

KOOK
ENSEMBLE



FILIBUSTER

Autumn 2024

Tour Pack

Photography – Nick Warner



Photography – David Street

Bertie is on a mission to change his life. Having turned his back on his family name, replaced the home estate for a cottage in the woods he waits for his one true love. Only he forgot to tell them...or even find them.

Leaning heavily on the silent movie comedians, acclaimed gentleman juggler Tom Gaskin and storytelling circus director Sean Kempton bring to life a playful world of loneliness, love and boredom through highly skilled juggling, clown and some audience participation!

Filibuster was originally developed for a WIP performance at Jacksons Lane Theatre and a run of outdoor shows, which was sadly interrupted by the pandemic.

Now being developed as a full indoor show with the support of Landmark Theatres and Beaford Arts in North Devon and Jackson's Lane theatre, London, the show is due to launch at the Landmark Theatre North Devon in September 2024.

Our aim is to tour the show to rural communities in Devon engaging lost audiences again and connecting communities with theatre and circus arts. We are also planning to take the show to a small number of established venues across the SW and beyond.

About FILIBUSTER

Photography – David Street



About Kook Ensemble

Kook Ensemble is a thrilling new company that makes compelling and playful non-verbal circus theatre. Formed in 2023 and based in North Devon, we bring our unique voice in circus and skilled acrobatics to create characters and stories that fulfil our mission to bring connection, joy and open-hearted discovery to our audiences.



Photography – Shelly Love



Kook Photography – Roy Riley

We are driven to create playful theatre experiences that connect our audience to each other. We are committed to bringing the invisible into focus, to give voice to stories that go unheard and create ways for new friendships and communities to play, share, discover and build together.



The Core Team

Sean Kempton

Co-Director

Sean is a hugely successful performer and director in circus and theatre. He continues to perform and develop work for Cirque Du Soleil and was an original cast member and comedy creator for Franco Dragones iconic *Le Reve* in Las Vegas. Most recent directorial work includes Underbelly's summer headline show at the South Bank London, National Romanian Circus' national tour, rewriting the clown content for the relaunch of Cirque Du Soleil's *Kooza*, and a co-commission by London Mime and *Vamos* theatre. Sean is now leading *Kook* into its first full year of making new work and a core teacher at the National Centre of Circus Arts.

Michaela O'Connor

Co-Director

Michaela is a trained physical actor, aerialist and director, whose work has taken her from the Royal Albert Hall and West End to Broadway. She has worked as a performer for Cirque Du Soleil, *Dragone* and Cameron Mackintosh, as well as a score of other leading companies internationally. Michaela specialises in highly physical ensemble circus work, having developed three major pieces in recent years for various venues in London. Michaela is also a core member of the National Centre for Circus Arts, where she is a leading member of the teaching faculty.

Tracey-Anne Cutbush

Creative Producer

Tracey-Anne is a trained director, producer and teacher, with a passion for building creative communities and advocating for the power of the arts. She has worked extensively across the industry, from Fringe to West End to the Royal National Theatre, driven by the challenge of breaking new ground and building new partnerships. Tracey-Anne is a highly experienced facilitator and arts education specialist leading co-creative projects that focus on building new work, artists and audiences. Most recently she has led the National Theatre's *Schools Speak Up* project for young people in North Devon.

What have we done so far?

In August 2023, Kook launched its first activity, an ACE supported R & D on a new full show using circus arts and theatre exploring the topic of Dementia at the Landmark Theatre, North Devon.

This 2-week open door R & D process culminated in a sharing of the WIP at the Landmark and at the Memory cafes in Barnstaple.

Alongside this work we kick started our mission to embed ourselves as facilitating artists working within the community with the collaboration and support of other Devon made arts organisations, which is key to our work.

Open door collaboration is a guiding principle for us. Inspired by the exposed workshops at the National Theatre, we mirror this approach in the way we work. Our rehearsals and workshops are open to the public, inviting observation, curiosity and engagement, and striving to open hearts and minds to creativity, community and play.

So far, we have delivered...

- Arts Award sessions with Q & A.
- 3 Workshops with young circus performers and acrobats.
- 1-2-1 masterclass offering access to career progression and professional pathways.
- 2-hour workshop with local youth theatre.
- Memory Café showing & Meet and Greet.
- 5 Workshops for local artists.
- Running a continuing programme of workshops for theatre artists in Devon



“An outstanding workshop. Sean’s expertise and experience really shines through. A playful and creative workshop that will definitely help my creative practice in the future.”

“It was an honour to see what you guys are doing first hand, keep up the good work”
Mayor of Ilfracombe

“The absolute highlight was the slow-motion juggling with feathers, which had everyone mesmerised and holding their collective breath! It was moving to see the man with blowing the feather back to the juggler - he was totally caught up in that moment and was delighted to join in. Your performance was totally engaging for the people with their carers and they have already asked me when you are coming back!”
Anne McKiernan (Dementia Expert /Manager of Barnstaple Memory Café)

“The workshop came at the perfect time for me ...very affirming, joyous and liberating. Loved it , thank you :)”

“...it felt like a breath of fresh air, and a great opportunity to explore creative play in an open and non-judgmental space. The experience made my week!”

“Having such a great session available on my doorstep was honestly amazing.”

“...my heart felt every emotion, every piece of empathy I have for people living with dementia who are living or have died that I have cared for came back... you couldn’t have got this any more perfect. Astonishing piece of art and movement. This needs to be shown to more people”
Kerri Turton (Dementia Health Care Professional)

PERFORMANCE INFO

TOUR DATES: 16th September
– November 2024.

RUNNING TIME: 60 min

LANGUAGE: Non-verbal

RECOMMENDED AUDIENCE:
From 8 years

TRIGGER WARNINGS:
Loneliness.

We are also committed to offering a wrap-around learning package to meet the needs of your community and venue. We are able to offer experiences from an open Q & A to CPD or bespoke workshops for a target groups. Please enquire for more details.

CAST: 1 artist

TOUR TEAM: 1 technician, 1 stage manager/engagement facilitator, 1 director/producer.

TRANSPORT: 1 Van

FIT UP/GET OUT: Filibuster will take approximately 4 hours to Fit Up and 1.5 hours to Get Out. The show can be performed twice a day with a minimum 2-hour break.

PLAYING SPACE:
Floor – 8m x 5m.
Height – 5m.



Photography – Remy Archer

KOOK

ENSEMBLE

Inquires and
further information:

Tracey-Anne Cutbush
Creative Producer
t-a@kookensemble.com

*Kook Ensemble website is under
construction.*



Photography – Merry Phillips

FILIBUSTER Credits:

Original concept:
Tom Gaskin

Direction and development:
Sean Kempton
Michaela O'Connor
Tom Gaskin

Performed by:
Tom Gaskin

Sound Designer:
Peter Buffery

Designer:
Adrian Linford