

Arch 468, Unity Theatre & The Albany present:

Dead and Breathing

By Chisa Hutchinson

Directed by Rebecca Atkinson-Lord



Unity (Liverpool) 7 - 17 Feb 2018

The Albany (London) 19 Feb - 3 March 2018

Lizan Mitchell (TV: *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*, *The Good Wife*, *The Wire*. Broadway: *Electra*, *Having Our Say*, *So Long on Lonely Street*) and **Kim Tatum** aka **Mzz Kimberley** (TV: *EastEnders* and *Cold Feet*, *Project Cat Walk* Theatre: *Summer*; Theatre Royal Stratford East) are set to star in the first UK run of acclaimed US social satire **'Dead and Breathing'** By Chisa Hutchinson. They will be playing at **Unity (Liverpool) 7 - 17 Feb 2018** and then **The Albany (London) 19 Feb - 3 March 2018**

Spiteful old Carolyn Whitlock wants to die already. She's been sick with cancer for almost as long as she can remember and the pain has made her so mean that there's no one left who loves her.

Carolyn just wants to give up, but in order to do so, she's going to have to work harder than she ever has in her privileged life to convince her very Christian nurse Veronika to help her. But Veronika isn't all she seems, and so before Carolyn can die in peace, they'll both need to let go of everything they believe about what is right.

Can this well-to-do widow, slowly succumbing to cancer manage to convince, her home nurse, to help her end her life? It wouldn't be easy at the best of times, but it becomes almost impossible when Carolyn finds a final hurdle she must overcome. Spoiled, privileged, sheltered and judgemental she is repulsed by transsexuals and Veronika happens to be one. If Carolyn wants her own way, she will not only have to convince Veronika to do something that goes against her every belief; she will also need to choose what she denounces with revulsion as "*death by tranny*."

'Dead and Breathing' is a dark comedy of ethics and mortality that positions the right to die against the right to live your own life. Through constantly surprising humour and persistent questioning, **'Dead and Breathing'** investigates morality, mortality, and the intense tug-of-war between the right to die with dignity and the idea of life as a gift.

This is a coming together of long-term director/writer collaborators; award winning film and theatre maker **Rebecca Atkinson-Lord** and multi award winning playwright **Chisa Hutchinson**.

'Domesticity' The short film they recently made together has just won the Best Short Film award at the Discover Film Festival in London and has been nominated for the Best Screenplay award at Underwire Festival. It will be screened at the Barbican in November 2017

ENDS

PRESS CONTACT

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UNITY THEATRE, LIVERPOOL

DATES: 7 - 17 February 2018

TIME: 8.00pm (3.00pm Saturday matinee)

PRICES: 7 – 10 Feb £8.50 all tickets // 12 – 17 Feb £14 - £12 (£12 - £10 concessions)

TICKETS: 0151 709 4988

<http://www.unitytheatreliverpool.co.uk/whats-on/dead-and-breathing.html>

THE ALBANY, LONDON

DATES: 20 February - 3 March 2018

TIME: 7.30pm

PRICES: £14 (£10 concessions)

TICKETS: 020 8692 4446

http://www.thealbany.org.uk/event_detail/2203/Theatre/Dead-and-BreathingCAST AND TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

Cast

Lizan Mitchell // Carolyn

Lizan Mitchell is a multi-award winning stage and film actress based in New York. Her credits on Broadway include: *Electra*, *Having Our Say*, *So Long on Lonely Street*. Off-Broadway: *The First Noel*, *Brownsville Song*, *Cell*, *Rosmersholm*, *For Colored Girls (25th Anniversary)*, *Gum*, *Ma Rose and Salt*. Other theatre includes *Skeleton Crew* (Trinity Rep, Baltimore Center Stage), *A Raisin in the Sun* (Arena Stage), *The Good Peaches* (Cleveland Play House), *The House That Will Not Stand*, (Yale Repertory, Berkeley Repertory, Victory Gardens), *Dead and Breathing* (CATF, National Black Theater), *A Trip to Bountiful* (Cincinnati Playhouse, Roundhouse Theater).

Her film and TV work includes roles in *Detroit*, *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*, *Deadbeat*, *We'll Never Have Paris*, *Golden Boy*, *John Adams*, *The Good Wife*, *The Human Stain*, *The Preacher's Wife*, *Sesame Street*, and *The Wire*.

Kim Tatum/Mzz Kimberley // Veronika

Kim Tatum/Mzz Kimberley is an American trans woman actress. In 2017 she played Joan, in the critically acclaimed run of Rikki Beadle-Blair's play *Summer in London* at Theatre Royal Stratford East. Kim is also lead actress in the *Spectrum London* series, directed by Campbell X. Other TV credits include *EastEnders* and *Cold Feet*. Her film work includes *Killer Tongue* and *Club La Mode*.

Kim has modelled extensively, appearing alongside Kelly Osbourne in the TV series *Project Cat Walk* and at London fashion week for Red or Dead. She has featured as cover girl for popular magazines including Elle, QX, The Face, Bizarre, Prime, Time Out and Heat. Her commercial work includes Super Ice Tennents, Renault Cars, and Dove.

Kim also performs internationally as Mzz Kimberley in her award-winning solo cabaret show. She studied at the New York Academy of Theatre Arts and received her musical theatre diploma from the City Lit in London England.

Creative

Chisa Hutchinson// Playwright

Chisa Hutchinson's award-winning plays, including *She Like Girls*, *Sex on Sunday*, *The Subject*, *Dead & Breathing*, and *Somebody's Daughter*, have been produced by City Parks' Summerstage, the Lark, the National Black Theater, the Contemporary American Theater Festival, the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, and Atlantic Theater Company. Amongst others, she has won a GLAAD Award, a Lilly Award, a New York Innovative Theatre Award, the Lanford Wilson Award, and has been a finalist for the PoNY Fellowship. She's also been a Lark Fellow, a Dramatists Guild Fellow, a resident at the William Inge Center for the Arts, a Humanitas Fellow, and a Resident Playwright at Second Stage Theater. Chisa is a fourth-year member of New Dramatists in New York and a Creative Writing Professor at the University of Delaware. (B.A. Vassar College; M.F.A NYU - Tisch School of the Arts)

Rebecca Atkinson-Lord // Director

Rebecca is an award winning film and theatre maker who directs, writes, devises and produces theatre and performance and has directed more than 20 professional productions internationally. Her recent production of *Cuddles* by Joseph Wilde played a sell-out off-Broadway run, was a New York Times Critic's Pick and was named one of the 10 best shows of the year by both the New York Times and New York Post. The production will now be made into a feature film starring Nicole Kidman.

Directing includes: Theatre. For Arch 468, *MilkMilkLemonade*, *Learning How to Swim* (Ovalhouse), *Cuddles* (UK tour and 59E59 Theaters New York), *Seeking Oblivion*, *The Sluts of Sutton Drive* (Finborough Theatre), *Mrs Edna Way*, *Rather More Pressing Issues* and *Right*. Other directing includes: *The Crunch* (Look Left Look Right), *Work/Play*, *Fosterling*, (Ovalhouse), *Top Brass*, *Anhedonia* (Theatre 503), *Seeking Oblivion* (BAC), *Mother Clap's Molly House* and *The Flies* (Crescent Theatre, Birmingham). Film. *Domesticity*.

From 2010 - 2015 Rebecca was Director of Theatre at Ovalhouse. She is Founding Artistic Director and Chief Executive of Arch 468, Chair of the Board of Dante or Die and a trustee of SDUK.

www.rebeccaatkinsonlord.com

Sarah Booth // Designer

Sarah studied Drama at the University of Exeter and trained on the Motley Theatre Design Course. She is the co-founder of 'THE ATTIC' costume collective. She's a regular collaborator with Wonderful Beast, Tete a Tete and Icon Theatre. Previous design credits include: *The Mrs Mcmoon show*, The Egg, Bath; *A tale of Two Cities*, Darlington Civic Theatre; *Caught*, Pleasance Theatre; *Grass*, Unicorn Theatre and national tour; *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, Park theatre; *A World Elsewhere*, Theatre 503; *The Fosterling*, Ovalhouse; *The Poet's Manifesto*, Theatre Royal Stratford East; *L'Enfant et les Sortileges*, & *Wind in the Willows* for Iris Theatre, St Pauls, Covent Garden. She also designs for live events and photo shoots with previous clients including Zoella, Playstation, Ray Ban, Assassins Creed Syndicate and the Wellcome Trust.

<http://www.sarahjanebooth.co.uk>

Katharine Williams // Lighting Designer

Katharine Williams is a lighting designer for live performance and works in the UK and internationally. Recent designs include: *Education, Education, Education* (Wardrobe Ensemble), *Flood* (Slung Low), *Medea* (Bristol Old Vic), *Two Man Show* and *The Darkest Corners* (RashDash), *Instructions for Border Crossing* (Daniel Bye), *Big Guns* (Yard Theatre), *Am I Dead Yet?* (Unlimited), and *Ode To Leeds* (West Yorkshire Playhouse). She is lead artist on the *Love Letters to the Home Office* project and the founder of the *Crew for Calais* initiative, which is what happens when people from the theatre and creative industries come together to help refugees. www.crewforcalais.org

Edward Lewis// Sound Designer

Edward studied Music at Oxford University and subsequently trained as a composer and sound designer at the Bournemouth Media School. He works in theatre, film, television and radio. He has recently been nominated for several Off West End Theatre Awards, and films he has recently worked on have won several awards at the LA International Film Festival and Filmstock International Film Festival.

Recent theatre includes: The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui (Donmar Warehouse) Platinum (Hampstead Theatre) Baddies the Musical (Unicorn Theatre) Breaking the Ice (Unicorn Theatre) Chef (Soho Theatre) Abigail's Party (Leicester Curve) Hannah (Unicorn Theatre) The Cement Garden (VAULT Festival) The Speed Twins (Riverside Studios) Eugenie Grandet (Hartshorn-Hook Productions) Cuddles (Ovalhouse) Molly Sweeney (The Print Room/Lyric) Ignorance (Hampstead Theatre), Gravity (Birmingham Rep Theatre), A Midsummer Night's Dream (Almeida), Thom Pain (Print Room), On The Rocks, Amongst Friends and Darker Shores (Hampstead Theatre).

About Unity Theatre

Unity Theatre is Liverpool's radical theatre with big ambitions. Their programme of presented and produced work is edgy, radical and unashamedly contemporary, while their talent development programmes have aided the establishment of many of the UK's top touring companies including *Told by an Idiot*, *AD Infinitum* and *Kaboodle*. The theatre is home to many of the regions radical festivals including *Homotopia*, *DaDa Fest* and *PhysicalFest*.

Recent successes have included co-productions with Riksteatern (*Nina – a story about me and Nina Simone*) – sold out in Liverpool, London, Edinburgh Fringe and national tour of Sweden, 20 Stories High and Theatre Rites (*Broke n Beat Collective*), Up the Road Theatre (*Bardolph's Box*), Hightide and Soho Theatre (*Lampedusa*, London, Aldeburgh and Liverpool), Eastern Angles (*Chicken*, *Edinburgh Festival Fringe*, *Roundabout*) as well as a regular seasonal show with a difference co-produced with our Associate Artists Action Transport Theatre.

About The Albany

- The Albany is a performing arts centre in Deptford, with a history stretching back to the 19th century.
- It has three performance spaces, including a unique, flexible main space in the round, with a capacity of 500 standing and 300 seated.
- A registered charity, any income the theatre makes is reinvested back into the work it does.
- The Albany presents and produces a range of arts forms including theatre, music, spoken word, circus and outdoor arts, with audiences of over 40,000 in the last year for just over 400 events.
- On behalf of Lewisham Council, the Albany manages and programmes the Deptford Lounge, a new cultural and community hub, which includes a library, galleries, and a range of community facilities shared with Tidemill School.
- On behalf of Southwark Council, the Albany manages and programmes the Canada Water Culture Space comprising a 150-seat theatre and six education and meeting spaces at Canada Water Library.

Arch 468 // Producer

Arch 468 is a theatre production and development hub that exists to shape the arts ecology of the future. Its work seeks to queer the mainstream by telling radical stories in popular, accessible ways. Arch 468 seeks to blaze new trails across the traditional arts landscape and support other companies and artists to do the same. Since 2007 they have worked with some of the UK's most exciting artists, produced a series of award winning, critically acclaimed and commercially successful shows and toured extensively across the UK and internationally.

Arch 468 want to change the world by finding new ways to imagine what is possible and providing a model of artistic and personal bravery. The company aspires to revolution and generosity in all they do and their practice melds the broad appeal of populist presentation with the visionary innovation of cutting edge ideologies.

Their work is visionary, innovative, familiar, unnerving, spell binding, angry and generous.