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FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

Summer Season

April to July 2012

Vicky Graham Productions in association with Arch 468 and Neil McPherson for the Finborough Theatre
present

The World Premiere

THE SLUTS OF SUTTON DRIVE

by Joshua Conkel

Directed by Rebecca Atkinson-Lord

Designed by James Turner. Lighting by Tom Cooper. Sound by Edward Lewis.

Cast: Georgia Buchanan. Kelly Burke. James Hillier. Eric Kofi Abrefa. Matt Steinberg.

"Would you ever want to sit with me in the dark? Just sit with the lights out, barely even touching, maybe not touching at all, and just listen to me breathe?"

As part of the multi-award-winning Finborough Theatre's Summer Season, acclaimed US playwright Joshua Conkel makes his UK debut with the world premiere of the darkly comic *The Sluts of Sutton Drive*, opening at the Finborough Theatre for a strictly limited run of six Sunday and Monday performances from Sunday, 24 June 2012 (**Press Night: Monday, 25 June 2012 at 7.30pm**).

Everybody wants a piece of Stephanie Schwartz. Her son's demanding nuggets, her boyfriend wants her to wax and her best friend's taking her to a stripping class. Now there's a rapist on Sutton Drive, an obscene caller invading her home and a portal to hell beneath her sofa. How far must she go to make it all stop? And how far is too far?

A heart-breaking, taboo-busting black comedy by "the most important queer playwright of his generation" (Doric Wilson, the Co-Founder of Off-Off-Broadway's very first theatre, Caffé Cino).

Playwright **Joshua Conkel** is a playwright and blogger from rural Washington State. He is the author of *MilkMilkLemonade*, *The Chalk Boy*, *Lonesome Winter* (co-written with Megan Hill), *I Wanna Destroy You* and *Sprawl* as well as numerous short plays. *MilkMilkLemonade* was named Best Off-Broadway Show of 2009 by NY Press, and is consistently one of Playscripts' top three most-produced plays. It has become a cult hit in the USA, recently receiving its 25th production in only two years. In 2011, Joshua was nominated one of NEXT Magazine's "Who's Next". His work has been developed by The Management, Soho Rep, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Old Vic New Voices, Dixon Place, The Flea and more. He is a member of The Management, where he served as Artistic Director for six years, and of Ensemble Studio Theatre, The Soho Rep Writers/Directors Lab, Sons of Tennessee, and The Dramatists Guild. He is currently finishing a graphic novel adaptation of *The Chalk Boy* for First Second Books, an imprint of Macmillan, and editing his first short film, *Power Lunch*. He is an alumnus of Youngblood and the TS Eliot Old Vic New Voices US/UK Exchange. He holds a BFA in Theater from Cornish College of the Arts and lives in Brooklyn, New York. *The Sluts of Sutton Drive* is his UK debut.

Director **Rebecca Atkinson-Lord** is a theatre maker who directs, writes, devises and produces theatre and performance. Rebecca read Ancient History and Classics at Bristol University, specialising in ancient Greek drama. She trained as a Director at RADA and with Frantic Assembly, Complicite, Told by an Idiot and at The Young Vic. Her work has taken her from major international companies like Shakespeare's Globe, Scottish Opera and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, to intimate found spaces in London and beyond. As a writer-director, her credits include *Seeking Oblivion* (BAC Scratch), *Mrs Edna Way* (Arch 468) and an original adaptation of *Medea* (Barons Court Theatre). Direction includes *Mother Clap's Molly House* and *The Flies* (Crescent Theatre, Birmingham, for BSA), *Romeo and Juliet* (Teatro Technis), *Five Eleven* (King's Head Theatre and Tour) and numerous new plays by emerging writers including Janice Okoh, Chad Armistead and Louise Monaghan at venues including Arch468 and Theatre503. She is Director of Theatre at Ovalhouse and Founding Artistic Director and Chief Executive of Arch 468.

Designer James Turner previously designed *All Good Men* and *Thermidor* for the Finborough Theatre. James is resident designer at The Last Refuge and trained on the Motley Theatre Design Course. Theatre includes *Mercury Fur* (Old Red Lion and Trafalgar Studios), *Execution of Justice* (Southwark Playhouse), *Oh What a Lovely War* and *Much Ado About Nothing* (British American Drama Academy), *Thrill Me - The Leopold and Loeb Story* (Tristan Bates and Charing Cross Theatre), *Plain Jane* (Royal Exchange Studio, Manchester) *That Moment* (Underbelly, Edinburgh), *Some Stories* (Templeworks, Leeds), *Over the Moon* (New Wimbledon Studio), *No Wonder* (Library Theatre, Manchester) and *A Man of No Importance* (Union Theatre and Arts Theatre, Leicester Square).

The cast includes:

Georgia Buchanan trained at East 15 Acting School and Syracuse University. London theatre includes *Execution of Justice* (Southwark Playhouse) and *Enter A Gentleman* (National Portrait Gallery). US theatre includes *Lysistrata*, *The Tamer Tamed* (Shakespeare Santa Cruz), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Ensemble Studio Theater), *such small hands* (Syracuse Stage), *Love Letters*, *Translations*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Keegan Theatre). Roles in training included lead roles in *The Rose Tattoo*, *Woyzeck*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *A Dream Play* (Soho Theatre), *And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little* (Tristan Bates Theatre) and *Airswimming*. Film includes *Mindset* and *The Hard Place*.

Kelly Burke trained at RADA. Previous work at the Finborough includes *Blue Surge* (2011), *Green*, as part of *Vibrant – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights* (2009) and *In World*, as part of *Vibrant – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights* (2011). Other theatre includes *Zelda* for which she received an OffWestEnd Award nomination for Best Female Performer (New End Theatre), *Avocado* (King's Head Theatre), *Marie and Bruce* (Wallace Shawn Festival at the Royal Court Theatre), *Inherit the Wind* (Bug Theatre, Denver) and *Agnes of God* (Federal Theatre, Denver). Television includes *Doctors*. Radio includes *The Big Sleep*, *The Little Sister*, *These Are the Times* (BBC Radio 4).

James Hillier trained at RADA. At the Finborough Theatre, James appeared in the leading role in the sell-out UK premiere of Tennessee Williams' *Something Cloudy, Something Clear*, directed by Tamara Harvey (2003), and Che Walker's sell-out production of Rebecca Gilman's *Blue Surge* (2011) for which he was nominated for an Off West End Award for Best Male Performance. Other theatre includes *Titanic (Scenes from the British Wreck Commissioner's Inquiry, 1912)* by Owen McAfferty (MAC, Belfast), *The Land Of Uz* by Neil LaBute as part of *66 Books* (Bush Theatre), *The Water Engine* (Old Vic Tunnels), *The Recruiting Officer* (Lichfield Garrick Theatre), *Journey's End* (Drill Hall), *Trips* (Birmingham Rep), *Le Bourgeois Gentlehomme* (Gatehouse), *Lulu* (Almeida Theatre), *The Homecoming* (Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester), *Closer* (Royal and Derngate Theatres, Northampton) and *A Clockwork Orange* (Citizens Theatre, Glasgow). Television and Film includes *City on Fire*, *Casualty*, *Holby Blue*, *Great Expectations*, *Survivors*, *The Four Feathers*, *Blackbeard*, *Fired* and *Silent Witness*.

Eric Kofi Abrefa's theatre includes *Clybourne Park*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Harper Regan*, *Philistines*, *The Cherry Orchard* (all at Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama), *Khadij is 18* (Angle Theatre at Hackney Empire), *Sexy Buffing* (Metal Mouth Theatre) and *Richard III* (BBC Shakespeare Festival). Television includes *Tati's Hotel*, *The Bill*, *Holby City* and *Psychic Roadshow*. Film includes *Tight Jeans*.

Matt Steinberg trained at HB Studio, New York, and with the Shakespeare's Globe International Actors' Fellowship, London. London theatre includes *A Respectable Wedding* (Waterloo East Theatre). Canadian Theatre includes *Bartholomew Fair*, *Julius Caesar*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Richard III*, *The Provok'd Wife* (Stratford Festival), *Art is a Cupboard* (Sweat Company, Toronto), *The Goat* (Neptune Theatre, Halifax), *Waiting* (Soulpepper Theatre Company, Toronto). New York City theatre includes *Richard III*, *Volpone*, *Arden of Faversham* (Classic Stage Company), *Donna Morelli* (Ensemble Studio Theater), *Loud* (Threshold Theater Company), *Have You Met My Brother?*, *King John* (Doppelganger), *King Lear*, *Coriolanus* and *Timon of Athens* (York Shakespeare Company). Film and Television includes *The Best Years*, *True Confessions of A Hollywood Starlet*, *Degrassi: The Next Generation*, *The Green Door*, *Trojan Horse*, *Holy Cannoli* and *Dirty Work*. Awards include the Tyrone Guthrie Award (Stratford Festival) and the Christopher Plummer Award (Shakespeare's Globe Centre, Canada).

Producer **Vicky Graham** is an independent producer specialising in new writing in the US and the UK. She has seven years' experience of producing on the fringe and at festivals in London, Edinburgh, Paris, Avignon, and Off-Broadway in New York. As the first in-house Producer at Theatre503, she produced seven in-house productions (*Wild Horses* by Nimer Rashed, *Epic* by Matt Hartley, *Breed* by Lou Ramsden, *The Charming Man* by Gabriel Bisset-Smith, *The Biting Point* by Sharon Clark, *Sold* by Suzie Miller and *Carrot* by Ben Ockrent), as well as countless co-productions and events. She has also worked as Associate Producer for Pip Productions, Joint Artistic Director of Gilt & Grime and as a freelance producer and administrator. In 2011, Vicky was selected to participate in the Old Vic New Voices T.S. Eliot US/UK

Exchange, and subsequently spent three months working in New York at Jean Doumanian Productions at NYMF (New York Musical Theatre Festival) and line producing Off-Broadway at the Duke on 42nd Street. Vicky is a recipient of the Stage One Bursary for New Producers. *The Sluts of Sutton Drive* is her first production under the banner of Vicky Graham Productions. Forthcoming projects include *Strong Arm* (Old Vic New Voices Edinburgh Season).

The Press on playwright Joshua Conkel

"Proof of how desperately comedy needs audacity" *Time Out New York* on *MilkMilkLemonade*

"Theatrical gold" *New York Press* on *MilkMilkLemonade*

"Conkel and director Isaac Butler are unafraid to go for the belly: They want you laughing, nauseated or both. It's proof of how desperately comedy needs audacity" **** *Time Out New York* on *MilkMilkLemonade*

"Dark, compassionate satire...filled with appalling but true-to-life observations" *Backstage (Editor's Pick)* on *Chalk Boy*

The Press on director Rebecca Atkinson-Lord

"A superb, energy-filled production" ***** Five Stars – *Birmingham Post* on *Mother Clap's Molly House*

"Using her own unobtrusively contemporary-sounding adaptation of the text, director Rebecca Atkinson Lord sensitively balances the mythic and the personal in this small-scale production of Euripides' tragedy. The strengths of the production lie in its realistic and recognisable characterisations, which bring the tragic tale into the realm of the familiar without reducing its horrors..." *The Stage* on *Medea*

"Atkinson-Lord's direction is admirably subtle and sophisticated" *WhatsOnStage* on *Candlesticks*

PRESS NIGHT: MONDAY, 25 JUNE 2012 AT 7.30PM

PHOTOCALL: BY ARRANGEMENT. PLEASE EMAIL admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk

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Box Office 0844 847 1652. www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk

Sundays and Mondays, 24, 25 June, 1, 2, 8 and 9 July 2012

Sunday and Monday evenings at 7.30pm.

Matinees on Monday 2 July and Monday 9 July at 2pm.

Tickets £14, £10 concessions.

For more information, interviews and images, please contact

Neil McPherson (Finborough Theatre) on e-mail admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk or **07977 173135** or

Vicky Graham (Producer) on e-mail vicky.graham@me.com or **07841 904 757**

Download press releases and images at <http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk/press-resources.php>

Notes for Editors:

1. Stage One

Vicky Graham and Vicky Graham Productions are supported by the Stage One Bursary for New Producers. For more information please visit www.stageoneuk.com

2. Arch 468

Arch 468 aims to celebrate new theatre and the headstrong courage of young artists and provide a hub where emerging artists can meet to develop their work, challenge themselves and find bold new audiences. Since opening in 2008, Arch 468 has provided more than £80,000 worth of free development time, space and resources to emerging theatre makers and continues to be a key venue supporting the burgeoning new-theatre scene.