

# Nancy Poole PR press release

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Clean Break in association with the Yard Theatre presents the London premiere of its Double-Bill

## ***Amongst the Reeds* by Chino Odimba**

## ***House* by Somalia Seaton**

directed by Róisín McBrinn

at The Yard Theatre from 1 - 17 September

Press Night: Monday 5 September

Clean Break transfers a Double-Bill of plays from two fresh voices to **The Yard Theatre**, following its premiere at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. **Chino Odimba** and **Somalia Seaton** tell stories of survival and the need to be heard in two plays bursting with humanity, humour and power.

Directed by **Róisín McBrinn** (Head of Artistic Programme at Clean Break), design is by **Rachael Canning** (co-founder and designer of The Wrong Crowd), lighting by Olivier and TMA Award winner **Natasha Chivers**, and sound by regular Clean Break collaborator **Becky Smith**. The cast is **Michelle Greenidge, Shvorne Marks, Rebecca Omogbehin** and **Jan Le**.

- Chino Odimba's ***Amongst the Reeds*** follows two friends struggling in the shadows. Oni and Gillian have made their home in a disused office block, finding dangerous ways to stay hidden without the authorities catching up with them. But now Gillian is heavily pregnant and visibility might be the only way to give her baby a chance.
- Somalia Seaton's ***House*** is an explosive new play about family, culture clashes, memory and truth. Pat returns to her childhood home after a five year absence, ready to forgive her mother. But first she needs acknowledgement of the neglect she suffered at the hands of a woman who believed she was only ever following the teachings of her close-knit Nigerian church - and the word of God.

**Chino Odimba** and **Somalia Seaton** have been on attachment to Clean Break through its Emerging Writers' Programme since 2015. They are commissioned by and connected to some of the UK's leading new writing companies and have been shortlisted and nominated for prestigious awards including the Bruntwood Prize and the Alfred Fagon Award.

**Clean Break** uses theatre to transform the lives of women with experience of the criminal justice system. It commissions and produces plays telling their hidden stories and runs a theatre-based Education Programme in prisons and at its North London studios.

This summer, in addition to presenting its Double-Bill at Edinburgh and in London, Clean Break presents its hugely successful multi-authored play ***Joanne*** as part of the **RSC's Making Mischief Festival**. Performed by **Tanya Moodie**, the production premiered at Soho Theatre in 2015, following performances at Latitude Festival. **Chino Odimba** was one of its five playwrights, alongside **Deborah Bruce, Theresa Ikoko, Laura Lomas** and **Ursula Rani Sarma**.

cleanbreak.org.uk @Cleanbrk

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**NOTES TO EDITORS OVERLEAF**

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### **Listings information**

**Venue** The Yard Theatre, Unit 2A Queen's Yard, White Post Lane, Hackney Wick, E9 5EN  
**Dates + time** 1 – 17 September 2016 at 8pm  
**Box office** www.theyardtheatre.co.uk  
**Tickets** Previews: £12.50/10; £15/£12.50

**Chino Odimba (playwright)** has been on attachment to Clean Break through its Emerging Writers' Programme since 2015 and was one of five writers of the Clean Break's play *Joanne*, performed by Tanya Moodie (Soho Theatre and Latitude Festival, 2015). She was shortlisted for the prestigious Bruntwood Prize in 2015 for *Wild Is De Wind* and has previously been shortlisted for the Alfred Fagon Award and the Adrienne Benham Award. She is a member of NW6 (an invited group of writers with the Tricycle Theatre), is on attachment with Talawa, is part of the Revolution Mix projects with Eclipse Theatre Company, and is one of the winners of the 2016 Channel 4 Playwright Scheme. Her previous plays include *The Bird Woman of Lewisham* (performed at the Arcola Theatre as part of the Story Project 2015) and *His Name Is Ishamel*, commissioned by the Bristol Old Vic.

**Somalia Seaton (playwright)** has been on attachment to Clean Break through its Emerging Writers' Programme since 2015. She trained at East 15 Acting School and is Artistic Director of No Ball Games Allowed, creating work with young people at its core. Her debut play *Crowning Glory* (Theatre Royal Stratford East) was shortlisted for the 2014 Alfred Fagon Award. She is currently on the Talawa Writers' Programme under commission to both Talawa and The Bush, and is also under commission to The Yard and the RSC.

**Róisín McBrinn (director)** is Head of Artistic Programme at Clean Break. Her first production for the company was *Joanne* (Soho Theatre and Latitude Festival 2015, RSC Making Mischief Festival 2016). Previously she was Associate Director at Sherman Cymru, where directing credits included *Before It Rains* by Kath Chandler (co-production with Bristol Old Vic), *The Sleeping Beauties* and *Peter Pan* by Robert Alan Evans, and *The Get Together* and *It's A Family Affair* by Simon Crowther, as well as leading the nurturing and development of Welsh and Wales-based new writing for the company. She has directed successful productions for some of the UK and Ireland's biggest venues including Sheffield Crucible (*Afterplay* by Brian Friel), West Yorkshire Playhouse (*Yerma* by Lorca), The Abbey Theatre (*No Escape* by Mary Raftery and *Perve* by Stacey Gregg) and the Bush Theatre (*66 Books*). She has developed new plays for Traverse Theatre, Bush Theatre, National Theatre, Soho Theatre, Abbey Theatre and Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester.

**Clean Break** works through theatre with women with experience of the criminal justice system and is celebrated for the plays it commissions and produces about issues affecting this group. Its playwrights have included Zawe Ashton, Alice Birch, Lin Coghlan, E V Crowe, Vivienne Franzmann, Tanika Gupta, Katie Hims, Sam Holcroft, Lucy Kirkwood, Chloë Moss, Rebecca Lenkiewicz, Winsome Pinnock and Rebecca Prichard.

Recent successes have include Tanya Moodie's soaring performance in *Joanne* written by Deborah Bruce, Theresa Ikoko, Laura Lomas, Chino Odimba and Ursula Rani Sarma (Soho Theatre and Latitude Festival 2015, RSC Making Mischief Festival, August 2016), *Spent* by Katherine Chandler (touring conferences and Higher Education settings), Vivienne Franzmann's *Pests* (Royal Court Theatre, Royal Exchange Theatre + tour), *Sweatbox* by Chloë Moss (Latitude Festival 2015), *Fingertips* by Suhayla El-Bushra and *Meal Ticket*, a company-devised play (Latitude Festival 2014), Katie Hims' *Billy the Girl* (Soho Theatre), Roz Wyllie's *Stepping Off the Edge of the World* (Soho Theatre + tour), Rebecca Prichard's *Dream Pill* (Almeida Festival 2013, Latitude Festival 2012, Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2011), Sonya Hale's *Hours til Midnight* (Latitude Festival 2013, Southbank Centre + tour), Chloë Moss's *There Are Mountains* (HMP Askham Grange), Sam Holcroft's *Dancing Bears* and Chloë Moss's *Fatal Light* (Latitude Festival 2011), and *Charged*, written by six of the UK's foremost contemporary playwrights in 2010, revived as *Re-Charged* in 2011 (Soho Theatre).

**NOTES TO EDITORS CONTINUE OVERLEAF**

## **The Yard**

Built in 2011, The Yard is a multi-award winning theatre in Hackney Wick in the East End of London, providing a safe space for artists to test and grow new ideas, and for audiences to access new work at affordable prices. The Yard has grown a reputation for discovering and developing artists whose work challenges the status quo and unites audiences in experiencing something new.

In five years, The Yard has become “the most important theatre in East London” (Time Out), committed to exposing the stories of unheard voices, interrogating the process of writing for performance and discovering and developing new artists.

In its short existence The Yard has had significant success including two transfers to the National Theatre for *Beyond Caring* and *Chewing Gum Dreams*. In 2015, The Yard was publicly voted as the second Best Theatre in London by readers of Time Out. The Yard has also been awarded the 2012 Empty Space Dan Crawford Award for innovation, the 2013 Empty Space Peter Brook/ Mobius Award for supporting emerging artists and the 2014 Off West End Theatre Awards Special Panel Award for Outstanding Achievement.