

PLAYFIGHT

PROGRAMME

CONTENT WARNINGS

Playfight contains strong language, scenes of a sexual nature, scenes of sexual violence, themes of a distressing and potentially triggering nature, haze, loud sound, sub-bass and flashing lights.

We are committed to supporting audiences with resources and aftercare options, including useful organisations in case you are affected by or have direct or indirect experience of any of the play's themes. We are also aware that some audience members would prefer not to have plot elements spoiled by content warnings. For a more detailed list of content warnings & audience support resources, please see the **final page** of this programme. Please note that in discussing the detailed content of the show, this page will contain plot spoilers.



THE TIMES



THE OBSERVER



EDFESTMAG



THE GUARDIAN



TIME OUT



FEST



WHATSONSTAGE



THESTAGE



PLAYFIGHT

Presented by Grace Dickson Productions and Theatre Uncut

Zainab

Nina Cassells

Keira

Sophie Cox

Lucy

Lucy Mangan

Writer

Julia Grogan

Director

Emma Callander

Set & Costume Designer

Hazel Low

Composer & Sound Designer

Roly Botha

Lighting Designer

Kate Bonney

Movement Director & Choreographer

Aline David

Associate Director

Natalie Simone

Production Manager

Liz Barker

Stage Manager

Iona Hicks

Producer

Grace Dickson

Marketing

Cup of Ambition

Press

Borkowski PR

Vocalist

Archee Aitch Wylie

Scenic Artist

Phoebe Tonkin

Playfight was first produced at Paines Plough's Roundabout in Summerhall as part of Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2024, where it received a Summerhall Lustrum Award.

Playfight by Julia Grogan is published by **Concord Theatricals**. You can purchase the playtext after the show, or click [here](#) to order online.

CAST



ZAINAB | NINA CASSELLS (she/her)

Nina graduated from Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 2024, where she was the recipient of the Laurence Olivier Bursary.

Theatre includes: Swive (The Globe, dir. Natalie Abrahami), The Crucible (The Yard, dir. Jay Miller).

Radio includes: Oliver: London to Lagos (BBC Radio 4, dir. Michael Buffong).

Theatre while training includes: Yerma (dir. Sophie Dillon Moniram), The Trojan Women (dir. Patsy Rodenburg), The Seagull (dir. Lyndsey Turner).



KEIRA | SOPHIE COX (she/her)

Sophie trained at Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Her professional theatre credits include: Reykjavik (Hampstead Theatre); Playfight (Roundabout @ Summerhall, Edinburgh)

Theatre whilst training includes: Jane Eyre; Comedy of Errors; Days of Significance (Guildhall).



LUCY | LUCY MANGAN (she/her)

Training: The Royal Central School of Speech & Drama.

Theatre includes: Macbeth (Wessex Grove UK/US Tour); Harry Potter And The Cursed Child (Palace Theatre); Living Newspaper (Royal Court); Queen Margaret (The Royal Exchange); Let The Right One In (National Theatre of Scotland); Danger Brigade (Crybabies Comedy); Trip (Stockwell Playhouse); Before I Was A Bear (CentrE17); Alice In The Cuckoo's Nest (Librarian Theatre); Moonface (Guttersnipe Theatre)

Television includes: The Great, Doctors.

Film includes: The Magic Finger, Disconnected.

Radio includes: The Christchurch Murder, Vampirella, INK 2 minute plays

CREATIVE TEAM

WRITER | JULIA GROGAN (she/her)

Julia is a playwright and screenwriter from the Midlands. Julia's debut play, PLAYFIGHT, won the ETPEP Award 2020, and was shortlisted for the Papatango Award, the Theatre Uncut Award and the Women's Prize for Playwriting. It ran at Summerhall's Roundabout through Edinburgh Fringe 2024 and received rave reviews, including 5 stars in The Guardian and The Times. Julia co-wrote, produced and starred in the play GUNTER, which ran at Edinburgh Fringe 2023. Gunter garnered exceptional reviews, a Fringe First Award, and earned Julia a place on The Stage's list of five break-out theatre makers. Subsequently, the play enjoyed a run at the Royal Court in April 2024. Julia co-wrote and starred in dark historical-comedy BELLY UP which premiered at VAULT Festival 2020 and went onto sell-out, five-star run at The Turbine Theatre in 2021. Belly Up is now in development with the RSC. Julia is currently developing a comedy pilot, PLAYERS, with Hat Trick, and has been in the writers' room for a major new Amazon series.

DIRECTOR | EMMA CALLANDER (she/her)

Emma is the Artistic Director of Theatre Uncut. She trained at the National Theatre of Scotland on the Regional Theatre Young Directors Scheme and went on to be the Associate Director of the Traverse Theatre. Work for Theatre Uncut includes The Merthyr Stigmatist by Lisa Parry and Bubble by Kieran Hurley. She has directed Theatre Uncut shorts at the Young Vic, Traverse Theatre, Bristol Old Vic Theatre, Arches Glasgow and Teatr Grob Copenhagen. Work as Associate Director for the Traverse Theatre includes Cuckooed by Mark Thomas and Crash by Andy Duffy. Her work has won three Fringe Firsts, the Herald Angel, Spirit of the Fringe and the Amnesty International Freedom of Expression Award.

DESIGNER | HAZEL LOW (they/them)

Hazel Low is a performance designer and collaborator across theatre, live art and spatial design. Recent Credits Include: The Glorious French Revolution, New Diorama Theatre. Blubber, Summerhall. Playfight, Roundabout @ Summerhall. The Legend of Ned Ludd, Liverpool Everyman. succession theme is my ringtone, Rose Theatre. Tiger, Omnibus Theatre. Bonfire, Derby Theatre, Sheffield Theatre, Non Such. As We Face The Sun and Pass It On, Bush Theatre. Who Killed My Father, Tron Theatre, Summerhall, and Scottish Tour (co-design with Blythe Brett). Splintered, Soho Theatre. Brilliant Jerks, Southwark Playhouse. Paradise Now, Bush Theatre (as co-costume designer and design associate). I, Joan, Shakespeare's Globe (as design associate). Bogyman, Pleasance Queendome. The Magic Flute, Royal College of Music (co-designed with Rosie Elnile). Trainers, Gate Theatre (as design assistant). Spatial design projects include NDT Broadgate (as Design Associate) and the Royal Court's pop up bar Court in the Square in 2020.

SOUND DESIGNER & COMPOSER | ROLY BOTHA (they/them)

Roly is a composer and sound designer, and is an Associate Artist of The PappyShow.

Theatre includes: Playfight (Soho/Bristol Old Vic/Belgrade/Roundabout), The Jungle Book (Theatre by the Lake), Rift (Immediate Theatre), Gunter (Royal Court), Dear Young Monster (Bristol Old Vic); Hir (Park); Gwyneth Goes Skiing (Pleasance); Truth & Tails (Chichester Festival Theatre); Tambo & Bones (Theatre Royal Stratford East); Shut Up, I'm Dreaming (National Theatre/School's Tour); The Ultimate Pickle, A Sudden Violent Burst of Rain, Half Empty Glasses (Paines Plough); Orlando (Jermyn Street); BOYS (Barbican, Southbank Centre, touring); Coming To England (Birmingham Rep); WILD (Unicorn); Blowhole (Soho); Milk & Gall (Theatre503); Brother (Southwark Playhouse); and Warheads (Park - Olivier Nominated).

LIGHTING DESIGNER | KATE BONNEY (she/her)

Kate designs lighting for a wide variety of live performance and events. Her heart lies in creating work that audiences remember forever alongside telling stories that truly deserve to be told. Recent credits include *The Testament of Gideon Mack* with Dogstar Theatre on tour; *Hercules the Bear* with Tenterhooks on tour and touring again this autumn; *So Young* with the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh playing again this autumn in the Traverse and newly refurbished Citizens Theatre in Glasgow; *Shō and the Demons of the Deep* with Independent Art Projects on tour; *Cyprus Avenue* with the Tron Theatre, Glasgow and *Mimi Store* with Jupiter Artland on Perth High Street. Kate also designs lighting for outdoor events including a number of *My Christmas Trails* with Culture Creative/Sony Music, *The Unfolding* for SLX/Bristol Light Festival in 2024 and once lit up a real live rocket of a photoshoot with Orbex, and aerospace company based in Kate's home town of Forres, Moray.

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR & CHOREOGRAPHER | ALINE DAVID (she/her)

Theatre work includes *Till the Stars Come Down*; *A Taste of Honey*; *Barber Shop Chronicles*; *Romeo and Juliet*; *Emil and the Detectives*; *Antigone*; *The Kitchen*; *Greenland and Our Class* (all National Theatre); *Arabian Nights* (Bristol Old Vic) *The Cord*; *The Arrival* (The Bush Theatre); *Sons of the Prophet* (Hampstead Theatre); *The Brothers Size*; *Dutchman*; *Eurydice*; *Elektra*; *Parallel Macbeth*; *The Invisible Woman* and *Playsize* (all Young Vic); *Wedding Band*; *School Girls Or*, *The African Mean Girls Play* (Lyric Hammersmith); *Dance Nation* and *The House of Bernarda Alba* (both Almeida); *Macbeth* and *The Merchant of Venice* (both RSC); *Gunter*; *Gone Too Far!*; *Wanderlust* (all Royal Court); *The Iphigenia Quartet* and *How to be Another Woman* (both Gate); *First Love is the Revolution*; *FLIP!* (Soho Theatre); *The Crucible*; *Romeo and Juliet*; *A Taste of Honey* and *Alice* (all Sheffield Crucible); *Of Mice and Men* (Birmingham Rep); *Looking for Yogurt* (Birmingham Studio); *Henry VIII*; *Romeo and Juliet*; *Women Beware Women*; *Antony & Cleopatra*; *Much Ado About Nothing*; *Troilus and Cressida* and *Handel and the First Messiah* (all Shakespeare's Globe); *Proof* (Menier Chocolate Factory); *Waiting for Godot* (West Yorkshire Playhouse); *1984*; *Macbeth* and *The Mighty Waltzer* (all Royal Exchange); *A Christmas Carol* (Sherman; Cardiff); *The Owl and the Pussycat* (ROH Olympic Project); *Working* (Royal Academy of Music); *Nothing* (Glyndebourne/Den Jyske Opera) and *Daphne* (La Monnaie; Belgium).

Television work includes: *The Crown S5* and *The Crown S6* (Netflix); *Augustus* (Apple), *The Typist* (Sky Arts).

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR | NATALIE SIMONE (she/her)

Natalie is an interdisciplinary theatre director. She trained as an actor at East 15 and then as a director at The Bristol Old Vic Theatre School.

Directing credits: *The Day I Got the Horn* (Royal & Derngate); *Metamorphoses* (The Egg, Theatre Royal Bath); *Henry V* (Site-specific, Temple Church); *The Ugly One* (The Hope Theatre, nominated for Best Director, Off West End Awards); *The Hunger* (Assembly, Edinburgh Fringe Festival & Greenwich Theatre); *STAG* (Bristol Old Vic).

Natalie has worked as an Associate/Assistant alongside Patrick Marber, Sally Cookson and Josh Seymour. Credits include: *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Sheffield Theatres); *Nachtland* (Young Vic); *What We Talk About When We Talk About Anne Frank* (Marylebone Theatre); *Emilia* (Circomedia); *Let The Right One In* (East 15).

STAGE MANAGER | IONA HICKS (she/her)

Iona graduated Bristol Old Vic Theatre School in July 2024 where she specialised in Stage Management in her final year. Since then, she has worked as Stage Manager On Book for the following productions; *The Long Run* and *Playfight*, both produced by Grace Dickson Productions, showing at Edinburgh Fringe 2024. *The Snowy Day*, produced by Can't Sit Still at Polka Theatre; and *Sam Wilde's Touring show, Boxville*.

While in training she completed a 5 week placement at the Donmar Warehouse as the Stage Management Intern on *Macbeth*, Directed by Max Webster. Credits in training include; Stage Manager, *A Very Expensive Poison* (Circomedia), Deputy Stage Manager, *Jekyll & Hyde* (Tobacco Factory Theatres). Assistant Stage Manager, *This House* (Tobacco Factory Theatres).

PRODUCTION MANAGER | Liz Barker (they/she)

Liz Barker is an established and accomplished Production Manager, Lighting Designer and Theatre Maker based in Liverpool. Alongside Playfight, Liz's recent Production Management credits include: WRESTLELADSWRESTLE by Jenni Jackson; Stuffed by Ugly Bucket; ADHD The Musical by Dora Colquhoun; Deep Blue by Paperwork Theatre. They are the Production Manager for Pleasance Theatre Trust at the Edinburgh Fringe, the Director and Founder of March for the Arts and a Trustee of the disability arts charity, RAWD.

Liz studied Drama at Liverpool John Moores University and Graduated in 2016, 1st Class with the Lynda La Plante Award for Outstanding Contributions to Drama.



GRACE DICKSON PRODUCTIONS

Grace Dickson Productions is a bold new production company, developing and producing formally innovative & bitingly relevant new writing that champions marginalised voices. GDP works collaboratively with artists on professional development as well as producing work that isn't afraid to make a noise and ruffle some feathers. GDP produces theatre that represents the world we live in and the worlds beyond it; work that is imaginative, playful and boundary-breaking.

Credits include: Playfight (Roundabout), Lady Dealer (Roundabout, Bush Theatre) The Long Run (New Diorama, Edinburgh Fringe, UK Tour), SPLINTERED (Soho Theatre), Project Dictator (New Diorama), Move Fast and Break Things (Summerhall, Edinburgh Fringe), BOGEYMAN (Pleasance Edinburgh Fringe), Whodunnit [Unrehearsed] (Park Theatre), Flushed (Park Theatre), and Belly Up (Turbine Theatre).

GDP encompasses the work of Grace Dickson, a Newcastle-born producer with a keen eye for powerful, socially relevant new writing. Grace is the co-founder of HD General Management with Ameena Hamid, who provide bespoke wellbeing-focused GM support to productions and workshops (The Jingleclaw, DIVA: Live From Hell, The Solve it Squad), and is Finance Manager at Runaway Entertainment (2:22 A Ghost Story, Newsies, 101 Dalmatians, A Knight's Tale, The Hunger Games). She is also a trustee of theatre charity ZooCo. Grace's producing work has been supported by a Stage One Bursary for New Producers and an Arts Council DYCP.

Grace was previously Associate Producer at Francesca Moody Productions, where she line produced several shows across scales including Tim Crouch's An Oak Tree internationally, Feeling Afraid As If Something Terrible Is Going to Happen at the Bush Theatre, and the Fringe First winning hits VL and Weather Girl.



THEATRE UNCUT

Theatre Uncut creates bold, progressive, uncompromising political theatre for live and digital audiences across the world. They galvanise action and fuel debate by supporting the world's leading playwrights and extraordinary new voices to create political writing that raises awareness on issues of social injustice. The company makes their work available for anyone to perform anywhere. Over 200,000 people across 26 countries have performed Theatre Uncut plays so far. Theatre Uncut believe that theatre has the power to make positive social change. Theatre Uncut Political Playwriting Award winning plays have been produced at the Young Vic and Royal Court and been nominated for an Olivier Award.

WITH THANKS

Dianne Roberts, Joanna Kennedy, Rutger Bellaerts, Necessity, Bristol Old Vic, Belgrade Coventry, Soho Theatre, Paines Plough, Shoreditch Town Hall, Susan Edwards, Bush Theatre, Harry Elletson, Thread Design, Mihaela Bodlovic, Adam Jefferys, Rory Thomas-Howes, Letty Thomas, Oli Lansley, Royal Court Theatre, Myah Jeffers, Ellie Fulcher, Jane Fallowfield, Wildcard Theatre, Beth Kapila, Papatango, Concord Theatricals, Neil McPherson, Blanche McIntyre, Alec Drysdale, Bryn Chiappe, Hannah Millward, Fanta Barrie, Nadi Kemp-Sayfi, Helen Monks, Robyn Cara, Libby Mai, Rachel Lemon, Lydia Higman, Cheryl Prince, Lauren Dickson, Mark Cartwright, Runaway Entertainment, Cup of Ambition, SM Publicity, Borkowski PR, Hannah Price and the board members of Theatre Uncut.



THE FOLLOWING PAGE CONTAINS DETAILED CONTENT WARNINGS ABOUT THE PRODUCTION AND THEREFORE CONTAINS PLOT SPOILERS.



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ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Playfight contains the following themes, references and occasional detailed descriptions:

Suicide	References to self-harm
Sexual violence	References to homophobia
Coercive relationships	References to animal abuse
Irreverence towards religion	References to spousal & domestic abuse
Scenes of a sexual nature	References to paedophilia
Strong language/swearing	References to parental neglect
Sexually explicit language	References to death and murder
Substance and alcohol abuse	References to religious trauma

WE CAN'T CONSENT TO THIS

This play deals with strong themes regarding consent, coercion and the 'rough sex defence', which has historically been used by men to claim women who were injured or killed in an act of sexual violence consented to their fate.

Throughout the development of this play, we have spoken with charity **We Can't Consent To This**, whose work campaigning against sexual violence was a huge inspiration. If you'd like to learn more about this, and support the campaign to end normalised sexual violence against women, you can click [here](#) to visit their website.

SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

WOMEN AND GIRLS NETWORK

For advice and support, call the free phone line on 0808 801 0660.

A free women-only and survivor-led service offering a holistic response to women and girls who have experienced, or are at risk of, gendered violence. They offer advice, helplines, counselling and therapeutic support, training and consultancy, practical support, sector advocacy and run a centre in West London as part of the national network of independent Rape Crisis organisations.

Click [here](#) to visit their website.

RESPECT MEN'S ADVICE LINE

For advice and support, call the free phone line on 0808 801 0327.

A support service for men experiencing domestic abuse, including a freephone and a live web chat for confidential advice. They have an Information Hub with details of local domestic abuse services, access refuges for male victims and links to specialised support.

Click [here](#) to visit their website.