



PRESS RELEASE – IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## EUROPEAN PREMIERE OF LAUREN GUNDERSON'S THE BOOK OF WILL NOMINATED FOR THREE PRESTIGIOUS LONDON THEATRE AWARDS



Link to production shots [HERE](#) (Credit Pamela Raith)

**The Offies (Off West End Theatre Awards)** today announced three nominations for the brand-new production of **Lauren Gunderson's** award-winning comedy, ***The Book of Will*** which opened in April at Queen's Theatre Hornchurch and plays until Sat 13 May before transferring to Octagon Theatre Bolton from Wed 17 May and Shakespeare North Playhouse from Thu 19 October.



The production has been nominated for:

**Performance Ensemble**  
**Choreography / Movement - Jonnie Riordan**  
**Director (Plays) - Lotte Wakeham**

The European premiere which marks the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Shakespeare's First Folio opened earlier this month to great critical acclaim.

*"Generous-hearted comedy"* ★★★★★ **The Guardian**

*"Poignant testament to friendship and collaboration"* ★★★★★ **The Stage**

This hilarious love letter to theatre is a co-production from **Queen's Theatre Hornchurch, Octagon Theatre Bolton** and **Shakespeare North Playhouse**. Cast includes **Jessica Ellis, Helen Pearson, Zach Lee, Tomi Ogbaro, Carrie Quinlan, Russell Richardson, Callum Sim, Tarek Slater, Bill Ward** and **Andrew Whitehead**.

Directed by the Octagon's Artistic Director, **Lotte Wakeham**, *The Book of Will* tells the hilarious and moving story of the breath-taking race against time to gather all of Shakespeare's works and save them for the ages. The creative team includes: **Carla Goodman** (designer); **Simeon Miller** (lighting designer); **Andy Graham** (sound designer); **Jonnie Riordan** (movement director); **Olivia Barr** (casting director); **Natalie Grady** (accent coach); **Ryan McVeigh** (assistant director); and **Ngozi Ugochukwu** (observer director).

This wonderfully witty, funny and fast-paced play tells the true story of The King's Men as they band together for a near-impossible plan – to collect all of Shakespeare's plays and compile the First Folio. No easy feat, and what follows is a bonkers race against time through 1620s London.

*The Book of Will* continues at Queen's Theatre Hornchurch until Saturday before visiting The Octagon theatre Bolton and Shakespeare North Playhouse. Visit venue websites for details.

**-ENDS-**

For more information, interviews or to discuss any editorial opportunities please contact:

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## LISTINGS

Octagon Theatre Bolton, Queen's Theatre Hornchurch and Shakespeare North Playhouse present  
**The Book of Will**  
by Lauren Gunderson  
Directed by **Lotte Wakeham**

**Queen's Theatre Hornchurch dates:**  
Playing until Sat 13 May 2023



[www.queens-theatre.co.uk](http://www.queens-theatre.co.uk)

**Octagon Theatre Bolton dates:**

Wed 17 May – Sat 3 June

Press night: Thu 18 May

[www.octagonbolton.co.uk](http://www.octagonbolton.co.uk)

**Shakespeare North Playhouse dates:**

Thu 19 October – Sat 11 November

Press Night: Fri 20 October

<https://shakespearenorthplayhouse.co.uk/>

Please note cast may be subject to change

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

Link to production shots [HERE](#) (Credit: Pamela Raith)

Link to production trailer [HERE](#) : (Credit: Zbigniew Kotciwicz)

**About Octagon Theatre Bolton**

Octagon Theatre Bolton is a regional producing theatre that makes popular, bold and adventurous theatre of the highest quality. We believe theatre matters because everyone's story matters and aim to entertain, inspire and engage as many people as possible through theatre. We are leaders in ensuring arts and culture thrive in Bolton working with thousands of young people and community groups every year. The Octagon reopened in May 2021 following a major redevelopment, funded by Bolton Council and Arts Council England. The redevelopment is the largest transformation of the building in the Octagon's history and will ensure the future of the Theatre for generations to come.

**About Queen's Theatre Hornchurch**

Queen's Theatre Hornchurch (QTH) is a vibrant producing theatre, working in Outer East London, Essex and beyond. As a cultural hub, over 210,000 people enjoy the programme each year. Audiences are guaranteed a warm welcome from a three-year winner of UK Theatre's Most Welcoming Theatre (2016 – 2018) and London Theatre of the Year 2020 (The Stage Awards), the first Outer London theatre to receive this prestigious award.

[www.queens-theatre.co.uk](http://www.queens-theatre.co.uk)

Twitter/Facebook: @QueensTheatreH

Instagram: @QueensTheatreHornchurch

**About Shakespeare North Playhouse**



Located in Prescot, ground-breaking new venue **Shakespeare North Playhouse** is home to the only 17th-century style, timber-built "Cockpit" theatre outside London, able to be configured in to two formations end-on and in-the-round. Built entirely during the pandemic thanks to public funds and donations, the new venue is anticipated to attract over 140,000 visitors a year to the region. Lead architect for the project is Helm Architecture, and Austin-Smith: Lord as support architect.

Housed inside this modern, energy-efficient building, the venue is also home to a fully-accessible outdoor performance garden funded by the Ken Dodd Charitable Foundation, exhibition gallery, 60-seater studio theatre, learning centre, events spaces, and a café and bar with outdoor piazza: [shakespearenorthplayhouse.co.uk](https://shakespearenorthplayhouse.co.uk)