

Diary of a Somebody to play in London after 35 year hiatus as part of Seven Dials Playhouse Spring 2022 Season

Tuesday 22nd March – Saturday 30th April 2022

Press Night: 29th March 2022, 7:30pm

1a Tower Street, London WC2H 9NP

John Lahr's *Diary of a Somebody* will be the exciting second show in the Seven Dials Playhouse Spring 2022 season. Directed by Nico Rao Pimparé (*The Start of Nothing*, 2020; *Rainer*, Arcola Theatre; *Candy*, King's Head Theatre) and presented in association with Seven Dials Playhouse, this dramatisation of *The Orton Diaries* chronicles the last eight months of notorious artist and playwright Joe Orton's life. The diaries track Orton's growing theatrical celebrity and the corresponding punishing effect it had on his relationship with friend and mentor Kenneth Halliwell who murdered him on 9th August 1967 and then took his own life.

Diary of a Somebody first premiered at the National Theatre in 1986, directed by Jonathan Myerson, where the Evening Standard called it 'perversely enjoyable'. The production at Seven Dials Playhouse will be *Diary of a Somebody's* first London revival in 35 years. The play incorporates Orton's words from his diaries, letters and literary fragments, as well as psychiatric reports.

John Lahr, writer of *Diary of a Somebody* comments, *the diary contained Orton's unique merciless, hilarious voice (...) the diary, it seemed to me, could make an extraordinary first-person spine to a biography. Its well-written, unabashed observations held the drama of the grief, violence and absurdity Orton found in life—the dross his comic alchemy turned into theatrical gold.*

Darren Murphy, producer of *Diary of a Somebody* comments, *I am thrilled to be bringing Diary of a Somebody back to a London stage, an absence of 35 years. With this being extra special for me as it is my first production in almost 2 years. The play is an extraordinary insight into the minds of one of our best loved playwrights, Joe Orton, and his turbulent relationship with his partner Kenneth Halliwell that ended tragically with their untimely deaths.*

Seven Dials Playhouse opened in February 2022 with *Steve* directed by Andrew Keates. It seeks to provide opportunities for people to collaborate on bold, creative and high quality work while providing journeys of enlightenment and entertainment for artists and audiences alike.

Mitchell Reeve, Executive Creative Producer at Seven Dials Playhouse comments, *It is an honour and a privilege to finally open the doors of Seven Dials Playhouse with such a wonderful Spring 2022 season. It is a privilege to bring the story of Joe Orton back to the London stage after a 35-year hiatus with John Lahr's Diary of a Somebody. I look forward to welcoming audiences to Seven Dials Playhouse this Spring and to see our very first season.*

Notes to Editors

Title	Diary of a Somebody
Dates	Tuesday 22 nd March – Saturday 30 th April 2022
Location	Seven Dials Playhouse, 1a Tower Street, London WC2H 9NP
How to get there	The nearest underground station are Leicester Square (Northern and Piccadilly lines), Tottenham Court Road (Northern and Central lines) and Covent Garden (Piccadilly line). The nearest rail station is Charing Cross.
Running Time	75 minutes straight through
Box Office	Tickets from £15 available at sevendialsplayhouse.co.uk or on 020 3841 6600
Director	Nico Rao Pimparé
Producer	Darren Murphy for Making Productions
Writers	John Lahr
Production Designer	Valentine Gigandet
Lighting Designer	Luca Panetta
Sound Designer	Andrew Avery
Social	@diarysomebody @make_prods

Ku Group – Sponsor

As an independently owned and run LGBTQ+ group, Ku is proud to be continuing our investments into queer arts, as we continue our partnership with Making Productions. We believe it's important to continue showcasing the stories, and talent from the LGBTQ+ community by way of theatre and the arts. Like gay venues, there is still a need for these safe spaces for people to be free to express themselves and to continually educate, not only ourselves but those allies around us. We hope that queer art helps battle the issue of acceptance and hate crime by sharing stories and the history of how things have evolved through time. Discover more via @kubarlondon

Joe Orton

Joe Orton was an English playwright and author. His public career was short but prolific, lasting from 1964 until his death three years later. During this brief period he shocked, outraged, and amused audiences with his scandalous black comedies. His first play to be staged, *Entertaining Mr Sloane*, won the London Critics' 'Variety' Award as the best play of 1964. *Loot*, his second play to be staged, won the Evening Standard Drama Award for the best play of 1966. *The Ruffian on the Stair* and *The Erpingham Camp* were performed as a double bill at the Royal Court Theatre in June 1967 under the title *Crimes of Passion*. His television plays, *The Good and Faithful Servant* and *Funeral Games*, were shown in 1967 and 1968. *What The Butler Saw*, his last play, was staged in 1969 and won a 1970 'Obie' Award for the best off-Broadway foreign play in New York. Both *Entertaining Mr Sloane* and *Loot* have been filmed. Orton also wrote a screenplay for the Beatles which was never filmed, but was subsequently published as *Up Against It*. The novels, *Head to Toe*, *Between Us Girls*, *The Boy Hairdresser* and *Lord Cucumber*, and the play *Fred & Madge* were published posthumously.

All enquiries, high res images and further information:

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