

10 September 2019

CAST ANNOUNCED FOR JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

It may only be September, but pantomime season is just around the corner at Oldham Coliseum Theatre. The theatre has lined up a talented cast of familiar faces for this year's famous festive spectacular, ***Jack and the Beanstalk***, who will be putting the extra sparkle into Christmas in Oldham.

Announced earlier this year, pantomime favourite **Richard J Fletcher** will be making his first outing as Pantomime Dame on the Coliseum stage after 11 years as Oldham's beloved high-flying, heel-kicking Pantomime Comic.

Richard commented: "*Being an Oldhamer, the Coliseum panto was a big part of my childhood, I couldn't imagine spending Christmas anywhere else. It's an honour to be asked to play the Dame*"

Richard is praised year on year for his boundless energy and skilful enticement of audience participation, both on and off stage. At 2018's cast visit to Dr Kershaw's Hospice in nearby Royton he had patients and staff in fits of laughter as they shouted out his catchphrase from *Cinderella*.

With Richard stepping into the extravagant wardrobe of the Dame the theatre is thrilled to announce that **Sam Glen** will be playing the Pantomime Comic in ***Jack and the Beanstalk***, the titular role of Jack. Sam will be familiar to Coliseum audiences from his previous role as Billy in the theatre's hit production of *The Kitchen Sink*. Recently returned from a hit run of *Letter to Boddah* at Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Sam is also a previous member of Oldham Theatre Workshop and appeared on BBC1's Take That musical audition programme, *Let it Shine* with Gary Barlow.

Last year's Cinderella **Shorelle Hepkin** returns to play Jill marking her third Christmas season at the Coliseum. Alongside her pantomime prowess, Shorelle may be familiar to audiences as Kay Lawrence in CBBC's BAFTA nominated teen drama *Wolf Blood*, in which she appeared in all four seasons.

Mitesh Soni returns to the Coliseum for his second pantomime season following his performance as Baron Boothby Mothwallow in *Cinderella*. Mitesh has recently completed a season performing in *Twelfth Night*, *Henry V* and *The Borrowers* as Grosvenor Park Open Air Theatre in Chester. In ***Jack and the Beanstalk*** he will be playing perhaps the most famous pantomime character of all time, the Pantomime Cow.

Previously seen at the Coliseum in a heart-rendering performance as Abbie Williams in the Northern Soul Award-nominated musical *Bread & Roses*, **Sophie Merzell** will be playing Grotton. Sophie's other theatre credits include *The Ugly Duckling: Christmas Special* at Hull Truck Theatre and *Let Me Play The Lion Too* at Barbican, London.

Another familiar face from hit Coliseum musicals, **Jenny Platt** returns to the Coliseum this Christmas to play Mavis Moorside and Good Fairy Greenfield. Jenny played leading lady Mandi in the Coliseum's musical ode to Oldham Athletic, *Meat Pie, Sausage Roll*, in Spring 2017. Soap fans will also recognise her from her previous role as a barmaid in the Rovers Return, as she played Violet Wilson in *Coronation Street* from 2004 - 2008.

Last seen at the Coliseum in 2010's production of *Sleeping Beauty* **Patrick Bridgman** returns to Oldham to play Jill's father, Lord Thickpenny Grabbmuch. Patrick appeared in five Coliseum pantomimes between 2006 – 2010. His recent theatre credits include *Oliver Twist* at Hull Truck Theatre and *Hymn to Love* at Theatre by the Lake, Keswick.

Oldham Coliseum Theatre's nationally renowned pantomime has been putting the extra sparkle into the festive season for generations; with all the ingredients for fantastic family fun: hit songs, silliness, a sprinkling of fairy dust and a generous helping of It's Behind You! With two fairies, a magic hen, a GIANT and a pantomime cow, ***Jack and the Beanstalk*** is the perfect Christmas treat for kids and not-so-grown-up grown-ups.

Jack and the Beanstalk runs at Oldham Coliseum Theatre from Saturday 16 November 2019 – Saturday 11 January 2020. This year's pantomime is sponsored by George Hill Timber and Building Supplies, Jigsaw Group and N Brown Group. ***Jack and the Beanstalk***'s Educational Partner is Oldham Hulme Grammar School.

- Ends -----

Notes to Editor:

Jack and the Beanstalk runs from Saturday 16 November 2019 – Saturday 11 January 2020 at Oldham Coliseum Theatre.

Tickets can be booked on 0161 624 2829 or at www.coliseum.org.uk

Link to production page: <http://www.coliseum.org.uk/plays/jack-and-the-beanstalk-2/>

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For further press information, please contact Shelly Ramsdale on 0161 785 7012 or shellyramsdale@coliseum.org.uk

Oldham Coliseum Theatre is a cultural and educational charity that works with over 150,000 individuals per year.

The Coliseum has a rich history in Greater Manchester dating back to 1885. It provides a wide variety of distinctive theatre performances and participatory activities for people from all communities in Oldham, Greater Manchester and beyond. It creates original productions each year which are presented at the Coliseum and on tour. Intrinsic to the town's on-going regeneration, the theatre works with its local communities and young people to develop creative programmes to facilitate learning, engagement and community cohesion.

www.coliseum.org.uk

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Cast:



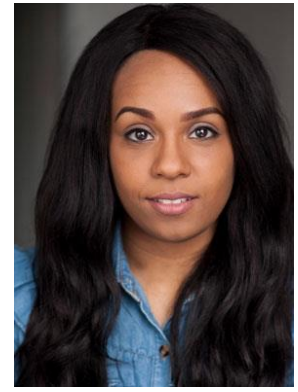
Patrick Bridgman
- Lord Thickpenny
Grabbmuch



Richard J Fletcher
- Dame Dotty Trott



Sam Glen
- Jack Trott



Shorelle Hepkin
- Jill Grabbmuch



Sophie Mercell
- Grotton



Jenny Platt
- Mavis Moorside /
Good Fairy Greenfield



Mitesh Soni
- Giant Moorside /
Hazy the Hippy Cow

Production Team:

Writers: **Fine Time Fontayne and Chris Lawson**

Director: **Chris Lawson**

Designer: **Celia Perkins**

Musical Director: **Dave Bintley**

Choreographer: **Beverley Edmunds**

Lighting Designer: **Douglas Kuhrt**

Sound Designer: **Gerry Marsden**

Fight Director: **Kaitlin Howard**

DSM On the Book: **Caroline Bowen**