

PURNI MORELL ANNOUNCES NEW SEASON AT THE UNICORN THEATRE



- 18 productions from the UK and beyond
- Seven new productions and international visitors from Belgium, Austria, Spain and the Netherlands
- Ted Hughes' epic tale *The Iron Man* re-imagined by animator Matthew Robins
- The return of popular hits *Baddies: the Musical* and *The Velveteen Rabbit* directed by Purni Morell; the deliciously surreal *Jeramee, Hartleby and Oooglemore* written by Gary Owen and directed by Tim Crouch and the digital interactive spectacle from Barcelona, *Sensacional*
- New work for under-fives with *The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark* and *Baby Show*, a new show created by Sarah Argent and Kevin Lewis for babies aged 6-18 months
- Continuing our partnership with Dance Umbrella, co-presenting *Tetris* and *Dream City*
- London performances from two of the UK's leading theatre-makers with Tim Crouch's *Adler & Gibb* and Hoipolloi's *The Duke*

Artistic Director, Purni Morell is delighted to announce an eclectic new season of work for autumn and beyond, that continues the Unicorn's unrivalled reputation for making theatre for children that challenges and breaks new ground - in exactly the way we expect from theatre for adults.

Featuring seven new Unicorn productions and the return of three of the theatre's most popular sell-out successes, this ambitious programme includes new work from theatre-makers Matthew Robins, Made in China and Sarah Argent. It presents recognisable tales rethought for teenage audiences, from Austria's Holger Schober with *My Mother Medea*, and Belgium's Ignace Cornelissen with *The Hunting Lodge*. And while last season's festive hit *The Snow Child* plays at the Sheffield Theatres this Christmas, the creative forces behind it, Thomas Eccleshare and Valentina Ceschi, turn their attentions to *Jason and the Argonauts*.

The season also sees a completely new work for its very youngest audience – *Baby Show*, which plays throughout the year to audiences aged six to eighteen months. Finally, following Edinburgh Festival performances, Tim Crouch's *Adler & Gibb* completes its London run, while, with his thought-provoking *The Duke*, Shôn Dale-Jones' pledges every penny of Box Office income to the Save the Children Refugee Appeal.

Purni Morell, Artistic Director said

'I think the point of theatre is to bring people together in a room and look collectively at ourselves, each other and the world we've created and are creating. At the Unicorn, everything we do is in service of giving children that space – whether through a piece of art about art itself like Adler & Gibb or through a Christmas show like Baddies: the Musical. No matter what age, everyone needs to be heard, and ideally understood. The Unicorn is the only theatre in London that treats children as the adults they have inside them, and I'm very proud to announce this season in service of giving our audience our side of the conversation and to hear what they reply.'

FOYLE STUDIO

A Unicorn production in association with Theatr Iolo

BABY SHOW

Created by Sarah Argent & Kevin Lewis
Directed by Sarah Argent

Friday 19 August 2016 to Saturday 19 August 2017 (various dates)

PRESS PERFORMANCE: TUESDAY 23 AUGUST AT 1.30PM

IT'S BABY'S FIRST ADVENTURE.

Sarah Argent and Kevin Lewis return to the Unicorn with *Baby Show*, a new performance created especially for the very young.

Following the success of *Scrunch* and *Seesaw*, *Baby Show* is a sensory performance with captivating images and intriguing soundscape to keep eager curious young minds rapt.

Age guide: strictly 6 – 18 months / Duration: Approx 40 mins (incl. 15 mins playtime)

WESTON THEATRE

Tim Crouch and the Royal Court Theatre

ADLER & GIBB

Written and directed by Tim Crouch
Co-directed by Andy Smith and Karl James

Tuesday 30 August to Saturday 3 September 2016

SHOOT THE WOUNDED. SAVE YOURSELVES.

First staged at the Royal Court in 2014, this new touring production of *Adler & Gibb* comes to the Unicorn direct from the Edinburgh Fringe.

In preparation for a film role an actress seizes the opportunity to dig up the truth in search of authenticity. Her subject is Janet Adler, a celebrated artist who rejected the art world in favour of making work solely for her lover Margaret Gibb. *Adler & Gibb* tells the story of a raid – on a house, a life, an identity, a reality and a legacy.

From the real to unreal, from fake to true and from theatre to film, the play takes Tim Crouch's (*I, Malvolio; An Oak Tree; Jeramee, Hartleby and Oooglemore*) fascination with form and marries it to a compelling story of misappropriation and death.

Age guide: 14+ and adults / Duration: 1 hr 30 mins (no interval)

WESTON THEATRE

Produced by Hoipolloi, PBJ Management and Theatre Royal Plymouth in association with Save The Children

THE DUKE

Written and performed by Shôn Dale-Jones

Weds 7 Sept at 1.30
Thurs 6 Oct at 4.30
Fri 14 Oct at 4.30 and 7pm
Thurs 17 Nov at 8.30

A STORY ABOUT THE WORLD WE LIVE IN.

In 1974 my father invested £750 (£8,100 in today's money) in a Royal Worcester porcelain figure of The Duke of Wellington on horseback - made to celebrate his victory over Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo. He kept the figure we affectionately called *The Duke*, wrapped in sponge, in a big box, under his bed. After he died in 2001, my mother decided to take the figure out and display it on the table in the bay window. Since 2005 I've been working on a film script which is in the very final stages of development. In the autumn of 2015 I sit at my desk waiting for an email that will tell me what I need to do to the script to get it onto the screen. I turn the radio on. I listen to a report about the refugee crisis. My mother calls. She tells me she's broken *The Duke*. My mother, my film script and the refugee crisis all need my attention.

Shôn Dale-Jones performs his new one man show, *The Duke*, a playful and richly imaginative piece which mixes fantasy with reality, taking the audience on an imaginative and touching journey which gently challenges us to consider our priorities in a world full of crisis.

No set ticket prices, pay what you can after the performance. All proceeds go to Save the Children's Child Refugee Crisis Appeal.

Shôn is Artistic Director of Hoipolloi, who combine original storytelling with an inventive spirit. He is also the award-winning writer/performer behind his comic creation, Hugh Hughes.

Age guide: for everyone over 8, including adults / Duration: 1 hr

CLORE THEATRE

Dance Umbrella return to the Unicorn with two dance performances: *Tetris* and *Dream City*.

Arch 8 Dancers, presented by Dance Umbrella in partnership with the Unicorn

TETRIS

Saturday 22 October 2016

FIT IN OR STEP OUT.

Tetris is about fitting in and doing your own thing. It's a show that asks you not how you can fit in with the world, but how you can change the world to fit in with who you are.

Choreographer Erik Kaiel has been making dance for many years – in subway stations, sculpture gardens, empty swimming pools, city streets, and occasionally on stage. His work is playful, physically impressive and highly entertaining. e returns to the Unicorn following *O Snap* which played here in 2014.

Age guide: 7+/ Duration: 55 mins / Pre-show insights are BSL interpreted

Supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

WESTON THEATRE

De Dansers, presented by Dance Umbrella in partnership with the Unicorn

DREAM CITY

Saturday 22 October 2016

An exhilarating rollercoaster of a show, *Dream City* is a dance party where seven musicians and dancers share the stage. Sometimes the performers are firmly in the present, bouncing off each other like human pinballs, at other times they move in a world of their own.

The music propels the dancers on as they play games of daring and exuberant one-upmanship, creating organised chaos as they go. It's not long before the stage fills with discarded costumes and bodies, like some mad dressing up party. Netherlands based De Dansers are known for their full-on, energetic family shows, and *Dream City* is no exception. Come along and enjoy the ride.

Age guide: 11+ / Duration: 50 mins / Post-show insights are BSL interpreted

CLORE THEATRE

A Unicorn production

MY MOTHER MEDEA

By Holger Schober

Translated by David Tushingham

Directed by Justin Audibert

Monday 17 October to Friday 25 November 2016

PRESS NIGHT: THURSDAY 20 OCTOBER AT 7PM

OUR PARENTS LOST US THE MOMENT THEY HAD US.

Justin Audibert directs Austrian playwright Holger Schober's *My Mother Medea*.

"I'm just going to get on with it, OK. We're the new kids, right. Just moved here. Refugees. Escaped from a country that didn't want us anymore. Here. To a country that wants us even less... Parents divorced... No, we don't care, we can handle that... Yes, we're broke, we lost everything... and no, we don't want to fit in, what's the point? ... We don't need any pitying chats at break time... We're us and you're you. End of."

The new kids with strange names and designer gear sit at the front of the class and tell their story; how it was for them, how it feels to be different, how it feels to be on the run and not to know what home means anymore.

My Mother Medea offers a completely new angle on an age old myth. Jason and Medea are presented as parents. They're parents who made mistakes. They're parents who ran away.

Age guide: 13+ / Duration: Approx 1 hr 30 mins (no interval)

CLORE THEATRE

A Unicorn production

THE OWL WHO WAS AFRAID OF THE DARK

By Jill Tomlinson

Directed by Lee Lyford

Tuesday 13 September to Sunday 20 November 2016

PRESS PERFORMANCE: THURSDAY 22 SEPTEMBER AT 1.30PM

DARK IS EXCITING. DARK IS KIND. DARK IS NECESSARY...

Lee Lyford directs Jill Tomlinson's beloved classic children's story, *The Owl Who Was Afraid of The Dark*, a heart-warming story about overcoming one's fears.

Plop, the baby barn owl, is fat and fluffy like every barn owl there ever was, except for one thing – he is afraid of the dark! Mrs Barn Owl sends him down from the nest-hole to find out more about the dark, and on his travels he meets a little boy who shows him fireworks, a black cat who takes him exploring, a little girl who tells him about Father Christmas and many others. It's not long before Plop finds out that Dark is Super!

Lee Lyford returns to the Unicorn following his earlier shows at the venue, *The Polar Bears Go Up* and *Britain's Best Recruiting Sergeant*.

Age guide: 2 – 6 /Duration: Approx 50 mins

WESTON THEATRE

A Unicorn production

JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS

By Valentina Ceschi and Thomas Eccleshare
Directed by Valentina Ceschi and Thomas Eccleshare

Saturday 24 September to Thursday 20 October 2016

PRESS NIGHT: TUESDAY 4 OCTOBER AT 7PM

JOIN JASON ON HIS QUEST FOR THE GOLDEN FLEECE.

Banished as a baby, Jason is back and ready to claim his rightful throne. In order to prove himself, he is sent on an epic quest to find the Golden Fleece. He assembles a crew of mighty Argonauts and they set sail aboard the Argo for the ultimate adventure.

Along the way, he meets deranged kings, horrific harpies, sinister sirens and a host of fearsome challenges. Does Jason have what it takes to be a hero, and bring the Golden Fleece back home?

Join us for this thrilling mission impossible where our hero's destiny is placed in the hands of the gods.

Age guide: 6 – 12 / Duration: Approx 1 hr

WESTON THEATRE

A Unicorn Production

BADDIES: THE MUSICAL

Book and Lyrics by Nancy Harris
Music and Lyrics by Marc Teitler
Story by Nancy Harris and Marc Teitler
Directed by Purni Morell

Tuesday 15 November to Saturday 31 December 2016

PRESS NIGHT: WEDNESDAY 23 NOVEMBER AT 7PM

SO YOU THINK BEING BAD IS WRONG? THINK AGAIN...

Sure, I eat people's grandmothers once in a while, but that doesn't make me a bad person... it makes me a good villain.

Baddies: the Musical returns this Christmas following last year's sold-out critical success. Artistic Director Purni Morell directs this deliciously artful and delightfully comic new musical about fairy tales much feared anti-heroes. But are they really, really bad or just misunderstood outcasts?

The Big Bad Wolf's in trouble – he's been ripped out of his story and thrown in jail for being too good at being bad. But playing the villain's the best part, everyone knows that... Along with fellow offenders Rumpelstiltskin, The Ugly Sisters and Captain Hook, the Big Bad Wolf is determined to find out who's decided to change the fairytale rulebook and why. How are you supposed to tell who the good guys are when there are no baddies around?

Full cast to be announced shortly.

Age guide: for everyone aged 6+, not suitable for under 5s
Duration: 2 hrs 10 mins (incl. interval)
Sing-a-long performance: Sat 3 Dec, 7pm
Magical Midnight Mischief Sleepover: Sat 10 & Fri 16 Dec
Fairytale Fun Workshop: Sat 26 Nov

CLORE THEATRE

A Travelling Light and Bristol Old Vic production

BOING!

Directed by Sally Cookson

Choreographed and performed by Wilkie Branson and Joël Daniel

Wednesday 30 November to Saturday 31 December 2016

PRESS PERFORMANCE: FRIDAY 2 DECEMBER AT 1.30PM

Sally Cookson directs this energetic and enchanting piece of dance theatre that captures the delirious excitement of waiting for Santa to arrive on the most magical night of the year.

There are beds to be jumped on, pillows to be fought with, seas to be sailed... On this most extraordinary night, let your imagination soar right up to the stars.

Following in their tradition of bringing enchanting shows for small children to venues up and down the country, Travelling Light have created this show to get your feet tingling and your head spinning with a whirl of colourful images and playful sounds.

Age guide: 2 – 6 / Duration: Approx 50 mins

CLORE THEATRE

Commissioned by and developed with Battersea Arts Centre

UNTIL YOU HEAR THAT BELL

Written and performed by Sean Mahoney

Directed by Yael Shavit

Tuesday 10 to Saturday 14 January 2017

LIFE IN THREE-MINUTE ROUNDS.

Three minutes boxing. One minute break.

Three minutes boxing. Try to impress dad.

Three minutes boxing. Play Sega Dreamcast.

Three minutes boxing. Parents break up.

Three minutes boxing. Fail your GCSEs.

Three minutes boxing. Sing in a car.

Three minutes boxing. Break.

Told through spoken word and within timed boxing rounds, Until You Hear That Bell is a story about amateur boxing and family. It's about doing something for ten years, and slowly getting good at it.

Age guide: 13+ / Duration: 1 hr

WESTON THEATRE

A Unicorn production

THE IRON MAN

By Ted Hughes

Created by Matthew Robins

Tuesday 24 January to Sunday 5 March 2017

PRESS NIGHT: TUESDAY 31 JANUARY AT 7PM

TALLER THAN A HOUSE, THE IRON MAN STOOD AT THE TOP OF THE CLIFF, ON THE VERY BRINK, IN THE DARKNESS.

Matthew Robins recreates Ted Hughes' renowned children's masterpiece *The Iron Man* in a new Unicorn production using his incredible animation and puppetry.

The Iron Man has been eating every single piece of metal in sight: tractors, old cars, fences – right down to the last rusty nail, destroying farms everywhere. The angry farmers try and trap him but in the end it's down to a young boy to try and tame the monster.

Combining live music, shadow puppetry, and stop-motion animation, Matthew Robins returns to the Unicorn following his production of *Something Very Far Away* and recreates the world of *The Iron Man* so vividly that you'll feel you are there. His distinctive handmade and visual style of storytelling lets you watch this atmospheric tale being created live onstage.

Age guide: 8+ / Duration: Approx 50 mins

CLORE THEATRE

A Unicorn production

THE HUNTING LODGE

By Ignace Cornelissen

Translated and Directed by Purni Morell

Tuesday 31 January to Sunday 5 March 2017

PRESS NIGHT: TUESDAY 7 FEBRUARY AT 7PM

THE PARTY ISN'T QUITE OVER YET.

Purni Morell directs her translation of Belgian playwright Ignace Cornelissen's *The Hunting Lodge*, a love story gone wrong for teenagers everywhere.

He has to fall in love with me. The papers all think it's about to happen. Daisy knows, better than anyone, what it takes to get your man. Sometimes what you want falls into your lap. Sometimes you have to fight for it. Because you're worth it, right?

Ignace Cornelissen's previous work at the Unicorn includes the hugely popular *Henry the Fifth* and *A Winter's Tale*.

The Hunting Lodge is a familiar tale, it's kind of new and kind of old. You'll recognise it, at least in part. And you might recognise yourself, which is where the problem starts.

Age guide: 11+ / Duration: Approx 50 mins

CLORE THEATRE

A Unicorn production

JERAMEE, HARTLEBY AND OOOGLEMORE

By Gary Owen

Directed by Tim Crouch

Sunday 12 March to Sunday 9 April 2017

PRESS NIGHT: WEDNESDAY 15 MARCH AT 7PM

IT'S NOT WHAT YOU SAY, IT'S HOW YOU SAY IT.

Tim Crouch returns with Gary Owen's deliciously surreal and delightful comic *Jeramee, Hartleby and Ooglemore* following its sell-out success last year at the venue.

Jeramee, Hartleby and Ooglemore have gone on a trip to seaside. Hartleby spends a lot of time being bossy and

trying to find the perfect spot. Oooglemore does some crazy dancing, shows off a bit, loses the shuttlecock when he hits it a little too hard and spoils the game. Hartleby then goes off in a huff. Jeramee makes it all OK.

Revelling in delightful innocence and glorious stupidity, *Jeramee, Harleby and Ooogleore* is a surprising and surreal encounter with three people who have a lot to say but only three words with which to say it.

Directed by Tim Crouch (*I Malvolio, An Oak Tree*) and written by Gary Owen (*Iphigenia in Splott, National Theatre; Violence and Son, Royal Court*), *Jeramee, Hartleby and Oooglemore* is aimed at audiences aged 3 to 7 years.

Age guide: 3+ / Duration: 50 mins

WESTON THEATRE

A Unicorn production

THE VELVETEEN RABBIT

By Margery Williams

Directed by Purni Morell

Friday 17 March to Saturday 15 April 2017

PRESS NIGHT: FRIDAY 24 MARCH AT 7PM

REAL ISN'T HOW YOU ARE MADE. IT'S A THING THAT HAPPENS TO YOU.

One of the Unicorn Theatre's most popular productions in recent times, *The Velveteen Rabbit* returns for the third time following a successful Broadway transfer.

Directed by Purni Morell, *The Velveteen Rabbit* in a large-scale stage adaptation for the whole family. This magical and moving story examines how toys and people, come alive through the wisdom and experience of love.

The Velveteen Rabbit tells the story of a little boy and a very shy toy rabbit who longs for nothing more than to be loved and become real. He spends his days waiting patiently on the nursery floor, watching the boy play with the other toys and dreaming of the day he'll be picked up again.

Loved by adults and children alike, *The Velveteen Rabbit* is an enchanting story of friendship, transformation and growing up, which takes us to the very heart of toys and children and speaks of things it finds there; fear, loyalty, compassion and wonder.

Age guide: for everyone aged 5 and over / Duration: 1 hr 30 mins (incl. interval)

WESTON THEATRE

A Theater Artemis / Maas Theater co-production

THE MAN WHO KNOWS IT ALL

Conceived and directed by Jetse Batelaan

Tuesday 30 May to Sunday 4 June 2017

BEHIND EVERY ANSWER LIES A NEW QUESTION.

Is it possible know everything? The man who knows it all seems to think it is.

Two performers and a musician go on a quest in search of everything it is possible to know. Along the way it becomes evident that the questions and answers just keep coming, especially when the audience gets involved. Knowing everything is more difficult than we imagine.

A tribute to not really knowing much about anything, an awkward and hapless man and his sidekick fail spectacularly again and again in front of a mercilessly curious audience.

Age guide: 4 – 10 / Duration: 50 mins

WESTON THEATRE

A Unicorn production in association with Made In China

DOUBLE DOUBLE ACT

By Jessica Latowicki, Christopher Brett Bailey and Tim Cowbury

Tuesday 20 June to Sunday 9 July 2017

PRESS NIGHT: TUESDAY 27 JUNE AT 7PM

THIS TOWN AIN'T BIG ENOUGH FOR THE FOUR OF US.

Two children are performing their famous comedy routine. But they keep being interrupted by a pair of pesky grown-ups who are trying to perform their own act. The man looks like the boy. The woman looks like the girl. This can only end one way: CHAOS!

Packed with word-play, comedy and slapstick, *Double Double Act* is a playfully subversive look at growing up, being serious, kidding around and playing the fool. As our double acts mirror and out-joke each other, who will have the last laugh?

And why is everything always covered in green slime?

Age guide: 6+ / Duration: Approx 1 hr

An Imaginart (Barcelona) / Unicorn co-production

SENSACIONAL

Thursday 29 June to Sunday 16 July 2017

PRESS PERFORMANCE: FRIDAY 30 JUNE AT 12.15PM

THE SENSORY SPECTACULAR FOR TODDLERS RETURNS!

Following three hugely successful runs at the venue, *Sensacional* is back to charm and engage young audience members. Bursting with colour and joy, this interactive and immersive digital experience will captivate children and parents alike.

Bring your toddler along to a sound and light show in which they are the participants. Watch as your child puts on a white suit and becomes part of a digital world of ladybirds, shapes, squiggles and squarks that won't keep still, no matter how hard you try to catch them!

Age guide: strictly 18 months – 3 years

Duration: 40 mins

WORKSHOPS / ACTIVITIES / EVENTS

PLAY IN A WEEK

GET ON STAGE AND MAKE YOUR OWN SHOW.

July 2016 & July/August 2017

Led by experienced professional theatre-makers, these intensive and fun workshops will culminate in a performance on the Unicorn stage to an audience of family and friends. There are two sessions over the summer holidays for 7 – 10s, and two for 11 – 14s.

Workshop places include lunch every day, access to professional production photographs, and an exclusive Play in a Week t-shirt. £450 per child. Payments can be made in instalments.

To find out more and to book visit the website.

AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND

Back for a second year, we host two days of exciting activities, crafts, shows and fun, from Ready, Steady, Colour performances to dance and puppetry workshops – and the best bit is that everything is free. Sat 27 & Sun 28 Aug

SLEEPOVER: MAGICAL MIDNIGHT MISCHIEF

Eat pizza, watch the show, meet the cast and take part in a whole host of activities before you bunk down on the set for the night. We'll wake you up with breakfast and a goodie-bag in the morning too! Sat 10 & Fri 16 Dec / No grown-ups / 7 – 10s / £79 (includes ticket price)

FREE SATURDAY ACTIVITIES

Join the Unicorn Play Club for free creative sessions and games most Saturdays from 12 – 2pm. Check the website for activities, dates and details. Follow us on Twitter at Unicorn Up Club for offers, crafts and updates.

SHOW-THEMED EVENTS

Take part in show-themed Up Club+ events and workshops such as Afternoon Tea with Rabbit and Family Owl Portrait making. Places can be booked online along with your show tickets. Visit the website for more information.

LOCAL FESTIVALS

Catch us at Bermondsey Street festival this September to take part in crafts and fun, and get exclusive discounts via our pop-up Box Office.

OPEN HOUSE

Book yourself in for a free guided tour of our RIBA award-winning building. Sat 17 & Sun 18 Sep

BLACK PLAYS ARCHIVE EVENT

The Black Plays Archive is an exceptional resource cataloguing the range of theatre writing produced in the UK by African, Caribbean and Black British writers. During Black History Month, join us for a special event that will include workshops, readings and discussions. Open to all. 5 Oct, 7pm

FOR TEACHERS

We offer free CPD sessions, resources and in-school workshops for school-focused productions (see show pages for details). There is also a free teachers' event on Tue 4 Oct, 5pm. Book now by emailing schools@unicorntheatre.com.

BIRTHDAY PACKAGES

Celebrate a birthday with a trip to the theatre. We can help to make your child's birthday extra special. We'll reserve you an area in the foyer with themed partyware, a buffet and a gift from the Unicornershop. Plus, everyone gets to see a show. We can also create parties on days when there are no shows, and have developed extra-special Birthday Packages around *Baddies: the Musical*. Visit the website for details and to make an enquiry. Prices start from £200 including tickets.

LISTING INFORMATION

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