



Press Release

Thursday 19 January 2022

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LYRIC HAMMERSMITH THEATRE WELCOMES NEW COHORT OF SPRINGBOARD TRAINEES AND ANNOUNCES RETURN OF EVOLUTION FESTIVAL IN MARCH 2023

- Evolution Festival, showcasing emerging talent, exciting new writing and re-imagined classics, returns to the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre from 21- 24 March 2023 for its seventh year.
- *Wasted*, the new Bill Cashmore Award-winning play by SPRINGBOARD trainees, **Chanel Fernandes** and **Kane Feagan**, to headline the Lyric's seventh annual Evolution Festival.
- The Lyric Hammersmith Theatre is delighted to welcome its 2023/2024 cohort of SPRINGBOARD, the flagship free two-year training programme that aims to find, shape, inspire, and champion the next generation of performers from currently underrepresented groups in theatre.

Evolution Festival returns to the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre in March 2023 for its seventh year, providing a platform and career launch pad for young theatre makers producing innovative work for stage and screen. Artists from previous years have gone on to create shows at the Lyric, Royal Court Theatre, the Vaults, Bunker Theatre, Battersea Arts Centre, Sheffield Theatres, and the Young Vic. They include directors Stef O'Driscoll, Alessandra Davison, Gavin Joseph, TD. Moyo, Yasmin Hafezi, Diane Page, Elin Scofield, and actor and author Nathan Bryon.

This year the festival runs from 21 – 24 March and includes:

- The headlining **Bill Cashmore Award-winning new play *Wasted***
- **Evolution: Labs**, featuring 30-minute re-lensing of four classic plays - *Pygmalion*, *The Father*, *The Master Builder* and *The Clouds*
- **Evolution: Scratches** with four nights of scratch performances created by the Lyric's SPRINGBOARD trainees
- **Evolution: Films** – a collaboration between the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and the Roundhouse bringing five premiere short film screenings showcasing new takes on the classic play *The Father*
- **Evolution: Audio**, showcasing extracts from the restoration comedy *The Belle's Stratagem*

Rachel O’Riordan, Artistic Director at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre said: *“We are thrilled for the return of Evolution Festival, which builds on our existing brilliant partnerships with the Roundhouse and Wimbledon College of Arts. Evolution Festival brings together extraordinary young artists and creatives to reimagine classic plays, re-lensing them to take them into new exciting directions. Artists across all disciplines, from direction, design, writing to film-making and performance, will be given the opportunity develop fundamental skills while creating compelling new work for audiences in a professional and supportive environment.”*

Rob Lehmann, Director of Young Lyric at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, said: *“We are looking forward to showcasing the exceptional work being produced by West London’s future theatre makers and creatives. Our festival headliner and Bill Cashmore award-winning play, Wasted by SPRINGBOARD trainees Chanel Fernandes and Kane Feagan is a testament to the vital role this award plays in propelling new ideas from the rehearsal room to the stage.”*

SPRINGBOARD 2023/2024

The Lyric Hammersmith Theatre is thrilled to welcome and introduce the new 2023/24 cohort of SPRINGBOARD, the innovative two-year training programme launched in 2022 with the aim to champion, shape, nurture, and sustain the next generation of performers from currently underrepresented groups in theatre. Successful applicants will be enrolled in the free two-year programme, benefiting from a bursary that will support them while they take part in a wide range of development initiatives including performances, workshops, masterclasses, artist development and opportunities both on and off the stage.

Following auditions in December, the second cohort of 10 SPRINGBOARD trainees who join the Lyric in January 2023 on the start of their two-year course are: **Rima Georges**, 25, from Westminster, **Stacey Ann Henry**, 19, from Brent, **Kabira Imona**, 24, from Kensington & Chelsea, **Isaiah James-Mitchell**, 22, from Ealing, **Bella Macdonald**, 25, from Harrow, **Louisa McClintock**, 20, from Ealing, **Kim Mac**, 24, from Hammersmith & Fulham, **Joshua Ogbue**, 21, from Brent, **Behkam Salehani**, 21, from Kensington & Chelsea and **Corbin Willetts**, 19, from Hillingdon.

SPRINGBOARD is kindly supported by **Esmée Fairbairn Foundation** and **The Emmanuel Kaye Foundation** whose support has helped to launch a three-year pilot of the programme for the first 30 trainees. SPRINGBOARD is a long-term commitment by the Lyric and will provide an inspiring, industry-leading model to improve access to careers in the theatre. SPRINGBOARD’s ambition is to be a template for UK arts organisations to adapt or adopt, actively making the performing arts sector more inclusive with a workforce that better represents society.

EVOLUTION FESTIVAL 2023

WASTED

Presented by the Bill Cashmore Award and the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre
21 – 24 March 2023, 8pm | Lyric Studio

The festival will be headlined by the Bill Cashmore Award-winning play *Wasted*, created by **Chanel Fernandes** and **Kane Feagan**, directed by **Emily Ling Williams** and designed by **Sonya Smullen**. Chanel and Kane were selected as the 2022 Bill Cashmore Award winners, following

scratch performances at last year's Evolution Festival. *Wasted* will be performed by trainees from the inaugural cohort of **SPRINGBOARD**, the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre's groundbreaking, new alternative performance pathway into employment for future theatre makers.

Best mates Amber and Bella find themselves at the center of a missing person's case after their flat mate Jacob doesn't come home after a night out. What ensues is a pulsating crime drama that lifts the lid on a justice system falling short to protect young women.

*There's a problem with university culture and this gripping new play dives head first into a waste-pit of victim blaming, misogyny, and a justice system in tatters. With sharp writing and gripping performances, *Wasted* is a must-see production for anyone interested in the lived experiences of young women in today's world.*

The Bill Cashmore Award enables emerging artists to transform a fledgling idea from the page to the professional stage, run in conjunction with the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre. It was founded by Sasha Bates in 2018 in memory of her husband, actor, playwright, director and entrepreneur Bill Cashmore. Previous winners of the award include **Eve Cowley** and **Elin Schofield** for *Screwdriver*; and **Martha Watson Allpress** and **Yasmin Hafesji** for *Kick*.

Sasha Bates said: "*Amongst a very strong field of scratch shows, I found myself mesmerised and intrigued by *Wasted*. Chanel and Kane drew me into the unsettling yet pervasive world of gender politics, everyday sexism, and power dynamics with undertones of the Me Too movement - contemporary and important issues affecting all of us today. Yet worthy it is not. It's funny, lively, spirited, and entertaining, delivered via a captivating mystery - the puzzling disappearance of their flatmate.*

The Bill Cashmore Award exists to make sure exciting and relevant work like this gets the platform it warrants. Kane and Chanel are deserving winners, possessing the talent, creativity, work ethic and determination to right some wrongs, start some conversations, provoke new thoughts, and entertain us along the way. I can't wait to see the full-length version and discover where these two young women – the characters in the play, but mainly the creators themselves – are heading."

EVOLUTION: LABS

Presented by the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and Wimbledon College of Art
21 – 24 March, 6pm | Rehearsal Room 1

Evolution Labs was set up in 2016 by Young Lyric and the BA Theatre Design course at Wimbledon College of Arts as a much-needed collaborative opportunity for early career directors and designers to meet and co-create work. This year **Lorraine Bitmead**, **Ashen Gupta**, **Lyse Marcelle**, **Ellis Patrick** will each direct re-lensed classic plays, respectively: a relocation of Aristophanes' Greek comedy *The Clouds* to the modern-day House of Commons, George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* set at Cambridge University exploring intersections of race and politics, a 1970's interpretation of *The Father* by August Strindberg focusing on gender politics, and Henrik Ibsen's *The Master Builder* placed in a contemporary architecture firm. These re-

workings are co-created with final year BA Theatre Design students from Wimbledon College of Arts; **Agnes Yeung**, **Shahaf Beer**, **Emelia Mendez** and **Andrew Yu**.

Two shows will be staged each night of the festival before *Wasted*. On 21 and 23 March, the productions will be *Pygmalion* directed by **Ashen Gupta**, designed by **Shahaf Beer**, and *The Master Builder* directed by **Ellis Patrick**, designed by **Andrew Yu**. On 22 and 24 March, the productions will be *The Clouds* directed by **Lorraine Bitmead**, designed by **Agnes Yeung**, and *The Father* directed by **Lyse Marcelle**, designed by **Emelia Mendez**.

Lucy Algar, Course Leader BA Theatre Design at Wimbledon College of Arts, said: "The BA Theatre Design course at Wimbledon College of Arts, UAL has worked with the Young Lyric team to create opportunities for emerging directors and designers to collaborate since 2016. The 2023 Labs creatives are all incredibly talented theatre-makers. We can't wait to see their reworked classics. We are also keen to see *Wasted*, designed by 2022 BA Theatre Design graduate **Sonya Smullen**."

EVOLUTION: SCRATCHES

Devised by SPRINGBOARD

21– 22 March, 7pm | Lyric Film & TV Studio

Both the 2023 and 2024 cohort of trainees from the Lyric's **SPRINGBOARD** programme will present brand new 10-minute scratch performances created entirely by them. One of these scratch ideas will be awarded the Bill Cashmore Award and will go on to be developed into the headline play for Evolution Festival 2024.

SPRINGBOARD is 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. To find out more, visit <https://lyric.co.uk/young-lyric/springboard/>.

EVOLUTION: FILMS

Presented by Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and the Roundhouse

23 - 24 March, 7.30pm | Lyric Cinema

In an exciting collaboration between the **Lyric Hammersmith Theatre** and the **Roundhouse**, **Evolution: Films** will premiere five short films in the Lyric Cinema.

Showcasing extracts from *The Father* by **August Stringberg**, adapted by **Luke Barnes**, the project brings together the Lyric's SPRINGBOARD trainees and young people from the Roundhouse's Behind The Lens programme who will create modern day workings of this classic drama. Direction by **Naomi Waring** and Cinematography support from **Bani Mendy**.

EVOLUTION: AUDIO

Presented by Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and the Roundhouse

21 - 24 March

Showcasing extracts from the restoration comedy *The Belle's Stratagem* by **Hannah Cowley**, adapted by **Luke Barnes**, and directed by **Tash Hyman**, performers from the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre's **SPRINGBOARD** programme will record a series of short audio duologues.

The audio duologues will be presented as a sound installation at the Lyric throughout the festival and online.

Tickets for *Wasted*, *Evolution: Labs* and *Evolution: Films* are available from £5. Tickets for *Evolution: Scratches* are free but must be booked in advance. *Evolution: Audio Dramas* are free to listen to throughout the festival. **All tickets are available via www.lyric.co.uk.**

THE BACCHAE

A Lyric Hammersmith Theatre production
Written by Katherine Soper, after Euripides
Directed by Kwame Owusu
Thursday 20 – Saturday 22 July 2023

Following the success of the inaugural SPRINGBOARD production of *Lysistrata* in the Studio in 2022, the next cohort of trainees will return to the Studio stage in this new production in July 2023. *The Bacchae* also marks director Kwame Owusu's return to the Lyric after his successful year as Resident Assistant Director in 2021/2022. Further details to be announced in due course.

Biographies

WASTED

Chanel Fernandes – Writer and Co-Creator

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*. She is a violinist and lover of football. Chanel's stage credits at the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre include the title role in *Lysistrata* and Phoebe/Hannah/Jenny (Cover) in Mike Bartlett's *Scandaltown*.

Kane Feagan – Co-Creator

Kane Feagan is a SPRINGBOARD trainee and recipient of the 2022 Bill Cashmore Award for her original play *Wasted*. 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 at the Lyric include: *Lysistrata*; *Aladdin*; *The MOB Reformers*; *Eclipse*; *Passin' Thru* and *The Intervention*.

Emily Ling Williams – Director

Emily was previously a Resident Director at the Almeida Theatre, Jerwood Assistant Director at the Young Vic and Trainee Director at Paines Plough. She is currently a Headlong Origins Artist. Her credits as a director include: *The Full Works*, *The Key Workers Cycle* (Almeida Theatre), *text me when you're home*, *5 Plays* (Young Vic); *Swallow*; *16* (Lemon House Theatre); *Lucky Cigarette* (New Earth Theatre); *GYSB*; *Tuesday at the Library*; *A Perpetual State of Happiness*; *Good Trouble* (Moongate Productions); *The Sign In Sidney Brustein's Window*;

Appropriate (RWCMD); *Miss Julie* (LAMDA); *Preach* (Rose Bruford); *Turbines* (Paines Plough/RWCMD/Gate Theatre). As a dramaturg her work includes *Endurance* (HOME Manchester). Emily's assistant/associate director credits include *The House Of Shades* (Almeida Theatre); *Blood Wedding* (Young Vic); *The Meeting*; *The Chalk Garden* (Chichester Festival Theatre); *Black Mountain*; *Out Of Love*; *How To Be A Kid* (Paines Plough/Theatr Clwyd/Orange Tree Theatre); *The Apology*; *The Island Nation* (Arcola Theatre).

Sonya Smullen – Designer

Sonya Smullen is a performance designer and maker from Glasgow. In 2022, she graduated from Wimbledon College of Arts studying a BA in Theatre Design which was supported by the Dewars Arts Award. Sonya has worked across multiple disciplines including film, projection and music which guided her process in design. Sonya's practice aims to nurture the collaborative element of making stories and intends to share narratives that focus on breaking boundaries between socially imposed hierarchies. Drawing from many different designers and thinkers including Tanja Beer and Felix Guattari, Sonya incorporates themes related to ecology, territory, power and identity.

In the past, Sonya has collaborated with the Prague Quadrennial Festival 2020, the National Theatre of Scotland and independent projects including film and installation for SaltSpace Gallery. A major part of her ethos as a designer is the promotion of collaboration and multi-disciplinary crossover.

EVOLUTION: LABS

Ashen Gupta (they/them) is a director and facilitator whose work spans opera, new writing and film for theatre. Directing and associate credits include: *The Waiting Room*, *Brown Sheep* (The Vaults); *Fast* (Etcetera Theatre); *Scratch That Itch: Nostalgia* (The Vaults). Assistant credits include: *Carmen*, *Gloriana* (English National Opera); *Chasing Hares*, *TWENTYTWENTY* (Young Vic); *NW Trilogy* (Kiln); *I Threw It* (The Old Vic); *Jîneoloji* (Filmed with The Old Vic); *Living Newspaper* (The Royal Court with TEA Films); *Orange Juice* (Tristan Bates). Facilitator credits include: *Britannicus Response*, *A Doll's House* workshops (Lyric Hammersmith Theatre); *Get Going*, *Take The Lead*, *Frontline Online*, *Schools Club* (The Old Vic).

Lyse Marcelle is a director and writer whose work and interests span from re-lensing classics to new writing and devising. As a director Lyse is strongly influenced by work across different disciplines such as; installation art, binaural sound and physical theatre. A big motivator for Lyse's work comes from growing up on a council estate in Cambridge, a city with large social inequalities. She strives to challenge the assumptions that we make about other people and about ourselves, and shed light on communities and voices that do not feel heard. Her work explores perceptions of reality, the working class experience and the themes of grief, relationships and mental health. Lyse has been working as a director and facilitator in educational settings since 2017. Most recently she wrote and directed *this is not a play about ophelia* (a play about ophelia), a semi-autographical re-lensing of *Hamlet* to reflect how bereavement care is currently overlooked in the UK. This was performed as part of a graduate showcase of work. Lyse graduated from London South Bank University earlier this year and this is her professional directorial debut.

Ellis Patrick is a theatre maker from southeast London of Bajan and Irish descent. He likes to explore black and working class stories using movement and music. He has worked across multiple roles in theatre including writing and producing though mainly as a freelance director. He has worked with a number of theatres including The Young Vic, Almeida Theatre and the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre. Ellis was recently assistant director on HighRise Theatre's production of *The UK Drill Project* at the Barbican.

Lorraine Woodley-Bitmead is a south London-based theatre practitioner. She has worked at the BRIT School as a teacher and choreographer, specialising in contemporary dance, with an emphasis on dance theatre and movement direction.

Lorraine's experience as a director has mainly been directing musicals at BRIT. Continuing her development as a director, she recently finished studying a Masters in Creative Performance Practice at LSBU, cementing her ambitions to direct professionally. As a director Lorraine is multidisciplinary in her approach; the integration of film and the language of sound and movement is prevalent in the development of ideas. Lorraine writes and directs work that explores issues of marginalised groups and has more recently found the challenge of reimagining of classical texts both nerve wracking and exhilarating.

The adaptation of *The Clouds* will be her professional debut as a director.

EVOLUTION: FILMS

Luke Barnes (adaptor) is an award-winning writer. Credits include: *Freedom Project* (Leeds Playhouse); *Sad Club* (National Theatre Connections); *All We Ever Wanted Was Everything* (Bush Theatre/Paines Plough/Middle Child); *No One Will Tell Me When To Start A Revolution* (Hampstead Theatre); *Chapel Street* (Bush Theatre); *Bottleneck* (Soho Theatre/HighTide); *The Jumper Factory* (Young Vic/HOME/Bristol Old Vic); *Lost Boys* (Unity/National Youth Theatre); *Cinderella - A Wicked Mother F*cker of a Night Out* (James Seabright/ Not Too Tame); *Katie Johnstone* (Orange Tree Theatre); *The Saints* (Nuffield Theatres/Southampton); *Eistedfodd* (HighTide); *There Should Be Unicorns* (London International Festival/Middle Child); *Ten Storey Love Song* (Hull Truck/Middle Child); *Weekend Rockstars* (Hull Truck/Middle Child); *A Wondrous Place* (Manchester Royal Exchange/Northern Stage/ Unity/ Crucible, Sheffield); *The Class* (The Unicorn/NYT); *Loki and Betty* (Almeida Theatre). Television includes: *Minted In Manchester* (Original Single for Channel 4).

Naomi Waring is a film director who uses a strong visual narrative to connect with her audience. Her work is usually set in working class communities and is influenced by social realism, with a particular interest in youth culture and the female perspective.

Naomi is a visiting lecturer at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, and GSA teaching Screen Acting on the BA acting course. Other clients include Hatch Films, The Paper Birds, The Roundhouse, the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, and ISSA.

Her films have screened at BBC iPlayer, Dublin Film Festival, Cork International Film Festival, Galway Film Festival, Belfast Film Festival, Manchester International Film Festival, Underwire, Aesthetica, Locarno Film Festival, Kerry International Film Festival, Richard Harris International Film Festival, Shiny winner, Off Line Best International Short, Finalist European Cinematography Awards.

Bani Mendy is a London-based director of photography, working worldwide, specialising in narrative and commercials. Work for television and drama most recently includes: *Ch4 Big Age*, BBC3 comedy *PRU*, *RAMBERT Note to Self*, *PTSD*, *Say Nothing*, *Drawn Out*. Documentary includes: *Reconnect*, *IronMind* and *The Amy Winehouse Foundation*. Commercial works include: *What Makes a Champion*, *THINK!* and *NIO EP9 Super Car*.

The **Roundhouse** opens up space for creativity to empower people and communities - day in, night out. They're on a mission to raise the creative potential of the UK so we give young people and artists the space to experiment, take risks and be part of incredible moments that go down in history. Through an ambitious youth programme, 11-30 year-olds can take part in creative opportunities or use affordable studio space that can ignite a passion, or help them turn their creativity into a career.

EVOLUTION: AUDIO

Luke Barnes (adaptor) – please see biography above under Evolution: Films.

Tash Hyman - Director

Tash is a director, dramaturg, facilitator and activist, and co-founder of no more superheroes, who create award-winning new work for the stage and audio, platforming stories of community, resilience and resistance in a time of climate and ecological crisis. As a director, Tash was a JMK Award Finalist in 2019, and Young Vic Genesis Award long-listed in 2020. Directing credits include award-winning *In My Lungs The Ocean Swells* at Vault Festival 2020, *Omelette*, Vault Festival 2020 and *Becoming Electra: A Queer Mitzvah*, 2019. Tash co-founded Resound Audio UK and with them has directed and produced award-winning fiction podcast *Land Skeins* in 2021 and *Beneath Our Feet* in 2022. Tash is an Associate of the National Youth Theatre of Great Britain, and lectures at UAL.

THE BACCHAE

Katherine Soper's (Writer) first play, *Wish List*, won the Bruntwood Prize for Playwriting, The Stage Debut Award for Best New Play, and caused Katherine to be nominated as Most Promising Playwright at the Evening Standard Awards. It was performed at the Manchester Royal Exchange and Royal Court, directed by Matthew Xia, and is published by Nick Hern Books. Her next play, *The Small Hours*, was written for National Theatre Connections. Katherine has written for The Big House and is currently under commission to the Royal Court.

Kwame Owusu (Director) is a writer and director based in London. He was the Resident Assistant Director at the Lyric 2021/2022 and is a Young Associate at the Gate Theatre. His first play, *Resist*, is about political radicalism, and his second, *Dreaming and Drowning* (Winner of the Mustapha Matura Award 2022) is about a young man navigating racism and searching for belonging. Kwame participated in the Bush Theatre's Emerging Writers' Group 2020/2021. His play *Horizon* was commissioned for the Bush Theatre's 2022 community play. He is currently writing an audio piece which will debut as part of the English Touring Theatre's *Fucked Up Bedtime Stories (for adults)*. He recently directed *Stoning Mary* (Arts University Bournemouth, 2022) and will be the Staff Director at the National Theatre on Rachel O'Riordan's production of *Romeo and Julie* in 2023. Other directing credits include *Pomana* (Edinburgh Festival Fringe); *The Wolf from the Door* (John Thaw Studio Theatre); *Rota* ('Shorts Festival', Antwerp Mansion); and *Whiskey Wednesdays* (Kickitdown Productions).

- ENDS -

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Notes to Editors

IMAGES available to download [here](#).

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#EvolutionFest

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EVOLUTION FESTIVAL 2023

Wasted

Presented by the Bill Cashmore Award and the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre
21– 24 March, 8pm | Lyric Studio
Created by Chanel Fernandes and Kane Feagan
Written by Chanel Fernandes
Directed by Emily Ling Williams
Designed by Sonya Smullen
Tickets: £10 / £5 for Young Lyric Members
Age guidance: 16+

EVOLUTION: LABS

Presented by the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and BA Theatre Design course at Wimbledon College of Art

21 – 24 March, 6pm | Lyric Rehearsal Room 1

Tickets: £5

Age guidance: 14+

The Master Builder

21 and 23 March

By Henrik Ibsen

Directed by Ellis Patrick

Designed by Andrew Yu

Pygmalion

21 and 23 March

By George Bernard Shaw

Directed by Ashen Gupta

Designed by Shahaf Beer

The Father

22 and 24 March

By August Strindberg

Directed by Lyse Marcelle

Designed by Emilia Mendez

The Clouds

22 and 24 March

By Aristophanes

Directed by Lorraine Bitmead

Designed by Agnes Yeung

EVOLUTION: SCRATCHES

Devised by SPRINGBOARD

21 March and 22 March, 7pm | Lyric Film & TV Studio

Tickets: Free but must be booked in advance

Age guidance: 14+

EVOLUTION: FILMS

Presented by the Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and the Roundhouse

23 - 24 March, 7pm | Lyric Cinema

Created by the Lyric's SPRINGBOARD trainees and young people from the Roundhouse's

Behind The Lens programme

Direction by Naomi Waring

Cinematography support from Bani Mendy

Tickets: £5

Age guidance: 14+

EVOLUTION: AUDIO

21 - 24 March | Lyric

Directed by Tash Hyman

Performed by SPRINGBOARD

Tickets: Free, no need to book in advance

Age guidance: 14+