

THE GARDENING CLUB

a new musical



over the counter, under the radar

Book, Music, & Lyrics by
Carleigh McRitchie & Bella Wright



THE GARDENING CLUB

over the counter, under the radar

In the golden age of perfect housewives and manicured lawns, five women break through this publicised lie to bring awareness to the dark sides of womanhood. *The Gardening Club* is a new pop-rock musical based in 1960 Georgia USA, where a group of women form a secret drug ring to distribute the birth control pill illegally, using a gardening club as a cover-up. A fiery journalist, a brave nurse, the cookie-cutter housewife, and two teenage sisters join forces to do whatever it takes to help the women of Savannah.

About New Wimbledon Theatre



AN ATG ENTERTAINMENT VENUE

Nowhere Girls Theatre

Founded by McRitchie and Wright in 2024, *Nowhere Girls Theatre* stands at the intersection between art and advocacy. Dedicated to breaking taboos, the duo sparks conversation around sex positivity and gender equality through music and live theatre — most notably in their debut work, *The Gardening Club*.

Our Manifesto

Nowhere Girls Theatre serves as a platform to encourage women and non-binary artists to be unapologetically loud and take up space! We reclaim “nowhere girl” for those who have been pushed to the margins — the unheard, the unseen, and the unafraid. Our company amplifies voices long silenced, creating a community where every story demands to be heard and every voice fuels change.

Established in 1910, New Wimbledon Theatre is a stunning Grade II listed venue in the heart of South West London. With its rich Edwardian heritage and legacy of hosting world-class performances, the theatre continues to be a vibrant home for musicals, plays, comedy and community events. Alongside the historic main house, the venue also proudly supports new and emerging work in its flexible black-box space, the *Studio at New Wimbledon Theatre*. New Wimbledon Theatre is delighted to host, as part of their Premieres Season, *The Gardening Club*, live in the Studio from Thursday 18 to Saturday 27 September 2025. The Studio space is part of their ongoing commitment to platforming bold, original voices in theatre. New Wimbledon Theatre is operated by the ATG.

Our Story

VOL. 1, NO.4

18 SEP 2025

Bella Wright grew up in Montana, wrapped (literally) in theatre: her baby blanket was stitched from her parents' old costumes. She's been on stage since she was four, raised in her hometown's community theatre.

Across the country in New Hampshire, Carleigh McRitchie was all guitars and garage gigs, brought up on classic rock and the rush of live music. Theatre? Never her thing.

They met studying abroad in Liverpool and instantly clicked, best friends from day one. When Bella learned Carleigh had never seen a professional musical, she dragged her to see *Wicked* on the West End. Carleigh didn't expect much, but somewhere between "Defying Gravity" and curtain call, she fell in love with musical theatre for the first time.

One summer evening in 2021, Carleigh turned to Bella and said, "What if we wrote our own musical?" She had no idea that Bella had secretly dreamed of that very thing. Bella shot back with an excited smile, "You better mean it, because I've got a Google Doc with ideas." The next day, *The Gardening Club* was born. From that moment on, they wrote every day for at least two hours, no exceptions.

Two years (and a deep dive into 1960s Savannah, Georgia) later, their final year of university arrived. They both knew it was time. Sitting in their favorite coffee shop with their best friend and arranger, Eli Younger, the three of them threw their hands in the middle and made it official: *The Gardening Club* would premiere in March 2024.



Carleigh McRitchie & Bella Wright

Thanks to an incredible first cast and crew, the premiere of *The Gardening Club* sold out its entire opening weekend. Energized by the response, Bella and Carleigh packed up Act I and took it to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

In the buzzing streets of Edinburgh, a brand new audience fell in love with the gardening girls. All six shows sold out, and to top it off, they were interviewed by *Playbill*, the iconic American theatre magazine.

Since then, the duo has been rewriting, fine-tuning every melody and sharpening the story. Now, with support from ATG and the New Wimbledon Theatre, they're bringing *The Gardening Club* to life once more, but this time in London, where the heart of musical theatre beats loudly. Follow them on the journey.

NOWHERE GIRLS THEATRE
in association with **BELINDA MATTHEWS**

Presents



Book, Music, and Lyrics by
CARLEIGH MCRITCHIE
& BELLA WRIGHT

Starring
EMMA WALLACE - OLIVIA TAYLOR QUINN - HANNAH GREENSMITH
EMMA ESPADA - LOLA GARLICK

with
HARRY BELTON - ISAAC MOORE - RICHIE PAISLEY
JASMINE BATES - CALLUM BULTITUDE - REBECCA-JO ROBERTS

**Orchestrations &
Musical Supervision**
ELI YOUNGER

Sound Design
ZAIN HAMAD

Set Design
EVIE JONES

Costume Design
**SHANNON
BLACKWOOD**

Lighting Design
THEA BULGIN

Choreography
AIMEE LEIGH

Stage Manager
JONI FRANIECZEK

Direction
TARA NOONAN

Cast & Crew



EMMA WALLACE

Phoebe Larson

Emma (she/her) is an Argentine-American actress, choreographer, and producer based in London. She is excited to return to

The Gardening Club, a project she's been involved with since January 2024.

Credits: *Emilia* (Lady Anne/Choreographer), *Spring Awakening* (Martha/Dance Captain), *RENT* (Mimi u/s, Choreographer), *13 Going on 30*, *The Musical* (Co-producer). Emma is grateful to her team for reminding her that no

dream is too small. Special thanks to Paul Isles at Link Artists, her parents,

Jellybean, her family in Argentina, and to Carleigh and Bella for the chance to bring this meaningful story to life.

TRAINING: Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts; LAMDA

IG: @emmafwallace



OLIVIA TAYLOR QUINN

Betty Collins

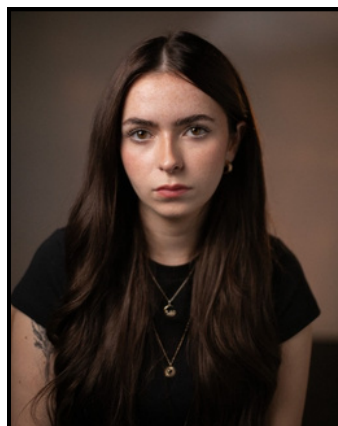
Whilst training, Olivia performed in Sondheim's *Anyone Can Whistle* as Cora Hoover Hooper and Maureen/Queenie in *Honk!*

When she's not performing, Olivia works with young people with additional needs and teaches performance arts in a West London College. She would like to thank the

cast and creatives of *The Gardening Club* for this amazing opportunity and her family and friends for their endless support!

TRAINING: London College of Music

IG: @oliviataylorquinn



HANNAH GREENSMITH

Sheila Watson

Hannah is delighted to return to *The Gardening Club*, this time as Sheila.

Theatre credits include *The Gardening Club* at Edinburgh Fringe (Vicki), *We Weren't Innocent*, *We Were Girls* (Hannah Burnsley), *Lord of the Flies* (Sam), *The Rover* (Antonio), and *As You Like It* (Celia). She has recently completed filming

her first feature with Working Title, "cc:Emily" (Romeo), set for release in 2025. Hannah is

represented by AC Actors and will appear in *West End Introducing: a live concert* at the Lyric Theatre this October. She shares life with her two much-loved dogs, Wallace and Ringo, who serve as her loyal at-home audience.

TRAINING: Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts

IG: @h.anrose



EMMA ESPADA

Maggie Martin

Emma is a Mexican-American actress from San Antonio, Texas.

Theatre Credits: *Stalled* (King's Head Theater). Credits while training: *Rent!* (LIPA), *Blu* (Texas State), *She Kills Monsters* (LIPA), *LAURA KIELER* (LIPA, Breach Theatre).

Emma is grateful to be in such a wonderful project and sends love to her wonderful supportive family and friends cheering her on.

TRAINING: Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts

IG: @emma_espada

Cast & Crew



LOLA GARLICK

Vicki Martin

Lola (she/her) is an Actor/Singer from Essex, based in London. A recent drama school graduate, she is ready to begin her professional career starring in *The Gardening Club* for the third time. Credits include: "Eastenders", *The Winter's Tale* (dir. Roy Alexander Weise), *The Sweet Science of Bruising* (dir. Lucy Jane Atkinson.) Lola would like to give a special mention to those who have shown belief in her abilities throughout her acting journey: Mum, Dad, family and friends; Kristian Wall and Liam McLaughlin @ Just Add Milk; Roy Alexander Weise; Hannah Preece and Melissa Wenn.

TRAINING: Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts
IG: @lolagarlick.x

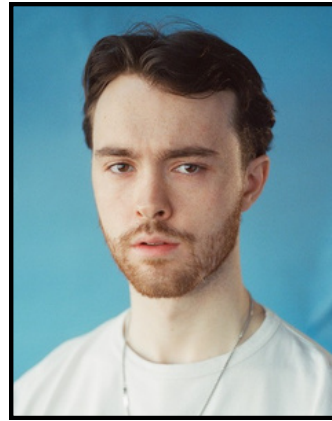


HARRY BELTON

Cliff Watson

Harry has taken part in numerous shows both in and out of drama school training: *Hairspray* (2019), *Oliver!* (2019), *Queen Margaret* (2024), *RENT* (2023), *Spring Awakening* (2023), *Fairlight* (2025), and *The Gardening Club* (2024). Harry has also appeared in Film and TV in "The Circle: Reawakening" (2025) on Amazon Prime.

TRAINING: The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts
IG: @harry.belton_

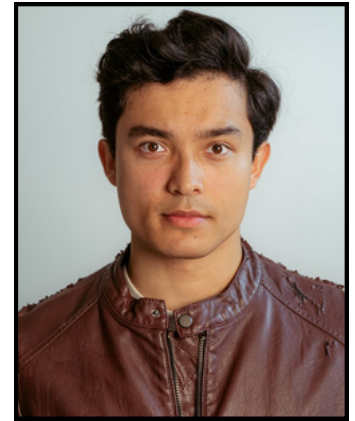


ISAAC MOORE

Luke Barnes

Isaac is an actor from the North East of England. Recent Theatre credits include: Michael in *The Boys in The Band* (Hope Street Theatre), Earnest in *STELLA* (Everyman EVI theatre), Roger in *RENT* (LIPA), *Scribbles Volume II* (The Other Palace). Recent film credits: Jack in "Another World" (Bass films). Isaac is incredibly excited to be joining *The Gardening Club* family for a third time and is very grateful for his family and friends' unwavering support.

TRAINING: Management course of the arts programme at The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts
IG: @cowsgomoore



RICHIE PAISLEY

Miles Bourne

Richie is thrilled to make his return to *The Gardening Club* and make his London debut. He has previously originated the role of Cliff Watson in the show's debut in March 2024 and at Edinburgh Fringe 2024. Other recent productions include *RENT* (Benny), directed by Stephen Fletcher. Richie is also a professional musician. He sends love to all of his family in South East Asia and the UK.

TRAINING: Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts
IG: @richiepaisley

Cast & Crew



JASMINE BATES

Ensemble/Understudy

Whilst at University, Jas played Miss Sherman in *Fame, The Musical*, originated The Villain in Thomas Ashton's dance project "The Artist", and danced in Ashton's Mainstage piece at "MOVE IT". She also appeared as a dancer in the feature film "Jackie". While at The BRIT School, Jas portrayed Berthe in *Pippin* and was a featured singer in "The BRIT Transforms Revue" at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane. As a child, she performed in the opera *Amahl and the Night Visitors* with Capital Arts Children's Choir.

TRAINING: Bird College,
The BRIT School
IG: @jas._bates



CALLUM BULTITUDE

Ensemble/Understudy

Callum (He/Him) is an Actor/Singer from Kent, based in London. His recent credits include Moritz in *Spring Awakening* (Phoenix Arts Club), Lead Vocalist on *Viking Cruises* (Blackburn International). In training credits: *Big Fish* (Edward Bloom), *Sweeney Todd* (Beadle Bamford/Assistant Director). Callum is super excited to join the cast of *The Gardening Club*, and would like to thank his amazing family and friends for all the support!

TRAINING: Italia Conti
IG: @callum.n.bultitude



REBECCA-JO ROBERTS

Ensemble/Understudy

Rebecca-Jo most recently originated Robin in the world premiere of *Stalled* (King's Head Theatre), *A Marvellous Party* (Prince of Wales Theatre), *The Sound of Music* (UK Tour), *Les Misérables* (Sondheim Theatre). She was also featured in the short movement film "Kick Me Under the Table" (IGM). Last summer Rebecca-Jo was invited to partake in Wise Children's Open Residency. She is the Artistic Director of Out of Pocket Theatre.

TRAINING: The Oxford School of Drama, The National Youth Theatre
IG: @rebeccajoroberts

TARA NOONAN

Director

Tara is a director and facilitator from South London. This is her third of three new musicals this year. She directed the musical *Medea Upstairs at the Gatehouse* and workshopped *Bollywood Rose* in preparation for a 2026 production. Earlier she toured *Coming To England*, a new musical about the life of Floella Benjamin and her experience emigrating to England in the Windrush generation. Credits include *Songs for a New World* (Upstairs at the Gatehouse), *Diary of a Gay Disaster* (King's Head Theatre), *Spring Awakening* (Phoenix Arts Club), *Batboy*, and *Bare* (London Palladium).

BELINDA MATTHEWS

Associate Producer

Belinda is a passionate theatre producer, driven by a love for innovative storytelling. She has been working on *The Gardening Club* since its Liverpool debut. Past experiences range from an internship at PW Productions to freelance stage management. Producing credits include: *Less than a chair* (Theatre Am Gleis), *The Gardening Club* (Liverpool & Edinburgh Fringe), *Soul Mate* (Edinburgh Fringe), and *Rent* (Liverpool). She looks forward to continue working on *The Gardening Club* and watching the show grow.

TRAINING: Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts, Anthony Field Producer Prize

EDITORIAL

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

by Tara Noonan

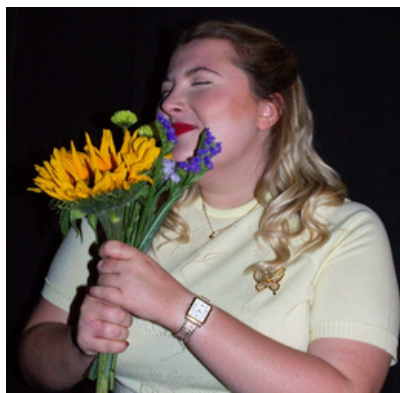
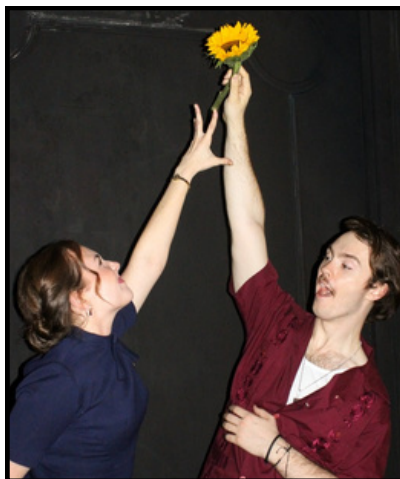
What you are about to see is a new musical that germinated – there will be plant puns, prepare yourselves – in the world of fringe theatre, and I couldn't be more thrilled that it has such a prominent showcase on a London stage. Thank you to the team at ATG for inviting us to open your Premieres Season, and for all of the support throughout this run.

Audiences are the lifeblood of new work, so I thank you for taking the time to support a new musical!

I wish I could say that the experiences of our characters do not resemble those of women today, but it only takes one look at the news to see that women's reproductive rights are just as vulnerable as ever. We hope that with this show we can be a part of preserving the steps taken by all the women who have come before us, as well as all the steps we are yet to take.

To get a musical to the stage in two weeks takes a Herculean effort from every department, and I have to give every single member of this cast and crew their flowers for their effort, professionalism, and enthusiasm.

I can't wait to see what the future of this show looks like, and I thank you for being here with us as we take our first few steps towards someday. I hope you enjoy your time in the garden.

**THE FIGHT ISN'T OVER**

by McRitchie & Wright

Is there a better way to spend Sexual Health Week than at the London debut of a birth control musical? Hard to imagine. *The Gardening Club* is fictional, but its roots run deep in history.

It wasn't until 1972 when contraception was extended to unmarried women in the US and the UK. And while no actual "gardening club" existed, history is rich with parallels. In 1970s Chicago, an underground abortion network called "The Janes" used secret newspaper ads to connect women to care. And the first version of the pill came with dangerous side effects – reports of cancer, strokes, blood clots and even death, until journalist Barbara Seaman exposed the risks in "A Doctor's Case Against the Pill" (1969), which helped inspire reform.

Fast-forward 50 years, and the fight is far from over. "Contraceptive deserts" exist across both the US and the UK. Over 19 million American women live without reasonable access to care, and nearly half of UK women report difficulty accessing contraception. This gap stems from lack of resources, education, and political will.

So, what can be done? Support your local sexual health clinics. Write to your MPs or elected officials. Raise awareness. Vote. Like Barbara Seaman in real life, and like our fictional heroine Phoebe Larson, fight for reproductive freedom and care. The curtain may rise on this musical, but the movement it sings of is real. The club is open. The question is: will you join?

Musical Numbers

ACT I

WATCH ME GROW	Full Company
THE PERKS OF BEING A MAN	Luke, Miles, Cliff, Ensemble
OVER THE COUNTER, UNDER THE RADAR	Phoebe, Betty, Sheila, Maggie, Vicki
I'D TURN THE PAGE	Vicki, Miles
EDGING TO HEAVEN	Phoebe, Betty, Sheila, Maggie
'TILL DEATH DO US PART	Sheila, Cliff
SOMEDAY	Phoebe, Maggie, Betty, Vicki, Sheila, Ensemble
ACT 1 FINALE	Full Company

ACT II

BETTY'S HAPPY ENDING	Betty
DON'T LET DOWN THE GUYS	Luke, Miles, Cliff, Ensemble
OVER THE COUNTER (REPRISE)	Phoebe, Betty, Sheila, Maggie, Vicki, Miles
OFF THE RECORD	Phoebe, Luke, Pharmacist
TEACH YOU TO TOUCH ME	Vicki, Miles
FEATHERS BY MORNING	Maggie, Ensemble
STEAL THE DRUG	Phoebe, Vicki, Betty, Miles, Pharmacist
WATCH ME GROW (FINALE)	Full Company

Cast

in alphabetic order

JASMINE BATES	Doctor, Ensemble
HARRY BELTON	Cliff Watson
CALLUM BULTITUDE	Pharmacist, Ensemble
EMMA ESPADA	Maggie Martin
LOLA GARLICK	Vicki Martin
HANNAH GREENSMITH	Sheila Watson
ISAAC MOORE	Luke Barnes
RICHIE PAISLEY	Miles Bourne
OLIVIA TAYLOR QUINN	Betty Collins
REBECCA-JO ROBERTS	Ensemble
EMMA WALLACE	Phoebe Larson

Understudies

PHOEBE, BETTY, MAGGIE	Jasmine Bates
LUKE, CLIFF, MILES	Callum Bultitude
SHEILA, VICKI	Rebecca-Jo Roberts

Production Team

BOOK, MUSIC, & LYRICS	Carleigh McRitchie
BOOK, MUSIC, & LYRICS	Bella Wright
DIRECTION	Tara Noonan
CHOREOGRAPHY	Aimee Leigh
ORCHESTRATIONS & MUSICAL SUPERVISION	Eli Younger
SOUND DESIGN	Zain Hamad
SET DESIGN	Evie Jones
COSTUME DESIGN	Shannon Blackwood
COSTUME ASSISTANT	Hazel Fairley
LIGHT DESIGN	Thea Bulgin
LIGHTING PROGRAMMER	Alfie Merrifield
LIGHT OPERATOR/STAGE MANAGER	Joni Franieczek
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER	Gracie McNally
INTIMACY COORDINATOR	Aimee Leigh
PRODUCER & MUSIC DIRECTOR	Carleigh McRitchie
PRODUCER & MUSIC DIRECTOR	Bella Wright
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER	Belinda Matthews