



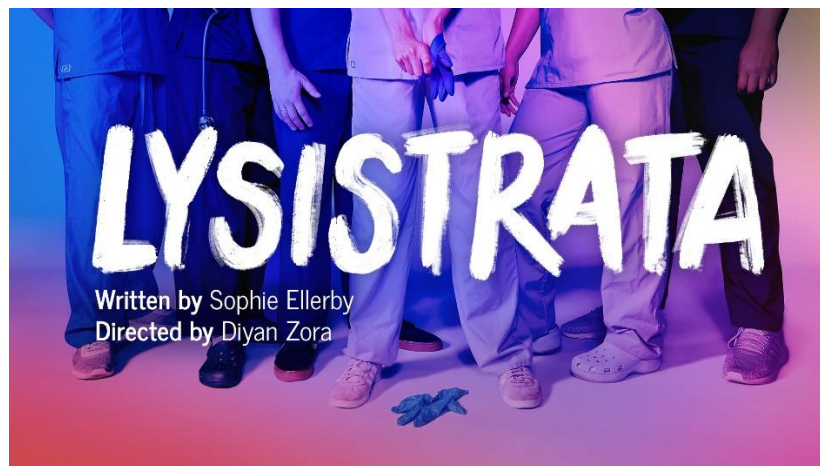
Press Release

Thursday 04 August 2022

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FULL CASTING ANNOUNCED FOR FIRST AUTUMN SPRINGBOARD SHOW *LYSISTRATA*, COMING TO THE LYRIC STUDIO IN SEPTEMBER 2022



The Lyric Hammersmith Theatre is thrilled to announce the cast and creative team for its first autumn SPRINGBOARD show *Lysistrata*, a re-imagined classic, showcasing emerging young West London talent and exciting new writing. The cast features all ten trainees of this year's [SPRINGBOARD](#), a ground-breaking, free two-year training programme providing unrivalled theatre-based training and development opportunities to nurture the next generation of performers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and groups underrepresented in theatre. SPRINGBOARD is kindly supported by **Esmée Fairbairn Foundation** and **The Emmanuel Kaye Foundation** who have helped to launch the programme through funding over the next three years for the first 30 trainees.

Commissioned by the Lyric for our SPRINGBOARD 2022 trainees, *Lysistrata* is a modern retelling of Aristophanes' seminal comedy, written by **Sophie Ellerby** (*Three*, *Arcola*) and directed by the Genesis Future Directors Award-winning **Diyan Zora** (*Klippies*, *Young Vic*).

The witty, sharp, and highly topical comedy follows the story of the title character Lysistrata, a medical student who decides to withhold her medical expertise at a sit-in protest at a STI clinic as a result of the NHS being consistently underfunded and the government's further cuts to vital medical bursaries. It brings together a strong ensemble of ten SPRINGBOARD trainees, including **Adelaide Banks** as Cleo; **Kane Feagan** as Marie; **Chanel Fernandes** as Lysistrata; **Rees**

Jenkins as Callum; **Georgia-Rose Oliver** as Kylie; **Sam Purkis** as Hugo; **James Douglas-Quarcoopome** as Michael; **Ryan Stevens** as Darren; **Wilf Walsworth** as Nicolas; and **Romario Williams** as Eli. This inaugural SPRINGBOARD production runs in the Studio at the **Lyric Hammersmith Theatre** from **08 – 10 September**.

Sophie Ellerby, Writer, said: *"Medical students in the UK have faced various cuts to their bursaries over the last few years that have left them struggling financially. With a job that's so demanding, physically and mentally, it feels insane to me that these students are not being properly supported. Since the pandemic we have all witnessed how important the NHS is for the nation. This adaptation of Lysistrata examines privilege, protest and power through the lens of student experience."*

Expect big bold characters, riotous humour, drinking games and a protest party. The SPRINGBOARD group are a brilliant bunch of young talent, they've been so positive and engaged throughout the development of the play. I look forward to seeing them bring the characters to life and really make them their own."

Diyan Zora, Director, said: *"Sophie Ellerby's new version of Lysistrata is such an exciting and fresh take on this infamous comedy. Our setting is a modern day STI clinic, where a young doctor leads a medical student strike for the NHS. The play zones in on one of the most pressing political issues of our time, whilst keeping the raucous humour and wit that makes the original so extraordinary."*

I am thrilled to be working with this daring and talented group of SPRINGBOARD trainees. Their energy and talent is off the charts, and through a year of bespoke training with the Lyric, they have become a proper ensemble."

Rachel O'Riordan, Artistic Director at Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, said: *"I am delighted to announce our inaugural SPRINGBOARD Autumn show 'Lysistrata' in our Studio this September. SPRINGBOARD is our bold new initiative at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, providing a major alternative performance pathway into employment for future theatre-makers from currently underrepresented backgrounds. The training programme directly speaks to our profound commitment to equality of opportunity, and builds on our long and influential history of talent development. We are so proud of the first cohort of 10 inspiring SPRINGBOARD trainees and are pleased to share Sophie Ellerby and Diyan Zora's bold, relevant and timely re-imagining of this classic."*

'We're striking. No treatments. No shifts. No seminars.'

Between working a zillion part-time jobs and campaigning to save the NHS, sixth year medical student Lysistrata is struggling to stay afloat. When a viral social media thread calls for all medical students to strike, she knows the perfect place to stage her protest - the local STI clinic. But the students' sit-in is interrupted by a surprising patient whose personal predicament provides Lysistrata an opportunity for great political change... an itch too fortuitous not to scratch.

Lysistrata is written by **Sophie Ellerby**, directed by **Diyan Zora**, set and costume design by **Alys Whitehead**, lighting design by **George Ogilvie**, sound design and composition by **Russell Ditchfield**.

Biographies

Cast

Adelaide Banks – Cleo

Adelaide Banks is a SPRINGBOARD trainee. Her most recent theatre credits include *Elephant in the Room* (Lyric Hammersmith Theatre); *The Great Barbeque* (Theatre Peckham); *A City Shaken*; *Summer* (Bush Theatre). Radio plays include: *Eulogies* (Lyric Hammersmith Theatre).

James Douglas-Quarcoopome – Michael

James Douglas-Quarcoopome is a SPRINGBOARD trainee. Previously, James performed on the Lyric main house stage as part of the large-scale community show *Heart of Hammersmith* (Lyric Hammersmith Theatre). Other theatre credits include: *Baby Blues* (Bread and Roses Theatre); *The Sun Will Rise* (Etcetera Theatre); *Breadcrumbs* (National Youth Theatre); *This Is How We Die* (Arcola Theatre). Film includes: *After School Session* (Jordan Walsh); *Straight through the Crew* (Black Math pictures). Radio includes: *Mindful* (Grow Fm); *Weekly Planet* (Insanity radio 103.2fm).

Kane Feagan – Marie

Kane Feagan is a SPRINGBOARD trainee and recipient of the 2022 Bill Cashmore Award for her original play *Wasted*, which will headline the Lyric's seventh annual Evolution Festival in Spring 2023. She most recently performed on the Lyric's main house stage as part of the chorus in Patrick Marber's cult-classic *Closer* (Lyric Hammersmith Theatre). Other theatre credits include: *Aladdin*; *The MOB Reformers*; *Eclipse*; *Passin' Thru* and *The Intervention* (Lyric Hammersmith Theatre). Kane also recently performed *The Maladies* as part of the Almeida Young Company at the Yard and is currently working on a show with the Bush Young Company.

Chanel Fernandes – Lysistrata

Chanel Fernandes is a SPRINGBOARD trainee and actress from West London. She is also a writer and recipient of the Bill Cashmore Award 2022 for her original play *Wasted* which will headline the Lyric's Evolution Festival in Spring 2023. She is a violinist and lover of football. Chanel's stage credits include Phoebe/Hannah/Jenny (Cover) in Mike Bartlett's *Scandaltown* (Lyric Hammersmith Theatre), Kara 1 in *A Letter to Lacey* (Bush Theatre), Linda Loman in *Death of a Salesman* (University of Warwick), Ophelia in *The Secret Love Life of Ophelia* (Greenwich Theatre), and projects with The National Youth Theatre of GB. Her screen credits include *What's Love Got To Do With It?* (Working Title/StudioCanal), *The Wall: A Giga Love Story* (Iconoclast Germany), *Sparks* (Channel 4), and she has recently been cast in an upcoming TV series.

Rees Jenkins – Callum

Rees Jenkins is a SPRINGBOARD trainee. Most recent theatre credits include: *(This isn't) A True Story* (Almeida Theatre); *The Red Shoes* (Pleasance Theatre); *Drama, Baby* (Bush Theatre). His film credits include *Business, As Usual*, a short-film in collaboration with Roundhouse and the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre.

Georgia-Rose Oliver – Kylie

Georgia-Rose Oliver is a SPRINGBOARD trainee. Previously, Georgia-Rose trained on the Playing Up Course with the National Youth Theatre, where she also performed in *Summer Fest*. Most recently, she performed on the Lyric's main house stage as part of the chorus in the 25th anniversary revival of Patrick Marber's *Closer* (Lyric Hammersmith Theatre). She also worked

on the radio play *Eulogies*, a response project to Sian Carter's family drama *Running With Lions* (Lyric Hammersmith Theatre) and participated in the Lyric's annual Evolution Festival, a platform highlighting innovative stage and screen work from young artists.

Sam Purkis – Hugo

Sam Purkis is a SPRINGBOARD trainee. Sam most recently performed on the Lyric main house stage as part of the chorus in Patrick Marber's iconic play *Closer* as well as the annual Evolution Festival (Lyric Hammersmith Theatre), a platform highlighting innovative stage and screen work from young artists. Sam's previous training includes National Youth Theatre and Hackney Showroom Young Actors. Theatre includes: *King Lear* (Chichester Festival Theatre/Duke of York's Theatre); *Sweet Bird of Youth* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *Coming Out as a Gay Basher* (Bush Theatre/Hackney Showroom/Old Diorama); *F OFF* (Criterion); *On Bower Hill* (Arts Theatre); *Crime and Punishment* (Periplum Theatre Tour); *Summer Fest* (The Bunker Theatre); *Richard II* (RADA GBS Theatre). Film includes: *Journeyman* (Jonny Massahi); *Acronymity* (Team Angelica); *Negative* (Lyric and Roundhouse Film). Writing includes: Shortflix Sky Arts Development Finalist and seven published works in the *FIERCE* and *COMMON* books by Team Angelica Publishing.

Ryan Stevens – Darren

Ryan Stevens is a SPRINGBOARD trainee. Ryan participated in both START and the annual Evolution Festival at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, both aimed at training, showcasing, and celebrating stage and screen work from young artists.

Wilf Walsworth – Nicolas

Wilf Walsworth is a SPRINGBOARD trainee. Wilf most recently performed on the Lyric main house stage as part of the chorus in Patrick Marber's modern classic *Closer* and was also seen in *Heart of Hammersmith* last year. He has previously trained with the Actors Class and National Youth Theatre. Wilf played the roles of Caliban and Ferdinand in Shakespeare in the Squares' production of *The Tempest*. Other stage credits include: *Buried* (New York Musical Theatre Festival); *My Mate Dave Died* (Edinburgh Fringe). While studying at Sheffield University, he took on numerous roles including Benjamin in *The Graduate*, Hannay in *The 39 Steps*, and Melchior in *Spring Awakening*.

Romario Williams – Eli

Romario Williams is a SPRINGBOARD trainee. Previously, Romario was part of the TYPT programme at Talawa Theatre Company. In the past, he has trained with the National Youth Theatre and performed in *The MOB Reformers* as part of the Lyric ensemble. He also performed as part of the New Views Festival at the National Theatre. Romario was also in the independent production of the *di black bwoy*.

Creative Team

Sophie Ellerby – Writer

Theatre includes: *Painkiller* (Stratford East Young Company, current); *To Whom It May Concern* (Cardboard Citizens, current); *Playing Up* (director, National Youth Theatre, current); *Lit* (HighTide and Nottingham Playhouse, 2019, remounted digitally in 2021); *Function* (The Criterion Theatre for National Youth Theatre, 2018); *Three* (Arcola Theatre for National Youth Theatre, 2017); *Lit* (HighTide Festival, Aldeburgh Cinema, Mirth Marvel Maud Walthamstow, Nottingham Playhouse, 2017); *Guts* (Playground Festival, Nottingham Playhouse, 2017).

Screen includes: *The Walk* (in development, BFI-funded Short); *Seaview* (Head Writer, webseries for Belgrade Theatre, 2021); *Lit* (screen adaptation, in development with Griffin Films). Fellowships: The Bush Theatre Allotment Week (2020); Writer in Residence, Pentabus Theatre Company (2018/2019); Paines Plough Roundabout Workshop (2018); HighTide's First Commission Scheme (2016); National Youth Theatre Epic Stages (2016).

Diyan Zora – Director

Diyan is a British Iraqi theatre director and writer based in London. As winner of the 2021 Genesis Future Directors Award, Diyan directed *Klippies* by Jessica Sian at the Young Vic Theatre. She is a member of the Bush Theatre's 2022 Emerging Writer's Group. Theatre includes: *Tom Fool* (Orange Tree Theatre); *Klippies* (Young Vic), *Ms Y.* (Young Vic); *Chronicles of a City We Never Knew* (Gate Theatre); *Gather Ye Rosebuds* (Theatre503); *Twelfth Night* (Cockpit Theatre); *Othello* (Barons Court Theatre).

As Associate Director: *LOVE* (& European Tour), *Faith Hope and Charity* (National Theatre); *The Ferryman* (Gielgud Theatre).

As Assistant Director: *Fireworks* (Royal Court); *Evening at the Talkhouse* (National Theatre).

Alys Whitehead – Set and Costume Designer

Alys Whitehead is a Set and Costume Designer based in London and the South East. She likes working with new and abstract writing and is passionate about making relevant, exciting work thoughtfully and with a particular aim to be as sustainable and waste-free as possible. She is an Associate Designer of Dissident Theatre and 3 time OFFIE award nominee.

Previous credits include: *What Makes A Town* (2022) Watermill Theatre; *Big Fish* (postponed until 2023) Wycombe Swan Theatre. *SAD* (2022) Omnibus Theatre [OFFIE nominated Set Design]; *Lysistrata Jones* (2022) Arts Ed London; *Rage + Consent* (2021) Drama Centre London; *Maddie* (2021) Arcola Outside; *Snowflakes* (2021) Old Red Lion Theatre [OFFIE nominated Set and Costume Design]

George Ogilvie – Lighting Designer

George has, in over his 25 years as the Studio and Events technical manager, designed lighting for the vast majority of the Lyric's youth, educational and partner organisations shows in the Studio. He has also lit shows for the Dende collective, Theatre Soleil and Pins and Needles. He designed the lighting for the Lyric's annual Christmas favourite *Raymond Briggs Father Christmas*. In his career George has worked in nearly every conceivable department in Theatre which he feels gives him a well-rounded and passionate feel for live performance. He is looking forward very much to working on *Lysistrata*.

Russell Ditchfield– Sound Designer and Composer

Russell is a Sound Designer and Composer from Lancashire. Credits include: *Peter Rabbit* (Blenheim Palace); *Puck* (Shakespeare Birthplace Trust); *Groan Ups* (Vaudeville West End & UK Tour); *Going The Distance* (Oxford Playhouse, Lawrence Batley & The Dukes Theatre); *Merry Christmas Carol* (Royal Court Liverpool); *Home, I'm Darling* (Bolton Octagon); *Macbeth* (Lawrence Batley Theatre); *Parakeet* (Ed. Festival); *My Beautiful Black Dog* (Bush Theatre); *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich & Katzenmusik* (A. Lloyd Webber Theatre); *Carousel* (Mack Theatre); *Man of Mode* (Mack Theatre).

As Associate: *Bloody Elle* (Royal Exchange Manchester); *A Pretty Shitty Love* (Theatre Clwyd). Russell's compositions have been played on BBC Radio 1, 2 and 6music.

- ENDS -

Press contacts:

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Notes to Editors

IMAGES available to download [here](#).

Listings

Lyric Hammersmith Theatre presents

Lysistrata

Written by **Sophie Ellerby**

Directed by **Diyan Zora**

Set and Costume Design by **Alys Whitehead**

Lighting Design by **George Ogilvie**

Sound Design and Composition by **Russell Ditchfield**

Lyric Hammersmith Theatre

Lyric Square, King Street, London, W6 0QL

Dates: Thursday 08 September – Saturday 10 September 2022

Box office: 020 8741 6850

www.lyric.co.uk

Tickets £10

Age guidance: 14+

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#LyricLysistrata

ABOUT THE LYRIC HAMMERSMITH THEATRE

The Lyric Hammersmith Theatre is a UK leading producing theatre, creating world class theatre from the heart of Hammersmith, London, its home for more than 125years.

Acclaimed works include debuts of Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party* and Michael Frayn's *Noises Off*, the Olivier Award-winning revival of Sarah Kane's *Blasted*, the triumphant *Bugsy Malone*, the international cult hit *Ghost Stories* and most recently the lauded adaptation of *A Doll's House* by Tanika Gupta.

Under the leadership of Artistic Director and CEO Rachel O'Riordan, the Lyric's programme of reimagined classics, contemporary plays and bold new works celebrates its unique Matcham theatre.

We are West London's largest creative hub and home to an innovative partnership of arts organisations. Together we are committed to nurture the next generation of talent from all backgrounds, providing necessary and accessible life-changing creative opportunities for thousands of young West Londoners.

SEASON AT A GLANCE

CLOSER

14 July – 13 August

Press Night: Wednesday 20 July 7pm

Mon – Sat 7.30pm

Weds & Sat 2.30pm

Open Captioned Performance: Saturday 30 July 2.30pm

Audio Described Performance: Saturday 30 July 7.30pm

IPHIGENIA IN SPLOTT

26 September – 22 October

Press Night: Friday 30 September 7pm

Mon – Sat 7.30pm

Weds & Sat 2.30pm

Open Captioned Performance: Friday 21 October 7.30pm

Audio Described Performance: Friday 14 October 7.30pm

BSL Performance: Tuesday 18 October 7.30pm

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

19 November – 7 January 2023

Press Day: Saturday 26 November

Performance schedule: For full listings see <https://lyric.co.uk/shows/jack-and-the-beanstalk-2/>

Relaxed Performance: Tuesday 06 December, 11am

Open Captioned Performance: Wednesday 21 December, 6pm

Audio Described Performance: Saturday 17 December, 6pm

BSL Performance: Wednesday 28 December, 2pm

OTHELLO

19 January – 11 February 2023

Press Night: Tuesday 24 January 7pm

Mon – Sat 7.30pm

Weds matinee: 1.30pm

Sat matinee: 2.30pm

BSL Performance: 01 February, 1.30pm

Open Captioned Performance: Saturday 04 February, 2.30pm

Audio Described Performance: Saturday 04 February, 7.30pm