

# GULLIVER'S TRAVELS WORLD PREMIERE UNEARTHS NEW TALENT POOL OF EMERGING WRITERS

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**A MUSICAL world premiere of adventure story Gulliver's Travels is just the beginning of a series of new works created by previously unknown writers and composers, according to the show's producer.**

The production, based on the original novel, debuted last week at the University of Chichester as part of a project showcasing the work of emerging playwrights of



new musical theatre.

The innovative venture, fronted by senior lecturer and resident producer Andrew Wright, offers artists a platform at venues across the south coast in collaboration with musical theatre students of the West Sussex institution.

"There is a real appetite for new writing and work in the industry," said Mr Wright, the programme coordinator for BA (Hons) Musical Theatre Performance at the University.

"This new venture is an opportunity for relatively unknown figures to make a name for themselves and generate interest in their work at professional theatres.

"But it is also a steppingstone into the industry for the University's musical theatre students who can experience first-hand the fresh and innovative work of some of the most exciting new talents in the country."



The musical premiere of Gulliver's Travels, hosted at the Alexandra Theatre in Bognor Regis, was the first of the new series of productions to be showcased at playhouses across the south of England.

The production included a vibrant young creative team of emerging director Jake Smith, who recently undertook a two-year residency at the Chichester Festival Theatre, alongside musical direction from Ed Court, choreography by James Berkery, and an original design by Anna Reid.

The cast of 26 performers encompassed students of the University's BA (Hons) Musical Theatre programme which included final-year student Matthew Headon in the lead role of Gulliver.

He said: “I have literally just finished my studies and not only am I lucky enough to play the lead but it is also a world premiere.

“Not many students get to put that on their CV a month after leaving university, and I am beyond thrilled to have been involved in what was an incredible experience.”



The show, which covers all four parts of Jonathan Swift’s novel, was constructed by composer Andy Rapps and librettist Chris Chambers.

Gullivers Travels started its life in 2008 at the iconic Minack Theatre in Cornwall and has since undergone significant rewrites at a workshop in The Royal Academy of Music and a further version presented as a showcase at St Martin's Hall in Trafalgar Square in 2014.

Mr Rapps said: “It was lovely to see how much the confidence of the students grew through the process and how genuinely enthusiastic they all were about the show.”

To find out more about Musical Theatre programmes at the University of Chichester go to [www.chi.ac.uk/music](http://www.chi.ac.uk/music).

Alternatively contact course leader Andrew Wright at [a.wright@chi.ac.uk](mailto:a.wright@chi.ac.uk).





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