

## DERBY THEATRE'S 'WELFARE': PRESS RELEASE



(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)

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### NOSTALGIC NEW SHOW 'WELFARE' COMING TO DERBY THEATRE THIS AUTUMN 2024



Bought to life by music, drama and heartfelt storytelling, audiences can look forward to a fantastic, feel-good production.

Derby Theatre is thrilled to announce the world premiere of *Welfare*, a heart-warming and hilarious new play by award-winning British-Armenian playwright Abi Zakarian. The anticipated production will debut on Saturday 28 September 2024 - Saturday 12 October 2024 in Derby Theatre's Main House.

Derby Theatre will be transformed into the historic Derbyshire Miners' Holiday camp in Skegness, where audiences will follow generations as they seek refuge together at the Miners' Convalescent Home. Featuring live performances by the acclaimed Derwent Brass, *Welfare* depicts the nostalgic journey of miners, holiday makers, strikers and bingo players as they congregate at the seaside. The play explores the evolution of the camp, originally a convalescent home for miners, and later a beloved holiday destination for Derbyshire miners and their families. Through the eyes of a family spanning generations, *Welfare* dives into the highs and lows of history, examining the impact of time and change on communities and individuals alike.

*Welfare* is a celebration of resilience, community and the pursuit of joy during 1950's Britain. Audiences can expect a rich tapestry of brass band music, rousing speeches, entertainment and a whole lot of bingo, all contributing to an immersive theatrical experience.

#### **About the Abi Zakarian:**

Award-winning playwright Abi Zakarian was born and raised in Derby to Armenian parents, often influencing her writing, bringing diverse perspectives to her narratives.

*Welfare* is a tribute to Abi's Derby roots and to the rich history of the Derbyshire Miners' Holiday Camp in Skegness. Drawing from her local upbringing, Zakarian weaves a narrative that reflects the resilience and camaraderie of the mining community. Alongside her own upbringing, Zakarian ensured *Welfare* drew on as much real-life experience as possible, visiting Skegness in October 2023 as research for the project. The Derby Theatre group met with individuals from the Derbyshire community who previously holidayed at the Miners' Holiday Camp, sharing photos, memorabilia and precious memories. With this play, she brings to life the stories of those who sought refuge, demanded hope and pursued joy, making it a personal and evocative piece.

#### **About Derwent Brass:**

Derwent Brass, first established in 1992 is one of the UK's premier brass bands, celebrated for their dynamic and powerful performances. Comprising both male and female performers of mixed ages and backgrounds hailing from near and far, all delivering quality music to uphold the position of number one ranked brass band in the country.

#### **About Derby Theatre:**

Derby Theatre is a leading regional theatre committed to producing innovative and thought-provoking performances. Partnered with the University of Derby, committed to nurturing local talent and presenting diverse stories, Derby Theatre continues to be a cultural cornerstone in the heart of Derby.

#### **Notes to Editors:**

Audiences can also enhance their experience with a traditional cone of fish, chips and mushy peas and immerse themselves in the spirit of Derbyshire Miners' Holiday Camp. On offer is fish, chips and mushy peas for £7.50 per person, or a vegan/vegetarian friendly option of chips and mushy peas for £5.45 per person, both available on all performance dates.

Tickets are now available to purchase at Derby Theatre Box Office or online at [www.derbytheatre.co.uk](http://www.derbytheatre.co.uk)

#### **Performance times:**

The performance times are Monday - Saturday 7:30pm, and Thursday and Saturday 2:30pm.

**Pricing:**

Tickets: £15 - £35, under 26s £13 - £21, 16–25-year-olds £5 on Friday evenings

Friends: 50% off preview performances (Bands A & B)

Friends: £5 off all other performances (Bands A & B)

Schools: £12.50, plus one free with every 10 tickets purchased

**Accessible performances:**

A BSL (British Sign Language) interpreted performance: Wednesday 9 October, 7:30pm

Captioned performance: Thursday 10 October, 7:30pm

Live Audio Described performance: Thursday 3 October and Saturday 5 October, 2:30pm  
(Touch Tours 75 minutes before)

Dementia Friendly performance: Thursday 10 October, 2:30pm

**Experience seats:** £35 (includes drink and savoury snack)

Experience the show by sitting on stage and immersing yourself in the action of *Welfare*, placing you at the heart of the performance.

**Post-Show Discussion:** Thursday 10 October, after 7:30pm performance.

For further information, media inquiries or to request press passes, please contact Eva Millett at 01332 593939 or [eva.millett@derbytheatre.com](mailto:eva.millett@derbytheatre.com).

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