

CATERPILLAR

by Alison Carr



directed by Mark Lester



**NEW
VENTURE
THEATRE**

Bedford Place,
Brighton BN1 2PT

Friday 19th - Saturday 27th June 2026 at 7.30pm
Matinee: Sun 21st June at 2.30pm

www.newventure.org.uk
www.facebook.com/NewVentureTheatreBrighton

Registered Charity No. 268607

This amateur production of 'Caterpillar' is presented by
arrangement with Nick Hern Books.

Caterpillar

I came across Alison Carr's play quite by chance. I had applied for performance rights to another play, was turned down, and was looking for something else to direct. That search led to me finding Caterpillar and having read it I was drawn to it on many levels.

I found myself laughing out loud, then shocked, and moved. Here was fantastic dialogue for two strong female characters and the complex part of Simon. It is exactly the kind of play I love – it has humour, you are drawn in and find yourself swept up in the world of the three protagonists, and finally are jolted into the realisation of what is going on for all of them. It is a reminder that invisible pain and turmoil are sometimes as impactful as something like a stroke.

The play deals with issues that are still not as much in our collective consciousnesses or openly spoken about as they might be. Issues which seriously affect both physical and mental wellbeing are painful realities for the characters in Caterpillar. The play is a stark reminder that it is easy to judge people without knowing what their life is like beyond the external.

Mark Lester
Director



CAST

Claire: Angelina Sangster

Maeve: Amanda Harman

Simon: Tom Bryant

Voice of Jamie: Jon Cottrell

Voice of Callum: Joanna-Joy Salter

CREATIVE TEAM

Director: Mark Lester

Production Manager: Jeremy Crow

Stage Manager: Gaby Bowring

Assistant Stage Managers: Tess Baber, Abigail Hyde

Set Design: Sabrina Giles

Set Team Leader: Simon Glazier

Set construction and painting: Simon Glazier, Gaby Bowring, Sabrina Giles, Andy Hind, Daryn Kleinhans, Elaine Larkin, Peter J Ranson, Joanna-Joy Salter, Chris Tew, Dan Tranter

Costume: Mary Weaver, Margaret Parkes

Makeup: Emese Csoma, Shannon King, Julie Monkcom, Flea Traini-Cobb

Lighting design: Ewan Cassidy

Lighting rigging: Ewan Cassidy, Chris Dent, Bert Gladstone, Chris Phipps

Lighting operation: Alex Epps, Ollie Wilson-King, Liam O'Sullivan (shadowing)

Sound design and recording: Chris Dent

Sound operation: Chris Dent, Sean McGrath, Jim Prior, Ollie Wilson-King, Liam O'Sullivan (shadowing)

Poster and programme: Tamsin Mastoris

Photography: Strat Mastoris

Marketing and publicity: Elysa Hyde

Props: Gaby Bowring

Health and safety: Ian Black, Richard Lock

THANK YOU

I'd like to thank all the amazing creative people and behind-the-scenes teams who've worked tirelessly on this production. There are too many to thank individually and I'm incredibly lucky to have so many people collaborate on the play. Thanks to Katie Brownings, Emmaus Sussex and Liam for the loan of the sofa, the team at Gladrags, and the Front of House and Box Office teams, without whom no show would be possible.

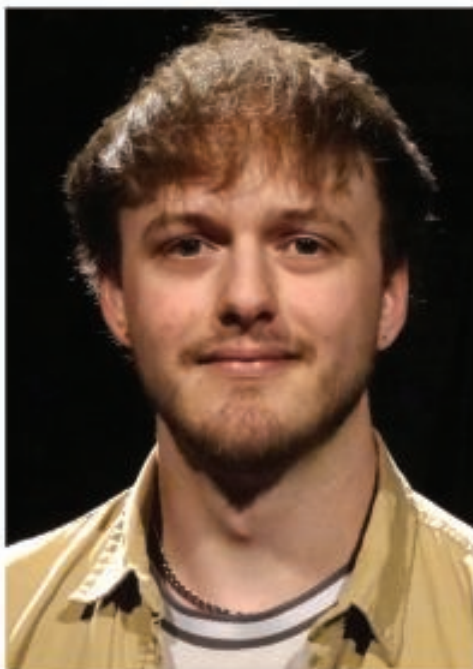


Angelina Sangster - Claire

This is Angelina's second production with NVT. Previous roles include Meg Winterburn in 'The Incident Room' (NVT); Truvy in 'Steel Magnolias' (The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham); Dr Jo Fuller in 'The Manifestation of Trim Tab Jim' (Brighton Fringe); Lady Windermere in 'Lady Windermere's Fan' (Mouse River Players, North Dakota). Angelina has also worked as an Improvisational trainer for emergency services in North Carolina.

Amanda Harman - Maeve

Amanda has been a member of NVT for well over ten years, making her debut as the Nurse in 'Medea' in 2012. She has appeared in many other productions including 'Seven Jewish Children', 'The Miser', 'Decade', 'Love & Information' and 'Blood Wedding'. More recent productions include 'Pickwick & Weller' and 'Gabriel' (2019), 'Turpin' (2022), 'It's a Wonderful Life' (2022) and most recent 'Suddenly Last Summer' (2023). She then took a short break from the stage but is excited to be back and to be part of this production.



Tom Bryant - Simon

Tom has recently returned to acting after featuring in various productions over the years. This will be his second show with the NVT, after his appearance in 'Arabian Nights' in March 2026. He has also acted in 'Macbeth' (University of Sussex) and 'Romeo and Juliet' (LYT Productions). Tom is excited to be taking the part of Simon, combining emotional depth with dry humour in this heartfelt and complex show.



Mark Lester - Director

Mark is an actor, director and member of the Artistic Director Team at NVT. He has appeared in a variety of roles, most recently as Agamemnon in Strat Mastoris's 'W.M.D.' He has directed a number of plays and is now hugely excited to bring Alison Carr's 'Caterpillar' to the NVT and privileged to be working with such a hugely talented cast and crew.

Alison Carr - Author

Theatre credits include 'A Street Like This' (Unfolding Theatre, Winner - Performance of the Year, North East Culture Awards); 'Until It's Gone' (Òran Mór's A Play, A Pie and A Pint, Stellar Quines, Traverse Theatre); 'Tuesday' (National Theatre Connections Festival); 'The Last Quiz Night On Earth' (Box of Tricks); 'Iris' (Live Theatre, Winner - Writer of the Year, North East Culture Awards); 'The Soaking of Vera Shrimp' (Winner - Critics Choice Award, Adelaide Fringe).

Alison's short film 'Doppelganger' can currently be watched on BBC iPlayer (BBC Writers, Candle & Bell).

Alison's new play 'All At Sea' will premiere at Newcastle's Live Theatre in September, then head to the Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough.

www.alisoncarr.co.uk



Extract from an interview with Alison Carr

Q: Caterpillar opens with a woman contemplating a leap — both literal and metaphorical. What drew you to begin the play at that edge-of-change moment?

The spark of the idea for Caterpillar came from a story I heard on the radio from a woman who was involved in one of these 'Birdman' festivals. She recounted being under the water in a white dress billowing around her. In the earliest drafts, the play started with Claire being under the water. But as the story unfolded and developed, I changed it to a moment of suspension just after stepping off the pier. Elongating what would, in reality, be a split second. The play is about change, is about deciding to step off or not, so starting with this impossible moment of pause, of quiet and space, felt important for the maelstrom of what's to come.

Q: There's a delicate balance in the play between dark humour and something much more tender and raw. How conscious are you of that balance when you're writing?

At this point, that is just baked in to how I think and write. I always say an audience will come with you to a much darker place if they're laughing along the way. People are funny, even in their darkest moments, and particularly with the characters of Claire and Maeve they use humour as a weapon and as defence.

Q: Caterpillar is set in a faded seaside town. How important was that sense of place to you when you were writing the play?

With the Birdman festival at the centre of the play, it had to be set somewhere coastal. I live in the North East, so I know those seaside towns which feel like they've seen better days but still have loads of character. I was interested in that contrast between a town that's a bit worn down and this burst of energy when the festival descends. For one weekend, everything feels heightened and alive, and then it all disappears again. That sense of place feeds directly into the themes of the play, of longing, escape, and the idea of transformation.

Q: Has your relationship to the play changed since you first wrote it?

It must be ten years or thereabouts since I wrote the play, and when it was first produced at Theatre503 in 2018 I was right on top of it, in rehearsals, tweaking it, answering questions, etc. Now there's a lot more distance between me and it, which I actually really value. It's out there in the world, belonging to the people making it and the audiences watching it. I love when I see a play of mine with other interpretations or instincts brought to it, and sometimes finding something I didn't even know was there. That's always exciting.

Q: Your work often centres on complex, funny, contradictory women. What keeps drawing you back to those characters?

Again, it's baked in at this point. These are the characters I am interested in writing. I think Claire is one of my most unlikable (quote unquote) characters, but what really interests me is why she behaves the way she does. No one is all good, or all bad, but I think often female characters are not 'allowed' to behave in challenging or contradictory ways. I want to be part of changing that, of writing richer, layered leading roles for the wealth of talented female actors out there.

Q: You're coming down to Brighton to watch our production of Caterpillar in June. Are you looking forward to anything in particular while you're here?

I've never been to Brighton before, so I'm excited to be a tourist and visit the beach and the Pier and the Pavilion, as well as explore the town. I hope the weather's good when I'm there. But, of course, I'm most looking forward to visiting NVT and seeing the play ...!

Q: What do you hope NVT audiences sit with on the journey home after watching Caterpillar?

I hope they feel they had a good night at the theatre.



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Booking NOW at newventure.org.uk



APPROPRIATE

A play by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins



Directed by Claire Lewis

Some legacies refuse to stay buried.

17th - 25th July 2026

In the Theatre Upstairs

Appropriate

by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins

Directed by Claire Lewis

When the Lafayette siblings return to their late father's crumbling Arkansas plantation home to settle his estate, tensions explode as they uncover disturbing artefacts among his belongings. *Appropriate* is a bold, biting and darkly comic play that explores legacy, race and what we choose to remember - or forget - about our past.

This production contains strong language, distressing themes and references to racism.

29th July - 1st August 2026

In the Studio Theatre

NVT Writers' Short Plays

various writers and directors

A rare opportunity to see eight original short plays written by The NVT Writers Group and performed in our studio space. This promises to be a varied evening's entertainment, which is not to be missed.

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Become a Sponsor

NVT is a registered charity and owns the freehold of its theatre, a Victorian listed building. This constantly needs money spent to keep it safe and suitable for modern theatre. We need to raise money every year for this purpose and are seeking support for our sponsorship package which has been designed to appeal to local businesses who want to raise their profile in the community:

£300: This package covers advertisements on our website and in the programme for each production for 2 years. You are also entitled to 2 free tickets per production. If you are interested in sponsorship or want to help us with fundraising in any way please contact us 01273 808353 or by email finance@newventure.org.uk

Supporting the New Venture

We all need a little 'care and maintenance' from time to time and our lovely Grade II listed theatre is certainly no exception. Whether it's fixing the roof or upgrading equipment, it is all increasingly expensive. So any donation you can make to help keep the New Venture alive and kicking will be hugely appreciated, and you can do it either via the donations box by the fireplace in the bar, or using the Donate Button on the homepage of our website - www.newventure.org.uk

Or why not become an Angel, Archangel or even Archangel Gabriel to help us support the current and future improvements to our theatre. For further information, please contact the Angels coordinator Gerry McCrudden: angels@newventure.org.uk

Contacting the NVT

For ticket information only, call the Box Office - 01273 746118. To book tickets or for other information, check our website at www.newventure.org.uk
All other enquiries 01273 808353

NVT Acting Class

Monday evenings at 7.30pm - 9.30pm.
(Acting class runs most Mondays - October to July with breaks in May and Christmas)

Acting classes are open to anyone over 18. It will cost you just £8 per session (£4 for NVT members). You do not need to have any experience. Each month has a different teacher.

Please see website for details about the classes and how to book.

Membership

Membership is open to anyone over the age of 18 and the current cost is £15 per year. There is a discounted rate of £10 for Full Time students and unwaged (on means tested benefit) - (Proof of status is required)