

Chesil Street, Winchester SO23 0HU

NEWS RELEASE

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**NATIONWIDE *TAKETEN* NEW WRITING FESTIVAL**

**WINNERS ANNOUNCED BY CHESIL THEATRE**

Chesil Theatre, Winchester’s leading community theatre company, is pleased to announce the top ten winners of *TakeTen*, their national competition and festival of new writing.

Entries were invited from writers in the format of a 10-minute play based on the theme *Snakes and Ladders.* An independent panel of judges from the world of professional theatre and drama had the task of selecting the winners from hundreds of entries submitted from across the UK.

The winners are:

* Powerplay by Lucy Aley-Parker (London)
* Cake by Victoria Buse (Radley, Oxfordshire)
* Moksha Patam by Mike Shephard (London)
* Alan Has Left The Chat by Nicky Denovan (Caversham, Berkshire)
* New Master by Sarah Hawkins (Shawford, Hampshire)
* Revisiting by Hayley Scott (Edinburgh)
* Firing Blanks by Kathryn West (Wadebridge, Cornwall)
* Time To Let Go by Sarah Nash (Haslemere, Surrey)
* Unlived Experience by Barry Hood (Dryslwyn, Carmarthenshire)
* A Portrait Of Isabella by Kate Price (Winchester)

The plays cover a range of theatre genres from black comedy to tragedy. Many writers explored contemporary topics including: the influence of AI, internet dating, dementia, loneliness and family relationships.

Chesil Theatre Chairman, Stephanie Danby said:

“This is the eighth edition of our biennial new writing festival. We are delighted that *TakeTen* has once again been well received. Writers have found the theme capable of a diversity of interpretations, all intriguing and entertaining. Chesil Theatre is pleased to play its part in giving writers the challenge of creating a unique work within a prescribed format and the opportunity of seeing their play brought to the stage. We will now work towards the performances which take place on 24th and 25th February 2024, when writers, judges and directors can all get together.”

Leading British playwright, theatre director and screen writer Jessica Swale 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.”

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

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For further information please contact:

Flavia Bateson

Chesil Theatre Marketing Team

07855 253452

marketing@chesiltheatre.org.uk

Editor’s Notes:

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.

About the judges for *TakeTen*

* 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.