

## CHOL THEATRE LAUNCHES THE EXTRAORDINARY POD AT HALIFAX FESTIVAL

**Chol Theatre** invites the public to step into its **Extraordinary Pod** as part of **Halifax Festival** on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> August.

The **Extraordinary Pod** features two larger than life characters who will spin a wheel of fortune and take each audience member on a short dramatic journey depending on what fate throws up. The action takes place in a huge, specially designed inflatable dome, topped by random body appendages. You can't fail to notice the pod when it lands on Saturday in the courtyard of Halifax's Piece Hall. Performances, which are free to attend, take place at various times between 10am and 4pm. The inflatable pod has been designed by Jamima Latimer, of Space Cadets in Todmorden and costume and set has been designed by Moira Beniot

Extraordinary pod is part of **imove**, which celebrates and challenges the relationship between people and their moving bodies through a series of exciting and innovative arts projects across Yorkshire. Inspired by London 2012, **imove** is funded by Legacy Trust UK, Yorkshire Forward and Arts Council England.

The **Extraordinary Pod** will tour to public venues such as parks, urban squares, shopping malls, schools and museums throughout Yorkshire in the run up to 2012.

Director **Andrew Loretto** says, *"Following the success of our touring Edwardian tea party in 2009, I'm delighted to be taking Chol theatre out on the streets once again to give audiences a unique and surprising interactive performance experience."*

The team of actors working on the **Extraordinary Pod** are: **Dean Ramsden**, whose TV credits include Tracey Beaker and Emmerdale. Dean has previously worked with Chol on **Space Circus**. **Kiruna Stamell**, an Australian actress who has played leading roles in Baz Luhrmanns' Moulin Rouge and Eastenders. **Gerald Fox**, an accomplished actor, writer and workshop facilitator based in Hull. Gerald has performed at Glyndebourne Opera House and played the lead role of Mr. Webb to great acclaim in Chol Theatre's **Not for all the Tea in China**.

ENDS

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## Editors Notes

*imove* is Yorkshire's signature arts and culture programme for ensuring a legacy from London 2012. The programme blurs the boundaries between art and sport through surprising partnerships across arts, culture, physical activity and learning. It aspires to the very highest of standards and aims to leave a legacy of increased participation in culture, sport and volunteering throughout the region. Find out about all *imove*'s projects at [www.imoveand.com](http://www.imoveand.com)

*imove* is primarily funded by Legacy Trust UK, an independent charity whose mission is to support a wide range of innovative cultural and sporting activities which celebrate the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and which will leave a lasting legacy in communities throughout the United Kingdom.

Legacy Trust UK is funded by a £40 million endowment from the Big Lottery Fund (£29m), Department for Culture Media and Sport (£6m) and Arts Council England (£5m).

Visit [www.legacytrustuk.org](http://www.legacytrustuk.org) for further information.

**Chol Theatre** makes public performances and events using many different art forms. Chol performances often happen in surprising locations. Chol is a leader in making theatre that is both professional and open to people to take part in. Chol creates exciting work that is new, modern and accessible. The company's production of *Space Circus* was shortlisted for **Theatre Centre's Brian Way Award 2009** and the show *Beast Market* was nominated and subsequently shortlisted for an **Arts Council England and Huddersfield Examiner Community Arts Award 2008**

**Andrew Loretto (Director)** - Originally from Belfast, Andrew has been co-director of Chol Theatre since 2006. He was previously Artistic Director of Theatre in the Mill, Bradford and the National Student Drama Festival, Scarborough. Andrew co-runs Chol Theatre with Susan Burns and directs most of the performance work. The Extraordinary Pod is Andrew's last production for Chol Theatre before he takes up a new role in the autumn as Creative Producer for Sheffield Theatres.

**Kiruna Stamell (Actor)** - Originally from Australia, Kiruna Stamell moved to England to complete her training at LAMDA. Kiruna was subsequently employed for her acting and dance skills and worked extensively in the UK, Europe and back in her native Oz. TV kicked off with her arrival on Albert Square (the first ever short statured actress on the soap) as Sandra Fielding. All The Small Things was next up - a BBC drama with Sarah Lancashire about 2 rival choirs in a quiet, rural Northern village. Meanwhile, the award winning Jack Thorne wrote the part of Carrie for his darkly comic masterpiece 'Cast Offs' around Kiruna. This was first screened in Nov/Dec 2009 on channel 4 and blew the lid on many preconceptions about living with a disability.

**Gerald Fox (Actor)** - Gerald Fox is an actor, writer, and workshop facilitator based in Hull. He's appeared in Shakespeare, pantomime and opera plying roles as diverse as Macbeth, Wilbur the pig,

Dame Trott, a gnome, and a pencil(a very wooden performance!) He especially enjoys devising new theatre and taking it to unusual places. Gerald has performed at Glyndebourne Opera House, every shape and size of village hall, museums, school gyms, a MacDonald's restaurant, a 1950s bus, and a trolley park at Asda.

**Dean Ramsden (Actor)** - Dean Ramsden is now settled in West Yorkshire, where he trained at Bretton Hall College. Since graduation Dean has taken on many roles in various areas of performance. TV credits include Tracey Beaker Returns for BBC Television, and Emmerdale for Yorkshire Television.

Theatre credits include 'If Only The Lonely Were Home' for York Theatre Royal/Tutti Fritti productions, 'Darwin's Worms' for Bent Architect, 'The Winged State' for No Limits Theatre Company, 'City of Stories' for Moveable Feast Productions, and 'Space Circus' for Chol Theatre.

## **ENDS**

## **CONTACT**

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