

Supported by



*AMPLIFY *SEASONS: WINTER PROGRAMME

Friday 23 January 2026

**NOTTINGHAM
PLAYHOUSE**

Welcome

SEASONS is an endeavor in providing regular opportunities for some of the best Midlands artists to showcase their works at Nottingham Playhouse. SEASONS is about celebrating, year-round, the talent and voices within the Midlands and giving you, the audience, the opportunity to feed into the creative process and see works grow over time.

If this is the first time you've come to our Neville Studio, welcome. We programme work here year-round. We also produce a Christmas show for 3-8 year olds and their families, directed by a Midlands director – we've just finished *The Little Mermaid*.

The rest of the year we programme visiting work against three strands – family work, work of national significance and Midlands artists' work. So, SEASONS is not your only chance to support local work. Do check out the upcoming programme for other exciting shows.

This WINTER evening, we've got some dark and brooding stories for you – a double bill of works in progress and a headline show from the fabulous Polis Loizou. These works may be the first time they've ever been performed in front of an audience – so please approach this evening with open minds – this is a space to try things out, get things wrong, and participate in the creative process – in which you play a vital role.

WINTER has been programmed through an open callout for submissions, and by a panel of members of Nottingham Playhouse's creative community led by our Associate Artist, Benjamin Wilson and our Associate Literary Artist, Laura Turner.

SEASONS is the brainchild of Beccy D'Souza, our Artist Development Producer, who is dedicated to providing sustainable and valuable support for artists across the Midlands region. The biggest thanks of the evening goes to Beccy for the work that goes into crafting opportunities with longevity at their heart.

Thank you to Ben & Laura and the programming volunteers: Tracey Blythe, Chris Sims, Paul Caulfield, Devin Tupper, Adam Iqbal, Heather Angelini and James Morgan for the time and care contributed to the selection process.

Thanks to the artists presenting work tonight: Esther Warren, Jeanette Bird-Bradley and Polis Loizou – for making work, and bringing it to us; and Max, our BSL Interpreter for making work accessible for deaf audiences.

And finally thanks also to the Fenton Arts Trust and the Noel Coward Foundation, who have supported SEASONS financially in its first year.

You'll see feedback stations around and about the venue tonight – please do use them. Getting work up in front of audiences provides an invaluable opportunity for artists to develop – it shapes the work, helps with funding bids, and builds confidence for artists. So please do pick up a pen and pop your thoughts down.

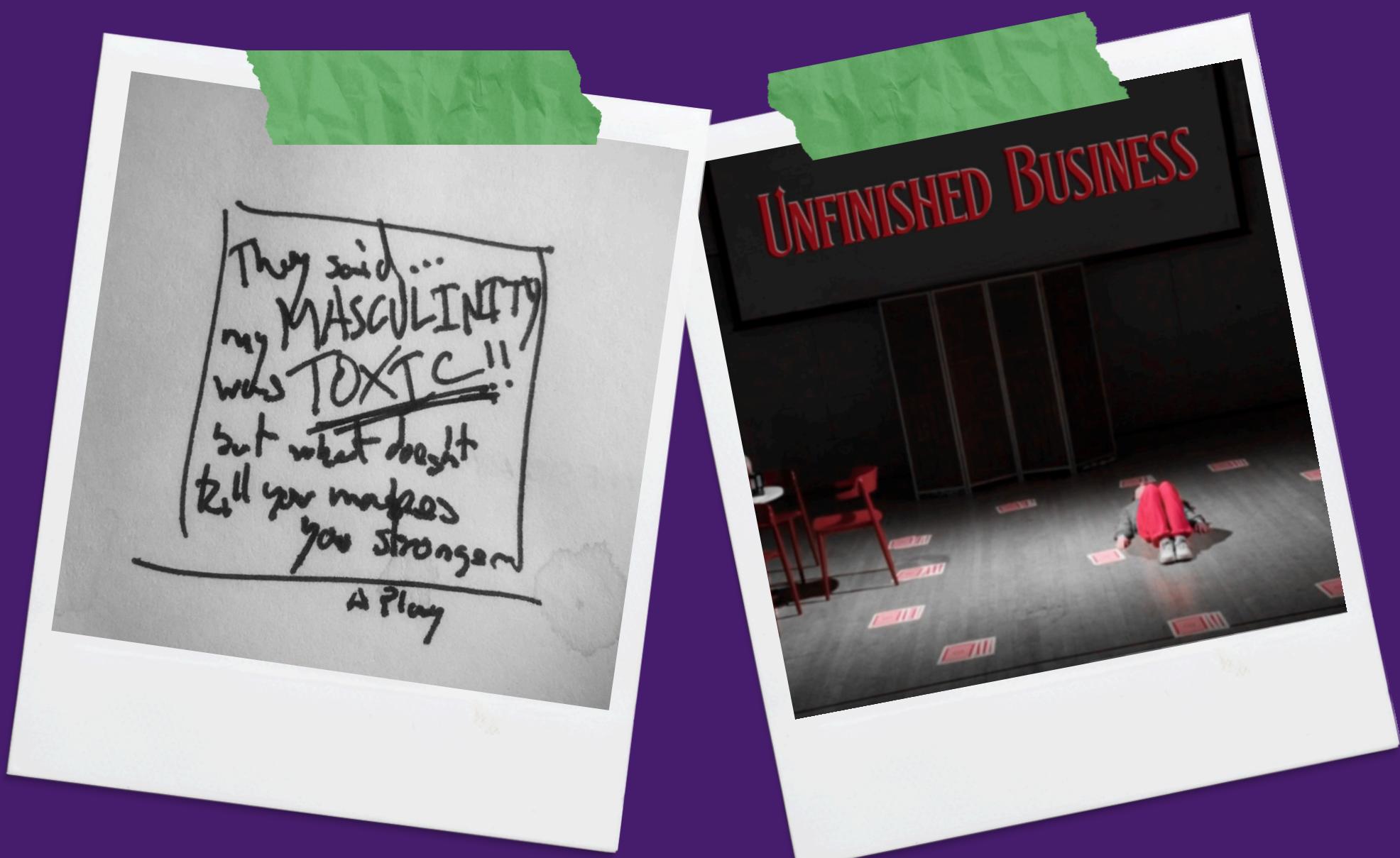
We hope you have a brilliant night.

Eden Peppercorn
Interim Artist Development Support

CONVERSATIONS IN THE DARK

A Work-In- Progress Double Bill

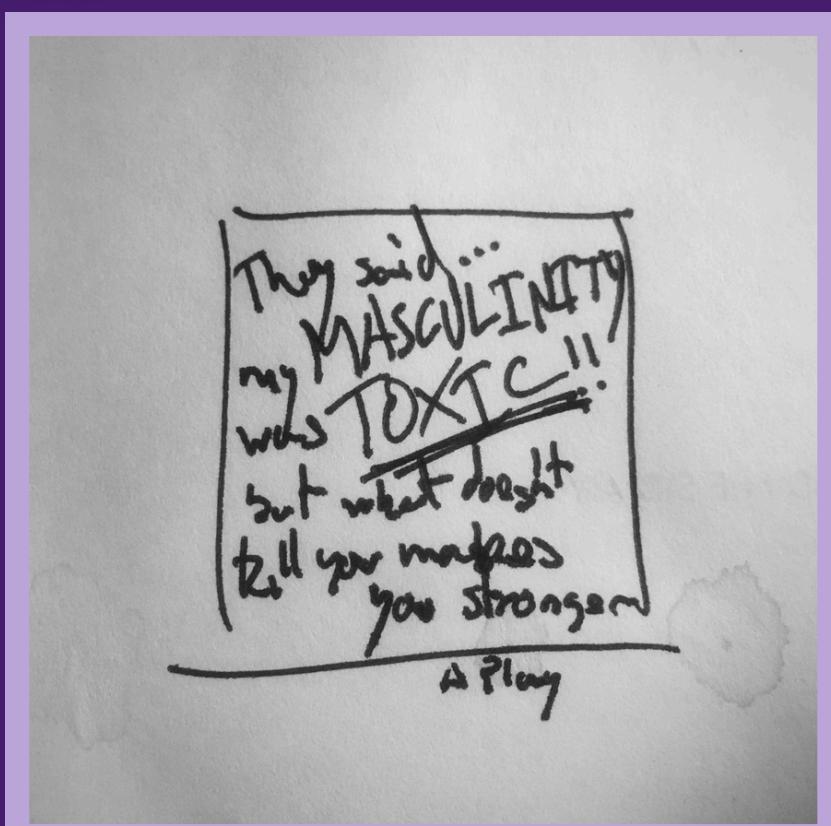
Start Time
6.45pm



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They Said My Masculinity Was Toxic, But What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Stronger

by Esther Warren



This work-in-progress performance shows the first of two stand-alone scenes that will make up the finished text, which will examine two romantic liaisons in the life of Michael. It is performed by East Midlands based actors Laurie Owen and Ken Ogborn.

Evening, May, 1994.

The year's Criminal Justice and Public Order Act has yet to be passed; this encounter is illegal. Let's watch anyway.

Taking cues from the works of Arthur J Bressan Jr., Armistead Maupin, Dennis Cooper, Torrey Peters and Christine Love, this new play is a tender look at intimacy, the fear of being seen for who you are and the lengths that we might go to feel close to anyone.

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About Ester Warren

Esther Warren is a Nottingham based, early-career, theatre creative. She has acted, directed and worked as lighting designer for Nottingham's Lace Market Theatre, with extensive credits prior among Bristol's Fringe theatre scene. Her credits and details of her work can be found at her website A Grand Quiet. Once completed, this will be her first play.

Unfinished Business

Written and Performed by
Jeanette Bird-Bradley



Unfinished Business is currently in development. With this being its second live sharing, you'll see a selection of autobiographical scenes that explore the relationship between invisible disability, paranormal experience and the perceptions around both. It is supported with funding from Arts Council England.

Jeanette has always been preoccupied by Ghosts, it's the way she was raised, from childhood ghost hunts, to spooky imaginative games played with her brother, the paranormal has always been a backdrop to her life. Little did she know that in her adulthood she would be haunted by something a lot more real- multiple sclerosis, a life altering condition. Unfinished Business is a comedic Ghost story about what it's like living with a chronic illness. Join Jeanette as she hunts the ghosts that haunt her, in this honest but playful performance.

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About Jeanette Bird-Bradley

Jeanette Bird-Bradley is a Nominee of new Act of the year award by Nottingham Comedy Festival. She is a regular performer with Improv groups Rhymes against Humanity & Miss Imp, and has written several short plays that have been performed at Cultural Exchanges & Curve Theatre.

You Oughta Be In Pictures

by Polis Loizou



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You Oughta Be In Pictures

by Polis Loizou

"Keep your pretty head, son, or you'll lose it."

Hollywood, the 1940s. A charismatic film director auditions a young actor for a horror film whose lead has died under mysterious circumstances. As he shares tales of exploitation, broken promises, sex, cults, and the fine line between artifice and truth, it transpires there may be a more malevolent eye than that of the camera in the room. But the horrors on screen were never real – were they?

Award-winning theatre-maker Polis Loizou comes to Amplify: SEASONS with a tale to fill you with dread... and doubt.

Start Time

8.30pm

Triggers

Sexual references, descriptions of violence and gore, suicide, drugging and devil worship.

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About Polis Loizou

Polis Loizou is an award-winning Cypriot author, playwright, poet, performer and oral storyteller. His books include *Disbanded Kingdom*, published in 2018 and long-listed for the Polari First Book Prize, and *A Good Year* – a queer, historical folk-horror novella set in Cyprus during British colonial rule.

Polis is also one third of the fringe theatre troupe The Off-Off-Off-Broadway Company, for which he's written, directed and produced a number of one-act theatre shows that have toured the UK fringe circuit. These include *Hitchcock reworking Back Door*, winner of the John Beecher Memorial Award at Buxton Fringe and Best Comedy Show at Greater Manchester Fringe. His solo theatrical work includes *Mr Fox*, a take on the grisly old tale that explores misogyny and privilege; *Island of Love*, a blend of history, myth and family stories of Cyprus; and the Arts Council-funded *I Was A Teenage Bisexual*, a one-man horror B-movie for the stage mixed with poetry and multimedia. His latest piece, *You Oughta Be In Pictures*, premiered at the Edinburgh Fringe in 2025.

Become an Amplify Member

We know that the Midlands – both East and West, is full of talented theatre-makers and we want Nottingham Playhouse to be a hub for artists.

Whether you're fresh out of education, early in your career, or someone who has been making professional work for several years, we want to be there for you. We are committed to developing a network where ideas can be shared, challenged and grown.

Become an Amplify Member for free and get access to opportunities including:

- Quarterly AMPLIFY:SEASONS events
- Scratch nights
- Networking events
- Masterclasses
- Co-working opportunities
- One to one mentoring & guidance sessions
- Access to our Amplify Forum

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