IN ASSOCIATION WITH PLATFORM, PRESENT

SUPERFAN

LITTLE TOP

A magical first circus experience for babies age 0-18 months
Little Top

Starcatchers and SUPERFAN present Little Top, a magical first circus experience for babies aged 0 – 18 months and their adults, created by Ellie Dubois and Kim Donohoe.

At a time in their development when young children are discovering their own physicality and the pleasures and perils of gravity, Little Top invites babies to experience spectacular balances, astonishing tumbles and inventive juggling in a specially-designed set that miniaturizes the magic of the Big Top.

Becky Minto’s beautiful set creates a colourful, cosy and welcoming space where professional circus acrobats, acro-balancers and jugglers perform up close in babies’ line of sight, making eye contact, and interacting and responding to their young audience.

Babies and adults alike are transported into a playful, joyous, upside down, topsy-turvy world where people can fly, patterns fill the air and anything is possible.

PERFORMANCE DETAILS

AGES
For babies ages 0 - 18 months / pre walkers, and their grown ups.

RUNNING TIME
45 minutes (no interval). Maximum performances 2 per day with minimum 2-hour interval between end of first show and start of second show.

CAPACITY
Capacity of 50 per performance; (25 adults/ 25 babies).

VENUES
Little Top is designed to be performed within the circus tent space, ideally in a clear playing space, with easy access. The piece can be performed in non-theatre spaces with a reduced lighting plan, provided there is a blackout.

PERFORMANCE AREA
10m wide x 10m deep, 4m height (includes set and audience).

FEE
Contact us for fee information.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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REVIEWS AND AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

“Incredible experience at Little Top in Cumnock! My little one was amazed and I have to admit I think I may have enjoyed it even more than her! You must come back it was out of this world!”

“This show is amazing! Saw it on tour and it’s just lovely. My one-year-old was captivated.”

“... While the dancer in blue danced around the space my babies face was beautiful! (Full of wonder!)”

DIGITAL THEATRE + | LYN GARDNER

“In an Edinburgh theatre, a small audience sits entranced while a young man juggles with balls. The audience watch transfixed and laugh. Some reach out as if wanting to touch the spheres that spin through the air, rising and falling in streams.

This is Little Top, a show made by the renowned Scottish company Starcatchers, and what is unusual about it is that the majority of its audience is made up of babies. Unlike a traditional adult theatre audience, some of whom regularly nod off almost as soon as the curtain rises, not a single baby falls asleep during the show, which has been carefully made – with rigorous testing of its dramaturgy – for an audience aged between 0 and 18 months.

The babies, accompanied by parents and carers, are settled within the miniature, magical, fairy-lit version of a traditional big top. It’s fascinating to watch how their attention is held by the 40-minute show, the way they respond to it and each other, and the pleasure they take in the opportunity to play with the equipment alongside the performers for 20 minutes afterwards. Starcatchers’ Little Top, a first circus experience for babies, is but one of an increasing number of superb quality shows made for the very young.”

THE SUNDAY HERALD

“The latest work from Scottish pre-school theatre specialists Starcatchers (in co-production with SUPERFAN), the show is aimed at babies aged up to 18 months. The piece is presented in designer Becky Minto's charming, miniature circus tent and played by fine, young performers Gabrielle Cook, Kim Donohoe (who co-created the production with director Ellie Dubois), Arron Sparks and Nat Whittingham. It is a conventional, nicely executed circus show involving juggling and acrobatics of various kinds and a lovely musical score (which draws upon 1980s synth-pop) by Kim Moore.”

Contact us for a full marketing pack including reviews and audience feedback.
COMPANY

STARCATCHERS

Starcatchers is Scotland’s National Arts and Early Years Organisation, specialising in creating performances and exploring creative activity for babies, toddlers and young children aged 0-5 and the adults who care for them.

We make beautiful, innovative productions with exceptional artists who specialise in work for the under 5s; deliver engagement projects across Scotland, placing artists directly into communities; and provide professional development for artists and early years practitioners to develop practice using arts and creativity with very young children.

For more information visit: www.starcatchers.org.uk

SUPERFAN

SUPERFAN is a collaboration between Ellie Dubois, Kim Donohoe and Pete Lannon, creating new performances for adult and young audiences. Their work blends theatre, performance art, circus and choreography. SUPERFAN won the 2019 Oxford Samuel Beckett Theatre Trust Award with Nosedive.

For more information visit: http://superfanperformance.co.uk/

CREATORS, CAST AND CREW

Created by Ellie Dubois and Kim Donohoe, produced by Starcatchers

Ellie Dubois - Director
Kim Moore – Sound Design
Becky Minto – Set and Costume Design
Michaella Fee – Lighting Design / Production Manager
Chris Gorman - Production Manager / Technician
Performers - Gabrielle Cook, Kim Donohoe/Laura Bradshaw, Arron Sparks and Nat Whittingham.
ELLIE DUBOIS
CO-CREATOR

Ellie Dubois is an award-winning artist who trained at the National Centre for Circus Arts and whose work, combining contemporary performance and circus, is reinventing traditional notions of what circus can be.

Named as one of the British Council’s ‘Artist’s to Watch 2017’ her most recent work No Show - an all-female feminist deconstruction challenging expectations of female circus performers – won a Herald Angel Award and was nominated for a Total Theatre Award. Ringside, her circus show made for one audience member at a time, won the Autopsy Award for experimental performance and received a Spotlight Award from NoFit State and Crying Out Loud to take the show to Festival du Cirque Actual (France) and Subtopia (Sweden).

Ellie received the Jerwood Performing Arts Micro Bursary to support the creation of a new solo work exploring circus and motherhood and the MG Futures Bursary to create a new piece of contemporary circus.

“**I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT CIRCUS AND I WANT TO PUSH THE BOUNDARIES OF WHAT IT CAN BE, WHERE IT CAN EXIST AND WHAT IT TELLS US ABOUT THE WORLD.**

**WHEN YOU GET TO SEE CIRCUS CLOSE UP AS YOU WILL IN LITTLE TOP YOU GET A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE THAT I HOPE IS GOING TO BE REALLY SPECIAL FOR THE BABIES AND THEIR ADULTS.**”

KIM DONOHUE
CO-CREATOR

Kim Donohoe is a Scottish theatre maker, performer and facilitator who specialises in work for babies and young children.

As an Associate Artist with Starcatchers, Scotland’s National Arts and Early Years Organisation, she has performed in Blue Block Studio and as a member of Sprog Rock, an interactive gig for little ones age 0-5. She is also a lead artist with Expecting Something, Starcatchers’ community engagement project for parents under 25 and their babies.

Most recently, Kim collaborated with Ellie Dubois and Pete Lannon as part of SUPERFAN to co-create and perform Like Animals, which previewed at The Tron in 2018. She trained in Contemporary Performance Practice at The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

“**WE WANT TO DISTILL THE JOY OF THE BIG TOP RIGHT DOWN INTO LITTLE TOP SO THAT IT’S WARM, FRIENDLY AND COLOURFUL BUT EQUALLY IMPRESSIVE AND MAGICAL.**”
LAURA BRADSHAW
PERFORMER

Laura Bradshaw is a performance artist working in movement. She has worked with a number of artists including SUPERFAN Performance (co-director, Bird Bones), and Chloë Smith (movement direction, Holding it Together), Sarah Hopfinger (Dramaturg, Wild Life) Uninvited Guests (performer, It is Like it Ought to Be) and most regularly as a performer/deviser under the artistic direction of Nic Green.

Her practice foregrounds collaboration and to reflect this initiates performance work under the name of Scrimshaw Projects. Scrimshaw Projects focuses on the body and its histories, memories and inheritance. The performance work is made across generations using movement as its primary art form. As well as being a lecturer in Contemporary Performance Practice at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, she also supports artists through mentorship, dramaturgy and Somatic Movement.

GABRIELLE COOK
PERFORMER

Gabrielle was an elite gymnast before training at The Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD), graduating with a first class degree.

She has since toured nationally and internationally with multiple dance and circus companies including: Pirates of the Carabina, Tom Dale Company, Becky Namgauds, Scarabeus Aerial, and Acrojou Circus Theatre. She specialises in floorwork, partnering and multi-discipline performance, combining her skills in Dance, Acrobatics, Chinese Pole and Physical Theatre.

“IT’S A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE TO PERFORM TO SUCH A YOUNG AUDIENCE, AND INSPIRE THEM WITH CIRCUS AND DANCE! I AM HYPER-AWARE OF THE AUDIENCES’ PRESENCE BECAUSE THEY ARE SO CLOSE, AND PERFORMING FOR SUCH A YOUNG AGE GROUP WE REALLY THOUGHT HOLISTICALLY – ABOUT COLOUR, MOVEMENT AND SOUND.”
ARRON SPARKS
PERFORMER

Arron Sparks is a professional circus performer and graduate of the National Centre for Circus Arts as Juggler. He has travelled the world being paid to throw and catch things.

Arron’s career in the circus began as a teenager and he has performed world-wide including in Swan Lake at the Royal Albert Hall (juggling rather than ballet dancing), on Blue Peter (twice) and had his name up in lights in Las Vegas.

“EACH SHOW I REMIND MYSELF OF THE NOTION THAT THIS SHOW MIGHT BE THE AUDIENCE’S FIRST INTERACTION WITH JUGGLING, CIRCUS OR EVEN LIVE PERFORMANCE. THAT’S AN IMPORTANT MOMENT AND ONE THAT MAKES ME HAPPY TO BE A SMALL PART OF.”

NAT WHITTINGHAM
PERFORMER

Nat Whittingham is a Circus Artist, Acrobat and Teacher. Originally trained as a gymnast before later studying Teeterboard at L’ESAC in Brussels, Nat is a versatile and experienced acrobat. Picked up as an apprentice by Nofit State Circus at the age of 18, he toured internationally with their show Bianco as well as Block and Open House and has worked with them ever since.

After his time at ESAC, he worked extensively in the UK and Europe, with companies such as Upswing Aerial, Pirates of the Carabina, Dot Comedy and Compagnie Bivouac. In recent years he has focussed on solo acrobatics, fusing traditional gymnastics, contemporary floorwork and acrobatic research. He teaches this internationally (with his partner) under the name Moving Through Acrobatics, as well as being a resident teacher at Circomedia and Fourth Monkey Theatre School.
BECKY MINTO
DESIGNER

Becky Minto (Designer)
Becky Minto was awarded the Silver medal for Space Design for the National Theatre Scotland's production of The 306:Dawn at the World Stage Design exhibition in Taipei 2017. She has been nominated for three CATS awards and a Manchester Evening News Award for Best Design.

Her designs for NTS production Ignition and Iron-Oxide's White Gold were selected for Make Believe/ UK Design for Performance exhibition at the Prague Quadrennial and The V&A, London 2015. She has exhibited for the Society of British Theatre Designers in 2015, 2011 and 2007.

Becky also teaches on the Performance Costume Degree at Edinburgh College of Art.

KIM MOORE
COMPOSER / SOUND DESIGNER

Kim Moore works as composer, music producer, sound designer across experimental electronic and contemporary music, in theatre, dance, film. Her work varies from ghostly orchestral worlds to distorted noise and electronic driven scores. Some of her work includes Icepole, Blueblock Studio, Sprogrock [Katy Wilson and Starcatchers], NoShow [Ellie Dubois], Dolls, [National Theatre of Scotland], Mouthpiece [Kieran Hurley, Traverse Theatre] and Tigertale/ Tiger [Barrowland Ballet].
MARKETING

VIDEO TRAILER

KEY MESSAGES

• Little Top – a magical first circus experience created especially for babies 0-18 months and their grown-ups
• Experience spectacular balances, astonishing tumbles and inventive juggling up close with professional circus performers who will make eye contact, interact and respond to their young audience
• A colourful, cosy and comfortable set built especially for little ones, taking into account their line of sight with space to toddle, crawl, wave and bounce
• A truly multi-sensory performance and an invitation to stay and play afterwards
• #OurFirstCircus – a shared first circus experience for baby and parent/carer; creating magical memories.

PROMOTION MATERIAL

Promotional material: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/40loqo7029df3rt/AACeBugqCoaxy95ABVl367M7a?dl=0

Contact us for high resolution images and marketing plans. We can provide overprinted flyers and posters and imagery for social media.
**TECHNICAL DETAILS**

**STAGING AND SET**

The stage/ performance area must be flat, even and without any large holes e.g. large dip trap access. The show is performed on a dance floor which forms part of the set. Please ensure the floor is in good condition.

The set is made from aluminium tube uprights and material to create a Little Top tent. The performance and all audience seating are inside the tent.

Minimum space required: 10m x 10m x 4m. We require a central hanging point to lift festoon and bunting to 3m-5m from the floor.

**LX AND SOUND**

Company tour with 2 laptops running both LX and Sound from Qlab.
TECH KIT OT BE PROVIDED BY PRESENTER

- 6 x Chauvet Colorado Zoom 2 LED Pars
- 6 x 1/2k fresnels
- 6 x Source 4 Junior zooms
- 3 x 15 to 13amp jumps
- 12 x 3m 15amp cables
- 3 x 5m 15amp cables
- DMX
- 2 x 10m Soca
- 1 x MOTU
- 1 x Jack to XLR 6 way loom
- 1 x Jack to XLR 2 way loom
- Power for MOTU
- Fire wire for MOTU
- 3 x 1/2k fresnels
- 13amp cables
- 3 x alpha packs
- 1 x beta pack
- 12 x stage weights
- 3 x plastic crates
- 12 x Tank traps
- 1 x trolley for tank traps

*If touring to an international venue we will need adaptors to the relevant power source/relevant cables of correct length.

DRESSING ROOMS & WARM UPS

The company require two secure dressing rooms to accommodate the two female and one male performer and their personal possessions. This dressing rooms need access to showers.

Time on stage, or a suitable, heated, space has to be dedicated to the performers to allow the minimum warm-up time of 1 hour thirty minutes. Due to the nature of circus and this piece in particular, this is essential in order to help prevent injury.

GET IN/OUT

Minimum 4 hours. Pre-rigging preferred where possible; essential for same day get in. Company require presenter to supply at least one technician to support the get in and get out. We do not require an operator for the show.

TOURING COMPANY / FREIGHT

Six on the road (4 Performers, 1 Production Manager/Technician, 1 Producer/Company Manager.) For UK and European touring set is transported in extra long wheel base van. Details of international freight available on request.

ACCOMMODATION

Single rooms (en-suite) on a bed and breakfast basis.