



A
STRANGER
IN OUR
HOUSE

A NEW PLAY FROM BRADLEY BARLOW

11 - 21 JANUARY 2023
TITCHFIELD FESTIVAL THEATRE

CAST in order of appearance

Kelly Little - Rosanna Sloan

The Reader & The Woman - Nikky Leigh Hickman

Simon Jones - Matt Costen

Phil Hunt - Alec Sleigh

Sammy Freeman - Jenni Scott

John Little - Jonathan Abbott

Faye Little - Poppy Fountain

The Child - Phoebe Burr / James Goring

Leon Armstrong - Mark Allen

CREATIVE

Written and Directed by Bradley Barlow

Stage Manager - Diana Harrison

Set Design and Props - Cath Marsden

Lighting Design - Colin Emmett

Sound Design and Operation - Jo Larner

*Set Construction - Alan James, Neil Brant,
Toby Knight-Davies & Oliver Whitehouse*

Costume - Daniel Vaughan

Lighting Operation - Chris Wynn

*Video Editing, poster and
programme design - Bradley Barlow*

Promotional photography - Ross Underwood

Marketing - Curtis McLennan

CONTENT WARNING

This play contains strong language, scenes of a sexual nature and moments of violence.

It explores themes including transphobia and child abuse - these are not performed on stage but are within the writing and script.

MUSIC

The Winner - Self Esteem

Lux Æterna - Metallica

*All I Want for Christmas is You -
in the style of Chase Holfelder*

Fairytale of New York - The Pogues & Kirsty MacColl

Blue Christmas - Sharon Van Etten

Silent Night - Chase Holfelder

Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas - Suzi Bloom

Shine a Light - Paolo Nutini

Unhappy Birthday - The Smiths

Get You The Moon - Kina feat Snøw

Hotel - Montell Fish

Advanced Ballet Class - John Powell

The 345 (Choose You Edit) - Self Esteem



*Scan the QR code and listen
to the full soundtrack,
including pre-show and
interval songs, on Spotify*



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FIVER HOLS
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PAGE 8 FOR MORE

JUSTICE AT LAST!

Charlie's killers finally behind bars as judge labels them...

FREAKS OF NATURE



By DAVE NOON

CHILD KILLERS Stephen Johnson and Casey Birch were yesterday jailed for the brutal torture and murder of 8-year-old Charlie Marber.

As the judge sentenced the young tearaways to a minimum of 13 years in prison, she described the case as the worst she had presided over in 35 years on the bench.

Lady Justice Mary Winters described Birch, aged 12 at the time of the murder, as the ringleader. But she said that Johnson, also 12, was not without blame and that both were a menace to society.

Innocent little Charlie was found in woodland last summer having been tortured at length - the details of which are too disturbing to print.

Charlie's distraught mum, Carrie Marber, said "13 years for what they did to my Charlie is a slap in the face - they should hang for what they done."

Full story on pages 2 to 7

NOTE FROM THE WRITER/DIRECTOR

I've always been fascinated by what causes moral panic and outrage in society and A Stranger in our House acts as a cautionary tale of sorts, bubbling up in a pressure cooker in a drive to discover someone's true identity.

I was 11 years old when the murder of two-year-old James Bulger hit the headlines, the nation shocked as it was revealed his life was taken by two young boys the same age as me. The media scrutiny was intense, their mugshots plastered on every front page, the vitriol from the general public showing no sign of abating.

As the years passed, the tabloids led the charge in campaigns to outlaw 'video nasties' they held responsible for the murder as well as weeding out the sex offenders in our midsts. In 2000, a Newport-based paediatrician was driven from her home when self-styled vigilantes confused her professional title. Similarly, five families who were wrongly identified as harbouring sex offenders were forced to flee their homes in the Paulsgrove estate in Portsmouth as violence flared. With the rise of social media, so-called paedophile hunters have made a name for themselves by exposing alleged offenders to their legions of followers, unsupported by the police.

The death of a child, especially one so brutal, evokes a primal rage in a lot of people. That anger has never gone away and in the years since his release, photos alleging to be of one of Bulger's killers have made their way on to social media but without any form of verification, potentially ruining an innocent person's life.

Are the actions of vigilantes ever justified? Should we have the right to take the law into our own hands? And what happens when it all goes wrong?

This play doesn't propose to have the answers, but hopefully will get the audience thinking and talking about the consequences of these various actions.

I can't thank the cast and creative team enough for their hard work and dedication to this production, going along with all of my fanciful notions and crazy ideas - I've loved working with you all and hopefully you'll agree that it was all worth it in the end! I'm so proud of you and can't wait for the audience reactions to your brilliant performances!



BRADLEY BARLOW trained at University of Chichester and is the former Artistic Director of Sussex-based Pitchy Breath Theatre Company (2016 – 2020).

Previous writing and directing credits include 143 Seconds (2011), Dead Leaves (2014), The Last Time We Saw You (2017) and Monsters: A Modern Frankenstein Story (2018), all for Pitchy Breath. His debut play The Family (2009) won a NODA Accolade of Excellence and was described by Surrey Mirror as "a gripping portrait of Britain". His most recent play The Legend of Grimm's Tales (2022, Groundlings) was performed by a cast of professional and local performers.

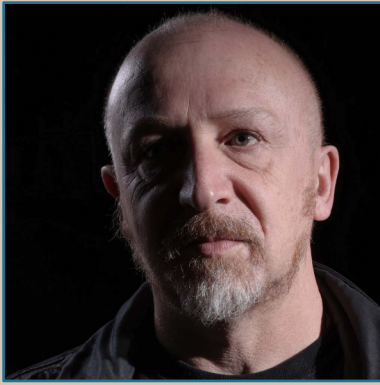
Theatre performance credits include the Cheshire Cat in Wonderland (2021, Groundlings), Macabre (2021, Titchfield Festival Theatre), The Flats (2019, Pitchy Breath), Julius Caesar (2017, Pitchy Breath), Trinculo in The Tempest (2015, Polesden Lacey Shakespeare), Inheritance (2015, Pitchy Breath), Mokita (2011, Pitchy Breath). bradleybarlow.com



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JONATHAN ABBOTT as John Little

In 2015, at the age of 46 and with absolutely no experience of acting, I was persuaded to take part in a local theatre production of Oliver. They were desperate. I was clueless. But I loved it. Soon after, I had a call from a director saying that I'd be perfect for a role in a feature film he was making. My response was "is this a joke?" Whilst on the film set, and for the first time in my life, I realised that I had found something I really wanted to do. It was like being struck by a bolt of lightning.

Since then, I have been fortunate to have worked on TV and films but after all these years it felt right to return to where it all started - the theatre. It's where the real acting lives and I'm absolutely loving it.

I once had a life full of normality. An average job, average pay, average home and a very average existence. In truth, I was bored. Then, I sort of fell into helping out at a local theatre - thanks Ysabel. Struck by lightning, the blinkers fell off and I realised that there was something beyond the mediocrity. I started to dream and embarked on an acting journey. It's a strange world full of strange people but I love it. I still dream but I'm actually in it. I am very lucky.

MARK ALLEN as Leon Armstrong

This is Mark's ninth and briefest appearance with TFT in a very short space of time, having previously appeared in Spamalot, Hairspray, Avenue Q and more recently in A Christmas Carol. The role was only outdoor filming on the coldest night of last year! Remarkably, he remembered his lines! (well sort of...). Enjoy.



PHOEBE BURR as The Child

Phoebe (12) has been part of Titchfield Youth Theatre since 2018 after her previous drama group closed. Phoebe has been cast in many Youth Theatre shows but her favourite was Frank Stein 2024, a contemporary writing of the classic Frankenstein, where she played a creepy humanoid twin (think The Shining). Being part of the youth theatre has given Phoebe opportunities within Titchfield Festival Theatre, where Phoebe has been in musical productions such as The Wizard of Oz and children's theatre as Thing 2 in The Cat in the Hat.

Outside of the theatre, Phoebe can usually be found in a swimming pool - she is a competitive swimmer with Gosport Dolphins swim club and is currently training hard for the next competition season starting in January.

Phoebe is very excited to be part of this production of A Stranger in our House - working with an amazing cast she has been given an opportunity to expand her acting skills while performing her favourite type of role. Phoebe hopes to be cast in more wonderful plays coming to Titchfield this year.



MATT COSTEN as Simon Jones

This is Matt's second performance with Titchfield Festival Theatre after playing Orlando in As You Like It. He has previously acted in several pantomimes, played Chris Keller in All My Sons and George in Blackadder Goes Forth with Chameleons Theatre Company in Chandlers Ford. When not acting, Matt works as an accountant, enjoys travelling and escape rooms, entering Tough Mudders, and spending too much money on his cats, Pepsi and Max.



POPPY FOUNTAIN as Faye Little

Prior to joining us in October 2021, Poppy studied at Performing Arts Studio Scotland, in Edinburgh. In her short time with us she has performed with TFT in a number of shows, most recently the hilarious La Cage Aux Folles and Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus. Outside of acting she enjoys other creative hobbies, including embroidery and disappointing her parents (both in and out of the show) by adding to her evergrowing tattoo collection. She is very much excited to portray such a complex character like Faye and hopes that she can bring the many sides of Faye to life on stage.



NIKKY LEIGH HICKMAN as *The Reader & The Woman*

Nikky is pleased to be taking part in her second TFT production after performing in Oliver! earlier last year. Nikky studied Acting at University of Wales Trinity Saint David and has since been a part of several theatre troupes. Her experience includes touring a devised piece around the RHS Gardens, pantos around schools, and performing at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2019. Nikky works for the NHS and enjoys making a difference in her day to day world but the stage is most definitely her happy place! Hope you enjoy the show!



JAMES HOUNSLOW as *The Child*

James has been in chorus for Collabro, he's been a lost boy in Peter Pan, and he's played two parts in the tragedy of Macbeth. He's also appeared in Joseph and the Technicolour Dreamcoat, mini pantos and was Portsmouth Music Festival winners. James loves to spend time playing with his friends, when he's not busy with the Theatre. James is Home Educated and enjoys the balance and time it allows him to follow his passions.

James is playing one of his best parts to date, because he loves playing horror and children don't often get to do this, so he is super excited and thanks the Director for this opportunity.



JENNI SCOTT as *Sammy Freeman*

This is Jenni's third appearance with TFT. Her previous roles include the Spirit of Christmas Yet to Come and Scrooge's sister Fan in A Christmas Carol (2022), and Lady Helena, Lord Howard and Eve in Emilia (2022). In addition to her involvement with TFT, Jenni performs regularly as lead singer for local band, Cahoots. Although Jenni has had enormous fun being very silly at times during rehearsals, she describes A Stranger in our House as an important play. She is proud to be the first Sammy and hopes she will not be the last.

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ALEC SLEIGH as Phil Hunt

As an actor, Alec trained at the Identity School of Acting. His first role was the lead in a production of Simon Stephens' Birdland at the 2017 Edinburgh Fringe. Other roles include productions of Miss Julie, At the Mountains of Madness, Hamlet, and Much Ado About Nothing.

A Stranger in our House is Alec's third production with TFT, after Poe's The Macabre Tales, and As You Like It. He has also appeared in the horror films Devil in the Woods, and Harvest of the Dead: Halloween Night; and portrayed serial killer David Berkowitz for Sky Crime's World's Most Evil Killers. Most recently, he also produced and starred in a movie adaptation of Prometheus Bound in collaboration with actors from the US over lockdown.



ROSANNA SLOAN as Kelly Little

Rosanna trained at Rose Bruford College of Speech and Drama on the European Theatre Arts course and graduated with a specialism in devised theatre and puppetry. After graduating she toured internationally, winning 'Outstanding Contribution to Drama' at the Istropolitana Arts Festival in Bratislava with a graduate theatre group. In 2015, she founded Unexpected Places, a local performing arts charity dedicated to increasing awareness of and encouraging involvement in theatre, particularly children and young people through their youth theatre, Light UP, and has been the Artistic Director ever since. She is also the Co-Director of Steppin' UP, a body positive hip-hop and street dance company for children and adults.

"A Stranger in our House is my first performance at TFT, and I have had the best time rehearsing it with this incredible cast and crew. I am so delighted to be involved in the premiere of this tense and engaging new play."

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