

Chesil Street, Winchester SO23 0HU

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release 1st March 2023

‘SNAKES AND LADDERS’ IS THE INTRIGUING THEME FOR THE *TAKETEN*,

CHESIL THEATRE NEW WRITING FESTIVAL, LAUNCHING 1ST MARCH 2023

Aspiring writers from across the UK are encouraged to enter this year’s *TakeTen* Chesil Theatre New Writing Festival. The event gets underway on 1st March 2023 with an invitation to submit new plays, incorporating the theme ‘Snakes and Ladders’ and with the added challenge of a playing length lasting just ten minutes.

Chesil Theatre Winchester inaugurated their new writing festival in 2008. Held biennially, the event has grown from a handful of entries and now regularly attracts over 400. This year’s closing deadline for submissions is 23.59 BST on Friday 2nd June 2023. Plays are then evaluated by an independent panel of judges, all drawn from the world of theatre, drama and entertainment.

The winning 10 writers are announced in November with the plays given their premiere at four performances over the weekend of 24th/25th February 2024. The theme gives the opportunity for treatment in a wide variety of styles and theatre genres, ensuring an amazing programme when the winning pieces are performed back-to-back.

*TakeTen* has been greatly encouraged over the years. Sir Ian McKellen said:

“I thought the whole enterprise was startlingly good and an example of what a company like the Chesil can do better than a professional one.”

Sir Kenneth Branagh commented:

“Three cheers for Winchester’s Chesil Theatre. At a time of challenge for all, they have bravely looked to creativity and imagination.”

The rules for *TakeTen* are simple:

* Plays need to be 10 minutes in length.
* Scripts can include one to four actors, with minimum props, lighting and sound.
* Works must be original, unperformed and unpublished.

Stephanie Danby, Chairman Chesil Theatre added:

“New writing is the lifeblood of theatre and *TakeTen* has proved a perfect springboard to nurture fresh talent. Chesil Theatre has long been associated with performing ground-breaking work and this latest *TakeTen* aims to consolidate that reputation, giving aspiring writers an opportunity to be celebrated. Life is full of ups and downs, successes and failures, amazing turnabouts in fortune. We feel ‘Snakes and Ladders’ offers an infinite number of interpretations.”

For more information contact taketen@chesiltheatre.org.uk and visit our website [www.chesiltheatre.org.uk](http://www.chesiltheatre.org.uk).

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Editor’s Notes

The attached image is provided repro-free for editorial use.

About Chesil Theatre

Chesil Theatre (Winchester Dramatic Society) is based in the heart of Winchester, presenting up to eight productions a year, ranging from traditional classics to contemporary works. Chesil Theatre also encourages new writing through its biennial festival *TakeTen*, runs drama workshops and readings, plus two lively youth theatre groups, as well as offering stagecraft and technical training. The Company has been performing for over 150 years.

Since 1966 Chesil Theatre has been the Society’s permanent home - a former 12th century church in Chesil Street, Winchester. This medieval building provides an intimate 75-seat studio-style theatre and versatile performance space.