



**HEY PRESTO  
INFORMATION PACK**

**NEW WRITING NORTH TOURING CHILDREN'S  
PRODUCTION 2016**

## **PRODUCTION INFORMATION – ABOUT THE BOOK**

### **HEY PRESTO**

**by Nadia Shireen**

Presto the Cat and Monty the Dog may live in an alleyway and eat out of rubbish bins, but at least they always have plenty of fun together - Monty is good at eating ice-cream and pulling silly faces, and Presto has a special talent for performing magic tricks.

When the carnival comes to town, Monty has the brilliant idea of putting on a magic show together that will make the friends rich and famous. Sure enough, the show is a great success, but although Presto makes all the tricks work, it's Monty who hogs the limelight. Soon, his new-found fame begins to go to his head, whilst Presto is left to run his errands and bring his chocolate ice-cream with extra sprinkles. What will happen to their friendship now?

Nadia Shireen's lively picture book is sure to bring a smile to children's faces. With delightful illustrations and something of the same quirky humour that characterised her acclaimed *Good Little Wolf*, this is a fun and engaging story about friendships and working together.

Children will love exploring all the colourful spreads of the carnival, featuring all kinds of unexpected circus animals from Alice the Bearded Duck to Nancy the Amazing Fire-Eating Lizard, not to mention a snoozing ice-cream seller and a bison selling balloons.

Publisher: Jonathan Cape

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## **TOUR INFORMATION**

This year the tour will run from Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September through to Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2016, including weekends and October half term.

Performance times will be chosen by the venue in the first instance and will then be programmed in to the tour schedule keeping as close to the venues preferences as possible.

In previous years we have largely run performances at 10.00am for the morning shows and 2.00pm for the afternoon shows. We've had significant feedback from audiences attending our previous productions who have asked for more after school and weekend performances. These are available, so if you would like to programme a later session at your venue or a performance over the weekend, please let us know.

As you'll know, building a family audience in local venues is a key objective for New Writing North, so we have made as many timeslots available outside school hours as possible to help build on this family engagement.

## **PERFORMANCE (S) - LOGISITICS**

### **ARRIVAL – Production team**

4 performers and 4 production staff will arrive 1-2 hours, depending on access, prior to the commencement of the performance to set up and prepare. Please ensure that the venue/space and associated toilets are unlocked.

After the performance, it will take approximately 1 hour to take down the set so please allow for this time when booking performance spaces at your venue.

### **PERFORMING SPACE LAYOUT**

A minimum area of 7m x 7m will be needed. The show will be performed in a performance area of approximately 4.5m x 4.5m. Children will sit on the floor in front of the performance area and we suggest providing seating for adults towards the back.

### **REFRESHMENTS**

Could we request that tea/coffee and water are made available on arrival for performers and production staff if at all possible? Thank you.

### **ARRIVAL - Audience**

On the day, please could venue representatives collect tickets and ensure that the audience know where to go and where to sit. Venue representatives will be responsible for audience safety in their venues, including adhering to fire regulations.

### **PERFORMANCE DURATION**

50 minutes

### **TICKETING**

Each venue is responsible for selling tickets to the performance at their venue. New Writing North can provide the tickets if necessary. If you would like us to produce tickets for you, please make this known as soon as possible.

### **EVALUATION**

When audience members book a ticket, please collect their postcode. This is really important for New Writing North as this information allows us to report back on the audiences reached by our shows. We appreciate this is not always possible, but we ask that you collect this information where possible.

## CONTEXT AND EVALUATION

*Hey Presto* is produced by New Writing North for Durham Book Festival 2016. It will tour to venues across County Durham, Tyne and Wear, Northumberland and in Yorkshire and the North West; this will include library spaces, community centres and partnering book festivals. The aim is to make a range of quality arts experience available in areas with little arts provision and build audiences within those communities. It is important that we evaluate the impact of this work on your communities so we will be undertaking evaluation in each of the venues we visits, talking to audiences and staff.

We also have some funding to support engagement work of other arts programming outside of the show. If you would like to talk to us about that, please contact [sarah@newwritingnorth.com](mailto:sarah@newwritingnorth.com)

## THE TOUR

Following our initial funding from Arts Council's Strategic Touring Fund to produce *My Granny is a Pirate* in 2013 and *The Worst Princess* in 2014, last year we were successful in securing another 3 years worth of funding from the same fund to continue to develop a touring circuit across the north of England, that will see quality performance work for under 7s and their families produced by New Writing North. The first year of funding supported our production of *Man on the Moon* last Autumn and will support this year's production in 2016 with the final production touring in 2017.

## CRITICAL ACCLAIM FOR MAN ON THE MOON 2015

Our production of *Man on the Moon* by *Simon Bartram* was a huge success last year, reaching over 4300 people across 49 performances in 41 venues across the north of England.

"New Writing North has raised the bar again this year with its annual children's production that's touring the North-East until November." *Helen Brown - The Northern Echo*

"Throw in some music, songs, a joke telling session, a dance routine and a cross-stage cartwheel or two, and it's a cracker of a day out based on the first of the Bob tales." *Fiona Thompson - Sunderland Echo*

"This play with music is ingeniously devised for under-sevens and their families and designed to fit into community centres, libraries, village halls and corner spaces where children's theatre companies rarely pitch their tents. Ruth Johnson's production conveys the essential barminess of Bob's world. But it doesn't come across as educational, more a celebration of storytelling, role-play and dressing up, as well as presenting young minds with a gentle introduction to the shared let's pretend mystery of live play-acting"  
*Roger Foss - The Stage*