

# FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

VIBRANT NEW WRITING | UNIQUE REDISCOVERIES

October 2019-January 2020 season

The European premiere

# CHEMISTRY

by Jacob Marx Rice.

Directed and Designed by Alex Howarth.

Lighting and Video Design by Rachel Sampley.

Presented by Sloshed Theatre in association with Neil McPherson for the Finborough Theatre.

Cast: Caoimhe Farren. James Mear.

*"It doesn't feel like a disease, it feels like... falling in love. Your heart races, and your skin tingles. It's perfect. At first."*

In a production commissioned by the Finborough Theatre, the acclaimed multi award-winning American play by Jacob Marx Rice, ***Chemistry*** opens at the Finborough Theatre in its European Premiere for a four-week limited season on Tuesday, 29 October 2019 (**Press Nights: Thursday, 31 October and Friday, 1 November 2019 at 7.30pm**).

Steph struggles with chronic depression. Jamie just overachieved himself off the deep end. When they meet in their psychiatrist's office, sparks fly and they stumble unexpectedly into a beautiful relationship. But how do you trust someone else when you are already in a battle with your own brain?

Last year, 70.9 million prescriptions for antidepressants were dispensed in England alone, while, in the United States, an estimated 15.5 million Americans have taken antidepressant medication for at least five years and over. With dark humour, a beautiful soundtrack and captivating visuals, *Chemistry* is an intimate, frank and uncompromising examination of the chemicals we take and how they impact our ability to love.

*Chemistry* has been produced at Hollywood Fringe Festival, Cincinnati Fringe Festival, New York International Fringe Festival, Actors Theatre of Louisville and the Alchemical Theatre Laboratory, and now receives its European premiere at the multi-award-winning Finborough Theatre.

Playwright **Jacob Marx Rice's** work has been produced and developed at the Flea Theater, Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center, the New Ohio Theatre, Atlantic Theatre Stage 2, and others. His play series *The Suicidal Comedies* – consisting of *Chemistry*, *Coping*, and *Cracks* – has been produced around the United States, and has won the Kennedy Center's Jean Kennedy Smith Playwriting Award, the Excellence in Playwriting Award and FringeFAVE at the NY Fringe Festival, Producer's Pick at the Cincinnati Fringe Festival, and Producer's Encore Pick at the Hollywood Fringe. Jacob is a 2017 Playwright Observer at the Eugene O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, a member of The Shelter, and studied at New York University on their MFA for Dramatic Writing.

**Alex Howarth's** production of *We Live By the Sea* opened the Brits Off Broadway season at 59E59 Theatres in New York 2018, where it was Critic's Pick in The New York Times. It was nominated for a Fringe First and OffWestEnd Awards for Best Ensemble and Best Production, ran at the SoHo Playhouse Off-Broadway, and won Best Theatre, Critics' Choice, and Peace Foundation Awards and was in the Top Six Shows To See in *The Guardian* during two seasons at Adelaide Festival. He regularly leads research and development periods for new writing and adapted and directed the world stage premiere of *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*, working alongside the film's writer, Oscar nominee Peter Hedges. He regularly directs at drama schools including Mountview, Associated Studios, and University of Cumbria. Recent work includes *Misterman* (New Wimbledon Theatre, and Brockley Jack Theatre), *Oh! You Pretty Things* (Southwark Playhouse), *Back to Blackbrick* (Arts Theatre), *Two Sides* (Arcola Theatre) *The Red Light* (Union Theatre), and *Junk* (Old Red Lion Theatre). He is the Artistic Director of Patch of Blue, who create devised theatre pieces with live music for festivals and touring. As a writer, his work has toured the UK to great acclaim – most recently, award winning feminist gig play *Sirens* which was performed in a combination of English and British Sign Language. He has worked extensively with people with disabilities, having created performances with deafblind adults for the charity Sense. Forthcoming productions include Assistant Direction on *La Traviata* at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, in January 2020.

118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED Telephone 020 7244 7439 e-mail [admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk](mailto:admin@finboroughtheatre.co.uk)  
[www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk](http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk) Artistic Director Neil McPherson

The cast is:

**Caoimhe Farren** plays Steph. She trained at the Academy of Live and Recorded Arts. Theatre includes *The Ferryman* (Gielgud Theatre), *V.E.* (King's Head Theatre), *Outsiders*, *Clickbait* (The Bunker), *Confidence/Supply*, *Carnivores* and *Girls and Dolls* (Southwark Playhouse), *EleXion* (Theatre503), *Growth* (Old Red Lion Theatre), *The Commissioners* (Company of Angels), *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Ireland tour), *Scenes from an Inquiry* and *Snow White: The Remix* (The Playhouse, Derry), *Woman of Troy*, *Government Inspector*, *Coram Boy*, *Philistines*, *Twelfth Night*, *Blood Wedding* and *All's Well That Ends Well* (ALRA). Television includes *Derry Girls* and *Doctors*.

**James Mear** plays Jamie. He trained at Rose Bruford College and the Oxford School of Drama. Theatre includes *Pardoned* (The Other Palace), *Romeo and Juliet* (Stockwell Playhouse), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Brockley Jack Theatre, and Garden Shakespeare), *Dates and Measures* (Churchill Theatre), and *Troilus and Cressida* (To The Elephant). Theatre whilst in training includes *City of Angels*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Blue Stockings*, *Waiting For Godot* and *The Beggar's Opera*.

### The press on *Chemistry*

"Brilliant! A dark and twisted ride down the beautifully winding road that is love." *Discover Hollywood Magazine*

"Real, poignant, and funny. Sharply written banter and well-delivered one-liners allow us to access the tragedy unfolding before us." *Chelsea Now*

"A darkly comic and often painfully realistic portrait... The most convincing depictions of a journey to suicide I have ever encountered." *Stage Happenings*

"Must see! Playwright Jacob Marx Rice's smart, funny, sad script packs a lot into an hour." *River City News*

### The press on director Alex Howarth's production of *We Live By the Sea* in New York and International Tour

"Director Alex Howarth does wonders...coming up with a tight imaginative staging." Critic's Pick, *The New York Times*  
Best Theatre of 2016 *The New York Times*

"Playful, funny, and deeply moving." ★★★★★ *Top Shows to See at Adelaide Festival, The Guardian*

"Alex Howarth's production is so light and tight." ★★★★★ Natasha Tripney, *The Stage*

"It's rare for theatre to connect in such a way... something very raw and beautiful." ★★★★★ *British Theatre Guide*

"Every once in a while a piece of theatre comes along which makes me remember why I have always loved the power of theatre... *We Live by the Sea* does just that." *Adelaide Theatre Guide*

"Built with such skill by director Alex Howarth." ★★★★★ The Scotsman

"Modestly masterful storytelling." ★★★★★ *A Younger Theatre*

### PRESS NIGHTS: THURSDAY, 31 OCTOBER and FRIDAY, 1 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 7.30PM

### PHOTOCALL: TUESDAY, 29 OCTOBER 2019 AT 1.00PM-1.30PM

Finborough Theatre, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED

Book online at [www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk](http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk)

No booking fees on online, personal or postal bookings

Box Office 01223 357851. (Calls are free. There will be a 5% booking fee.) Lines are open Monday– Saturday 10.00am– 6.00pm

### Tuesday, 29 October – Saturday, 23 November 2019

Tuesday to Saturday evenings at 7.30pm. Saturday and Sunday matinees at 3.00pm.

**Prices until 10 November 2019** – Tickets £18, £16 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £16 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £18 all seats. Previews (29 and 30 October) £14 all seats.

£10 tickets for Under 30s for performances from Tuesday to Sunday of the first week when booked online only.

£14 tickets for residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea on Saturday, 2 November when booked online only.

**Prices from 12 November** – Tickets £20, £18 concessions, except Tuesday evenings £18 all seats, and Friday and Saturday evenings £20 all seats.

Performance Length: Approximately 85 minutes with no interval.

For more information, interviews and images, please contact

**Livvy Perrett** on e-mail [press@finboroughtheatre.co.uk](mailto:press@finboroughtheatre.co.uk) or **07889 794858**

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# Press Information

**FINBOROUGH | THEATRE**

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

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