

PRESS RELEASE Thursday 24 November 2022

ROYAL COURT THEATRE ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP WITH SISTER

The Royal Court Theatre today announces a three-year partnership with SISTER, the independent studio and entertainment providers behind content such as the multi-award winning *Chernobyl*, *Landscapers* and *This is Going to Hurt*. The partnership acknowledges the interconnectedness of UK TV and theatre, and has been formed to discover, nurture and commission exciting new and emerging voices in theatre.

Across the three-year relationship, which began in May 2022, SISTER and The Royal Court will run writer's workshops to generate new plays, which will be developed by and produced at the Royal Court, with support from SISTER. The partnership aligns with the Royal Court's ethos of creating space for playwrights, both new and established, to tell authentic, original and distinctive stories and further sharpens SISTER'S mission to support and invest in visionary storytellers.

Baghdaddy by Jasmine Naziha Jones, which has its Press Night tonight, Thursday 24 November, is the first play to be developed as part of this relationship. *Graceland* by Ava Wong Davies, which runs 09 February - 11 March, will be the second.

Jane Featherstone Co-Founder and CCO SISTER:

'We are incredibly fortunate in the UK television and film industry to be able to turn to theatre as a rich source of brilliant writing talent. And it's imperative that we continue to support new plays and new voices, particularly at this time. This partnership with the Royal Court is born out of shared creative values and the desire to make a genuine commitment to support the best new writing theatre talent there is. Sister is incredibly proud to be working with the Royal Court, and we are thrilled to see Jasmine Naziha Jones' Baghdaddy, the first production from our partnership, come to life.'

Erica Campayne, Interim Executive Director, Royal Court Theatre:

'We are so thrilled to be embarking on this three-year partnership with SISTER. It is deeply heartening, especially in these increasingly challenging times for subsidised theatre, that SISTER truly recognises that it is at the beating heart of creativity and writing in this country. Our shared belief that the voice of the writer must be nurtured, encouraged and given a space to reach its potential is at the centre of this partnership.'

Without support like this we would be unable to continue to develop writers with the confidence and fearlessness which is so necessary. Baghdaddy by Jasmine Naziha Jones and Graceland by Ava Wong Davies which follows at the start of next year mark the beginning of the public part of this relationship and are both precious extraordinary pieces of writing.'

Baghdaddy is written by Jasmine Naziha Jones and directed by Milli Bhatia. It runs at the Royal Court Jerwood Theatre Downstairs until Saturday 17 December 2022. The cast includes: Philip Arditti, Souad Faress, Jasmine Naziha Jones, Hayat Kamille and Noof Ousellam. It is designed by Moi Tran, with lighting design by Jessica Hung Han Yun, sound

design by Elena Peña, movement direction by Adi Gortler, and assistant direction by Melina Namdar. The fight direction is by RC-Annie and the dialect & voice coach is Edda Sharpe.

Baghdaddy is a playfully devastating coming-of-age story. Told through clowning and memory, it explores the complexities of cultural identity, generational trauma and a father-daughter relationship amidst global conflict.

Graceland by Ava Wong Davies is directed by Anna Himali Howard. Ava Wong Davies' Royal Court debut explores a relationship.

She meets him at an old friend's barbecue, ketchup dribbling down her chin, face ruddy from too much beer. He stands away from everyone else, beautiful and aloof. Their stories couldn't be more different, but they flirt, and then they fall in love.

Everything is perfect, until it isn't. Or maybe it never was.

Founded by Jane Featherstone, Elisabeth Murdoch and Stacey Snider, SISTER is an independent, modern studio, uniting a team of renowned creatives to make breakout stories, across all forms of media. As well as producing hit shows, including *Chernobyl* (Sky/HBO), *Gangs of London* (SKY/ AMC) *Landscapers* (SKY/ HBO) and *This is Going to Hurt* (BBC/ AMC), SISTER has invested in new creator-led businesses including Zando, an ambitious new publishing venture from Molly Stern, Campside Media, a podcast studio, AWA Studios, a comic book and digital media publisher, and a partnership with iconic London venue KOKO, which has been transformed into a new global music platform.

Baghdaddy has been generously supported by a lead gift from Charles Holloway.

ENDS

For *Baghdaddy* images see [here](#) and for *Graceland* see [here](#).

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BIOGRAPHIES:

Baghdaddy

Jasmine Naziha Jones (Writer)

Jasmine Naziha Jones was part of a Royal Court Introduction to Playwriting Group.

This is Jasmine's first play.

As actor, theatre includes: **Buggy Baby (Yard); The Art of Success (Rose, Kingston); Memory of Water (Nottingham Playhouse); Gaslight (Watford Palace); Sense**

(Southwark); The Phantom Seahorse (Soho); Philippa and Will Are Now In a Relationship (New Diorama).

As actor, television includes: **Casualty, To Be Continued, Call the Midwife, Doctors, Turn Up Charlie, Flatmates.**

As actor, film includes: **Raging Grace (AMC).**

As actor, radio includes: **over 30 radio dramas for BBC Radio, including Baghdad Burning, The Talking Mongoose, Moominland Midwinter, Girls of Riyadh and The White Hotel.**

Jasmine co-wrote comedy musical 'The Sisters' which premiered at Latitude festival and played Leicester Sq Theatre and Hen & Chickens.

Milli Bhatia (Director)

As director, for the Royal Court: **Maryland, seven methods of killing kylie jenner, Living Newspaper, My White Best Friend (and Other Letters Left Unsaid), This Liquid Earth: A Eulogy in Verse [Edinburgh International Festival], Half Full (& RWCMD), Dismantle This Room.**

As assistant director, for the Royal Court: **Inside Bitch (& Clean Break), Poet in da Corner, One For Sorrow, Instructions for Correct Assembly, Girls & Boys.**

As director, other theatre includes: **Chasing Hares (Young Vic); seven methods of killing kylie jenner (Riksteatern); Dismantle This Room, The Hijabi Monologues (Bush); My White Best Friend (and Other Letters Left Unsaid) (Bunker); I'm Tired Of Waiting, Someone Pass Me The Duct Tape, (Stratford East).**

As director, film includes: **seven methods of killing kylie jenner, Living Newspaper (Royal Court); HOME(BODY) or The Tall Story (Young Vic); Tiny Dancers (NYT); Yash Gill's Power Half Hour.**

As director, radio includes: **Ghosts In The Blood (Audible).**

Cast:

Philip Arditti

For the Royal Court: **Who Cares.**

Other theatre includes: **Copenhagen (Theatre Royal Bath); Henry IV, Henry V, Henry VI and Richard III - Ensemble '19 (Globe); Oslo, Salome, As You Like It, The Holy Rosenbergs, Blood and Gifts, England People Very Nice (National); The Hunting Lodge, Fourth Wise Man (Unicorn); Henry V (Regent's Park); Catch 22 (Northern Stage); Facts (Finborough); 66 Books (Bush); Light Shining in Buckinghamshire, Silver Birch House (Arcola); Rope (Almeida).**

Television includes: **No Return, Domina, Sanctuary, L'Ispettore Coliandro, Chimerica, Black Earth Rising, Patrick Melrose, Kiss Me First, The State, The White Princess, Spotless, Ripper Street, The Honourable Woman, The Vatican, Game of Thrones, Strike Back 4, Davinci's Demons, Borgia, Son, New Tricks, Twenty Twelve, Accused, Five Days, Father & Son, 10 Days to War, House of Saddam.**

Film includes: **The Last Planet, Anchor and Hope, The Danish Girl, Inferno, Hyena, Exodus, Monsters: Dark Continent, Red II, Singing Women, Born of War, Interview with a Hitman, Women and Children, Happy-Go-Lucky.**

Radio includes: **The Voyage of the St Louis, Miriam and Youssef, Fall of the Shah, Censoring an Iranian Love Story, Castle of the Hawk, Arabian Nights, The Bethlehem**

Murders, Love is Not New in this Country, The Bastard of Istanbul, The Great Charter, Gorsky/Book at Bedtime, Farran at Bay, Reluctant Spy, Book of the Week.

Souad Faress

For the Royal Court: **Goats, Indian Plays – Mahua, Great Celestial Cow (& Joint Stock), A Curse.**

Other theatre includes: **Lotus Beauty, Tiger Country, Sugar and Snow (Hampstead); Welcome to Iran (& National), The Village (Theatre Royal Stratford East); The Wisdom Club (Theatre Royal); Winter Hill (Octagon, Bolton); Chilcot (LUNG); Hurried Steps (New Shoes); White Privilege (Yard); The House of Bernada (Almeida); Small Miracle (Mercury); Trojan Trilogy (Theatre of Dionysus); The Permanent Way (Out of Joint); Celestina (Birmingham Rep); Homebody/Kabul (Cheek by Jowl/Young Vic).**

Television includes: **Better, The Other Half, His Dark Materials, Signora Volpe, Landscapes, Anatomy of a Scandal, Sandman, We Are Lady Parts, Back to Life, Doctors, Porters, The Spy, Apple Tree House, Brief Encounters, Game of Thrones, Berlin Station, Holby City, Hollyoaks, Cabbage & Patch, Vera, Making of a Lady, Utopia, Morton/Nemesis, Casualty, Sarah Jane Adventures, Law & Order, Silent Witness, My Spy Family, The Bill, Tripping Over, Bodies II, Family Affairs, My Hero, No Angels, Bremner Bird and Fortune, Noah, Being April, Strange.**

Film includes: **A House in Jerusalem, Dune, Cruella, Made in Italy, Christopher Robin, Bridget Jones' Baby, Sixth Happiness, Bhaji on the Beach, My Beautiful Laundrette, Such a Long Journey, Who's Who.**

Radio includes: **The System, Welcome to Iran, The Archers, The Complete Earthsea, Welcome to Zaatari, Phonophone, The Brick, The Insider, Ambridge Extra, Deportation Room.**

Jasmine Naziha Jones

Biography as above, under 'Writer'.

Hayat Kamille

Theatre includes: **Othello (English Touring Theatre/Dubai Opera); Waiting for Summer (Swivel Theatre).**

Television includes: **Vikings: Valhalla, Ransom, Tyrant.**

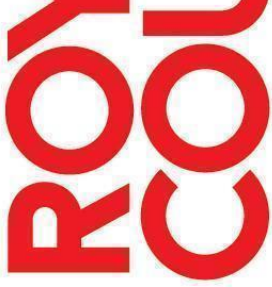
Film includes: **Death on the Nile, Mosul, Murder on the Orient Express, Letters from Baghdad.**

Noof Ousellam

Theatre includes: **Leopoldstadt (Sonia Friedman); Buggy Baby (Yard); Wildefire (Hampstead); Richard III (Cockpit/Custom Practice); A Midsummer Night's Dream (Almeida); Respect (Birmingham Rep); Rendition Monologues (Sheffield Crucible).**

Television includes: **Andor, Guilt, The Cure, Trust Me, Hanna, Love, Lies and Records, Vera, Meet the Jury, Holby City, River City, Taggart.**

Film includes: **Entebbe, Teen Spirit, The Mummy, Leave to Remain, The Conversations, Extraordinary Rendition.**



Radio includes: **The Tempest, Dan Dare, 1001 Arabian Nights, The Road to Bani Walid, The Boy From Aleppo Who Painted the War.**

Graceland

Ava Wong Davies (Writer)

Theatre includes: **Half Blue (Audible/LAMDA); Rime of the Second Sister (45North); i will still be whole (when you rip me in half) (Bunker).**

Anna Himali Howard

As director: **Orpheus (Opera North, upcoming); Kabul Goes Pop (Brixton House); I Stand for What I Stand On (Strike a Light/GYCA); Inside (Orange Tree); I Wanna Be Yours (Bush/UK tour); A Small Place, Albatross (Gate); BE Next Young Company (European Theatre Festival/ Birmingham Rep), Yours Sincerely (Vaults Festival/Soho Theatre).**

As assistant/associate director: **Small Island (National); Fleabag (International tour/Soho Theatre); Othello (Sam Wanamaker Playhouse); Paines Plough's Roundabout Season (Roundabout).**

As theatremaker: **Jane Anger (Yard Theatre Live Drafts); mahabharat/a (Camden People's Theatre); The Beanfield (Breach Theatre, Edinburgh Fringe, New Diorama & UK tour).**

LISTINGS INFORMATION

Baghdaddy

Jerwood Theatre Downstairs

Until Saturday 17 December

Monday – Saturday 7.30pm

Thursday & Saturday matinees 2.30pm

Captioned Performances Wednesday 07 December 2022 at 7.30pm, Thursday 15 December 2022 at 2.30pm

Relaxed Environment Performance Saturday 10 December 2022, 2.30pm

Audio Described Matinee Saturday 17 December 2022, 2.30pm and Touch Tour at 1pm

Press Performance Thursday 24 November 2022, 7pm

Post-show talk Tuesday 29 November 2022

Standard Tickets £10 - £49

Concessions*

First Look Tickets**

Under 27s***

Access £17.50 (plus a companion at the same rate)

*ID required. All discounts subject to availability

Graceland

Jerwood Theatre Upstairs



Thursday 09 February 2023 - Saturday 11 March 2023

Monday – Saturday 7.45pm

Thursday & Saturday matinees 3pm from Saturday 18 February 2023

Press Performance Wednesday 15 February 2023 (7pm)

Captioned performance Friday 03, Friday 10 March 2023

Relaxed Environment Saturday 11 March 2023 (3pm)

Standard Tickets £12-£25

Tickets: Ways to Save

Concessions* - available for previews and matinees. Limited to Band A – B in the Jerwood Theatre Downstairs. Concessions are available for Over 65s, Students, recipients of Jobseekers Allowance, and members of Equity, BECTU, Stage Directors UK or the Writers' Guild of Great Britain.

First Look Tickets** - as most of the plays we stage at the Royal Court have never been seen before, the first few performances in front of an audience are the final part of a long creative process that starts with the playwright. Our First Look Performances, which are sold at a reduced price, are an integral part of the process. If you book tickets for a First Look Performance (usually the first three previews of a new play), you'll be asked for your feedback which is then shared with the artistic team during the preview period, potentially influencing the final piece.

Under 27s Tickets*** – We have extended our Under 26s ticket offer to Under 27s due to a year of missed discounts during the Covid-19 pandemic. We offer a limited number of £12 tickets for all performances in the Jerwood Theatre Downstairs. Available on Band B tickets, subject to availability.

Mondays – all tickets £12. Available on the day of the performance from 9am online. A limited number are available, in advance, subject to availability, to Friends and Supporters.

Standing Tickets – A limited number of 10p standing places go on sale one hour before each Jerwood Theatre Downstairs performance. The places are production-dependent and may not always be available so please check in advance.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Partner:

The logo for ROU, featuring the letters 'R', 'O', and 'U' in a bold, red, sans-serif font. The 'O' is positioned between the 'R' and 'U', and the letters are slightly offset to create a dynamic, stacked appearance.The logo for SISTER, featuring the letters 'S', 'I', 'S', 'T', 'E', and 'R' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letters are stacked in two rows: 'S', 'I', 'S' on top and 'T', 'E', 'R' on the bottom.The logo for SISTER, featuring the letters 'S', 'I', 'S', 'T', 'E', and 'R' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letters are stacked in two rows: 'S', 'I', 'S' on top and 'T', 'E', 'R' on the bottom.

SISTER was co-founded by Elisabeth Murdoch, Stacey Snider and Jane Featherstone to develop, produce and invest in visionary creators. SISTER builds upon Featherstone's Emmy and BAFTA Award-winning scripted indie, Sister Pictures, an independent, modern studio with offices in London and LA. It unites the expertise of the founders, alongside a team of renowned creatives, to make breakout stories across all forms of media. As well as producing hit shows, including *This is Going to Hurt* (BBC One/AMC), *The Baby* (Sky/HBO), *Landscapers* (SKY/ HBO) *Gangs of London* (SKY/ AMC) and *Chernobyl* (Sky/HBO),

SISTER is in production on *Good Grief*, a romantic comedy film from multi-Emmy award-winning *Schitt's Creek* creator and writer Dan Levy for Netflix, the adaptation of literary phenomenon *The Power* for Amazon Studios, Charlie Covell's *Kaos* for Netflix, *The Following* *Events are Based on a Pack of Lies* and *Better*, both for BBC One.

The company is also in development on a number of projects and adaptations, including the untitled Bee Gees biopic with Graham King and Paramount, Abi Morgan's *Eric* for Netflix, Tobias Lindholm's 9/11 responders drama, *The Best of Us* starring Jeremy Strong, Iain Reid and Jason Schwartzman's adaptation of *Apples* for Prime Video, the adaptation of Alania Urqhurt's New York Times bestseller, *The Butcher and the Wren*, *Raya* - an adaptation of a sweeping historical fiction about Iranian Princess Soraya Esfandiary – Bakhtiari with Krasnoff/ Foster Entertainment. SISTER has also secured the rights to international bestseller *Deacon King Kong* by celebrated author James McBride, James Tynion's and artist Martin Simmonds' *Department of Truth* the critically acclaimed Lydia Millet novel, *A Children's Bible*. SISTER has also secured the rights to a series of podcasts including Ellen Barry's *The Jungle Prince*, directed by Mira Nair for Amazon, Helena Merriman's *Tunnel 29* and *West Cork*, the meticulous investigation by Jennifer Forde and Sam Bungey into the unsolved murder of Sophie Toscan du Plantier.

SISTER has made a series of bold investments in new creator-led businesses including Zando, an ambitious new publishing venture from Molly Stern, Campside Media, a podcast studio, AWA Studios, a comic book and digital media publisher, award-winning documentary production company Dorothy Street Pictures, and a partnership with iconic London music venue KOKO. To learn more about SISTER and its work, visit www.sister.net

The logo for ALT, featuring the letters 'A', 'L', and 'T' in a bold, red, sans-serif font. The letters are stacked in two rows: 'A', 'L' on top and 'T' on the bottom.