocchio, A (Scarborough) Christmas Carol, Goth Weekend, The Rise and Fall of Little Voice, The 39 Steps, Alice in Wonderland* and *Stepping Out*.

SERENA MANTEGHI

Serena Manteghi is an established theatre practitioner and performer, working extensively in new writing, devising and physical storytelling. She is the recipient of the following awards; BankSA 'Best Theatre' Award for *Eurydice*, The Sunday Mail's 'Best Female Solo Performance' for *Build A Rocket*, 'Honourable Mention' by Critics Circle Award for *Build A Rocket* and she was shortlisted for the Norman Beaton Fellowship Award in 2016.



Her theatre credits include; *Hamlet* (Shakespeare's Rose Theatre), *Salty Irina* (Ovalhouse), *Eurydice* (Holden Street Theatres, Adelaide), *Build A Rocket* (Stephen Joseph Theatre/ Various), *The Terrible Infants* (Wiltons Music Hall), *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice* (Stephen Joseph Theatre), *Echoes* (Brits Off Broadway), *My Mother Said I Never Should* (St. James Theatre), *The Railway Children* (Kings Cross Theatre), *HEART* (Traverse Theatre), *Mucky Kid* (Theatre 503), *Agammemnon* (Southwark Playhouse).

Musical theatre credits include; *Some Small Love Story* (Arts Theatre/Streatham Space) and *The Beggar's Opera* (York Theatre Royal).

Television credits include; *Mrs Wilson* (Bronte Films/BBC).

Film credits include; *Miss Jihadi* (Heavy Wait Productions), and *This England* (George Taylor Film).

HELEN COYSTON

Helen trained at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

Design credits include: *Operation Mincemeat* (New Diorama Theatre), *Romeo and Juliet: Mad Blood Stirring* (China Plate Theatre); *Sex with Robots and Other Devices* (King's Head Theatre); *The Art of Gaman* (Theatre 503); *Stepping Out, Alice in Wonderland, Build A Rocket, The 39 Steps, A* (Scarborough) *Christmas Carol* and *Goth Weekend* (Stephen Joseph Theatre) *Our Mutual Friend* (Hull Truck); *Antigone* (UK tour); *The Acedian Pirates* (Theatre 503); *Short Changed* (Theatre Royal Plymouth); *My Mother Said I Never Should* (St James Theatre); *The Musicians* (Royal and Derngate); *Land of our Fathers* (Associate Designer, UK tour); *Made up Stories From my Unmade Bed* (Lyric Hammersmith/Latitude Festival); *1002 Nights* (National Youth Theatre); *Peter Pan, Watership Down, There is a War* (Watford Palace Theatre); *Bluebird* (Edinburgh Fringe).

She also works as a costume supervisor, prop and costume maker and facilitator for various companies and education projects across the UK.

BEN COWENS

Ben trained at The Academy of Live & Recorded Arts in stage management and technical theatre, specialising in lighting design for theatre, events & dance between 2011-2013. Since graduating he has designed internationally and re-lit productions around the United Kingdom. He has also been nominated for best lighting designer 2016 in the Off West End Awards.

Lighting design work includes: *The Witches* (Watford Palace Theatre); *Moonfleet* (ALRA Theatre); *Thunder Road* (UK Tour); *Build a Rocket* (Stephen Joseph Theatre); *Even the Stones* (Jacksons Lane); *The Knight from Nowhere/The Bells* (Park Theatre); *Shadow of a Quiet Society* (UK Tour); *iCoDaCo* (Aberystwyth Arts Centre/Cardiff Dance House/Suzanne Dellal Centre); *Catharses* (Tour of Sweden); *An I for An I* (Tour of Sweden); *Showtime* (Bridlington Spa); *The Domino Heart* (The Finborough Theatre); *We Happy Few* (New Diorama); *Conversations with Dystonia* (The Place); *How to Find Us* (Soho Theatre).

Associate lighting designer: *The Worst Witch* (UK Tour & West End transfer).

Relight work includes: *The Worst Witch* (UK Tour); *Brighton Rock* (UK Tour); *La Strada* (UK tour & London transfer); *Around the World in 80 Days* (London transfer); *Imbalance* (International); *Stateless* (UK & tour of France)

SIMON SLATER

Simon, who is originally from Scarborough, has composed original music for over 300 theatre, film, television and radio productions. He composed the music for the three most recent SJT Christmas shows - *Pinocchio, A* (Scarborough) *Christmas Carol* and *Alice in Wonderland* - and for summer shows *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*, Alan Ayckbourn's *A Brief History of Women*, *The 39 Steps* and *Stepping Out*.

Recent credits include music for the 2016 production of *Amadeus* at the National Theatre; the Olivier Award-winning *Killology* (Sherman and Royal Court); the award-winning *Constellations* (Duke of York's and Royal Court, New York) for which he was nominated for an Olivier; *The Winter's Tale* (Sam Wanamaker Playhouse); *Carmen Disruption* (Almeida); *The Broken Heart, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (The Globe); *Great Expectations* (Vaudeville Theatre); *The Lady and the Van* (national tour); *The Deep Blue Sea, Death of a Salesman, The Grouch, As You Like It, Wind in the Willows* (West Yorkshire Playhouse); *The Rivals, Alice in Wonderland, Pinocchio, Wind in the Willows, Treasure Island, James and the Giant Peach* (Watermill Theatre, Newbury); *Romeo and Juliet, Henry V, Julius Caesar* (Royal Shakespeare Company); *Coyote On A Fence*

(Royal Exchange Manchester and the Duchess Theatre, West End); *I and You, Cost of Living, Jude* (Hampstead), *Honour* (The Park), *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart* (New Vic Stoke), *Orpheus Descending* (Clwyd, Chocolate Factory), *Europe* (Donmar Warehouse).

Television includes: *Inquisition* (Channel 5), two series of *Dalziel & Pascoe* (BBC); *Impact Earth* (Channel 5).

Radio includes: the award-winning *The Blood Libel, Eight Days In July, The Look Of Life, The Report* (BBC Radio 4).

As an actor, Simon has been seen in *Mamma Mia!, Chariots of Fire* (West End) and his award-winning one-man show *Bloodshot* (London, Calgary, Chicago, Vienna).

BENEDICT JONES

Benedict trained at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School in Stage Management, graduating in 2013. He is prolific Company & Stage Manager, working in theatres and on tours across the country, and is CSM for the outdoor touring company Changeling Theatre. Most recent credits include; *The Winter's Tale & Nell Gwynn* (Changeling Theatre), *New Plays in Rep Season* (Bristol Old Vic), *A Christmas Carol* (Bristol Old Vic), *Measure for Measure & Blythe Spirit* (Changeling Theatre), *Child of the Divide* (The Harbourfront Centre, Toronto), *Up 'N' Under* (Fingersmiths), *The Little Mermaid* (The Egg Theatre, Theatre Royal Bath)

STEPHEN JOSEPH THEATRE

The SJT is Scarborough's local theatre with an international reputation - a cultural icon of the Yorkshire region, providing accessible, high quality theatre to audiences since 1955. The SJT is known for its world premieres of almost all of Alan Ayckbourn's 83 plays and its commitment to new writing. The OutReach department works with people of all ages and throughout the community via workshops, projects and classes, including 'Rounders' Youth Theatre, which provides an opportunity for local young people to experience the exhilaration of performance first-hand.

"A most amazing venue full of atmosphere"

A 2018 audience member

"We are so fortunate to have such a gem in our town."

A 2019 audience member

"a thriving focus for the local community, and a splendid amenity that's a pleasure to visit" **Mark Shenton, The Stage**

www.sjt.uk.com

TARA FINNEY PRODUCTIONS

Tara Finney Productions is a multi-award nominated, independent theatre production company. TFP was founded in 2013 to produce *Land of Our Fathers*, which won Time Out's Fringe Show of the Year. Recently, TFP was associate producer on the world premiere of Oscar-nominated writer Anthony McCarten's new play *The Pope* at Royal & Derngate, Northampton. TFP's 20th anniversary production of Enda Walsh's *Disco Pigs* transferred to the Irish Repertory Theatre, New York, garnering a Critics' Pick from the New York Times and *The Greatest Play in the History of the World...* transferred to the Traverse Theatre following a sell-out run at the Royal Exchange Theatre.

Award wins & nominations include: Alfred Fagon Audience Award and Theatre & Technology Awards for *good dog*, Chita Rivera Award and Origin's 1st Irish Festival Awards (New York) for *Disco Pigs*, over 10 nominations for Off West End Awards for various productions, Susan Smith Blackburn Award and UK Theatre Award for *And Then Come the Nightjars*, Theatre503 Playwrighting Award for various productions, and VAULT Festival Award for *Paper, Scissors, Stone*.

www.tarafinney.com