

Chesil Street, Winchester SO23 0HU

NEWS RELEASE

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CHESIL THEATRE’S *TAKETEN* NEW WRITING COMPETITION

Judges announced from the world of theatre and drama

*TakeTen*, Chesil Theatre Winchester’s new writing competition has once again attracted hundreds of entries for the biennial festival and it’s now the turn of the independent panel of judges to pick the winning ten plays which will enjoy première performances in February 2024.

Playwrights were invited to submit a play lasting just 10-minutes and related to the theme – ‘Snakes and Ladders’ giving the opportunity to envisage the ups and downs of life over a range of genres.

British playwright, theatre director and screen writer Jessica Swayle added her encouragement:

“Kudos to every one of you who’s had the courage to pick up a pen (or open a Word document) and write, because it’s no easy task. And yet the rewards can be glorious.”

An exciting challenge now faces the panel of five judges, all drawn from the world of drama and theatre:

* Rosanne Collinson, Head of Drama and Theatre at Peter Symonds College, Winchester,
* Cecily O’Neill, writer, lecturer, director, dramaturg, Artistic Director of 2Time Theatre,
* Danica Pickett, casting director, actor, director,
* Simon Plumridge, designer, director, maker, core member of Winchester’s professional touring company Platform 4,
* Mark Ponsford, writer, actor, musician, theatre critic.

Chesil Theatre Chairman Stephanie Danby said:

“We are delighted to welcome this panel of judges to our biennial *TakeTen* writing festival. They bring a wealth of experience and expertise from directing to performing, teaching to publishing. We look forward to hearing their choice of the winning 10 plays in November, followed by a weekend of performances of all ten back-to-back in 2024.”

Chesil Theatre’s New Writing Festival has been running since 2008 and has previously enjoyed the support of Sir Ian McKellen and Sir Kenneth Branagh.

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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, outreach community projects and readings, two lively youth theatre groups and offers 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 heritage building provides an intimate 75-seat studio-style theatre and versatile performance space.