

PENTABUS

The Nation's Rural Theatre Company

PRESS RELEASE
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Pentabus Announce Tom Powell as their 2019/20 Clive & Sylvia Richards Charity Writer in Residence

Pentabus is thrilled to announce their second Clive and Sylvia Richards Charity Writer in Residence – Tom Powell.

Tom won the OTR National Radio Drama Award and the Footlights' Harry Porter Prize whilst still a student and has recently been announced as a member of the BBC Writers' Academy. His theatre work includes: *Little Echoes* (Hope Theatre); *I Dare You* (Leicester Curve, Nottingham Playhouse, Derby Theatre); *I'm Telling You It Is* (Arcola, Miniaturists 68) and *Unpossibiling* (Edinburgh Festival, Pleasance Dome).

During his year with Pentabus, Tom will write at least one new play as well as support the new cohort of Pentabus Young Writers to write their first short plays, which will be produced next summer.

Tom will take up his year-long residency with Pentabus in January 2020.

Tom Powell said: *'It hurts. I'm in serious pain. People are worried for my health. I haven't stopped smiling since I found out and my jaw aches. To have the time and space to focus on my writing and to get to know such a brilliant team is something I am incredibly grateful for. I can't wait to move to the quiet, sprawling countryside and for the lovely pubs of Ludlow. This opportunity is vital, both for what it represents as an artist at this stage of my career and for what it offers in support, expertise and time. Thank you Clive, Sylvia and the Pentabus team: it feels like the bursary will not only make my year but change my life.'*

Sophie Motley, Pentabus Artistic Director said: *'We're thrilled to welcome Tom to the Pentabus family. He is a brilliant young writer, and during his time here with us, he will not only become a core member of the team but more importantly he will be able to simply write, without restriction. This opportunity enables us to spend a year with an artist at the heart of the company; we will learn from Tom as he develops his craft. We're immensely grateful to the Clive and Sylvia Richards Charity for supporting this work.'*

The Clive and Sylvia Richards Charity said: *'We are delighted to sponsor the Writer in Residence for the second year. Tom Powell is a very worthy winner, chosen from a long list of 70 writers, down to a short list of 8. We are looking forward to his year at Pentabus.'*

For press enquiries please contact Catrin John – 01584 856 564 or catrin@pentabus.co.uk

Notes to Editors

Pentabus Writers in Residence

Previous Pentabus writers in residence were Sophie Ellerby (2018), Tim Foley (2016), Joe White (2015) and Simon Longman (2014). Sophie has recently received great reviews for her play *Lit* commissioned by HighTide and Nottingham Playhouse; Tim was awarded a Bruntwood Prize For Playwriting in 2017; Simon won the George Devine award for his play *Gundog* at the Royal Court and Joe's play *Mayfly* was produced by the Orange Tree Theatre in Richmond last year and won the OffWestEnd Award for Most Promising New Playwright.

About Pentabus

Pentabus is the nation's rural theatre company. We are the only professional theatre company in the UK whose vision is singularly rural. We tour new plays about the contemporary rural world to new audiences in village halls, fields, festivals and theatres, telling stories with local relevance, plus national and international impact. We believe that every person living in an isolated rural community has a right to exceptional theatre. We are based on a farm in Shropshire, and to date all of our work has been made here. It then tours village halls and theatres locally and nationally. Over four and a half decades we've produced 171 new plays, reached over half a million audience members, won a prestigious South Bank Show award, a Fringe First and were the first to live stream from a village hall. We have hosted a writer in residence since 2014 and they have gone on to be commissioned by the Royal Court, Birmingham Rep, Royal Welsh College, Nottingham Playhouse and the Bush.

We are a champion for rural young people aged 16 to 25 and Pentabus Young Company is our new initiative offering workshops, master-classes, work experience and mentorships, as well as the opportunity to join our Young Writers' Group, which has been running for six years. Previous participants of the Young Writers' Group have had their work presented at Ludlow Fringe, Latitude Festival and Hereford Courtyard. It is a springboard into further study and the arts industry, with many of our Young Writers going on to be published and professional writers.

About Tom Powell

Tom won the OTR National Radio Drama Award and the Footlights' Harry Porter Prize and is part of the Soho Writers Alumni Group. He is published by Methuen Drama. He has recently been announced as a participant of the BBC Writers' Academy 2019/20. Recent work includes: *Little Echoes* (Hope Theatre); *I Dare You* (Leicester Curve, Nottingham Playhouse, Derby Theatre); *Everything You Ever Needed to Know About Ants* (Pint Sized, The Bunker); *I'm Telling You It Is* (Arcola, Miniaturists 68); *Unpossibilitating* (Edinburgh Festival, Pleasance Dome); *White Light* (Arcola, Playwright Festival); *Goodnight Mr Bear* (Pleasance Theatre London, Daily Plays); *Autumn* (Significant Other, Tristan Bates Theatre); *Who Decides?* (Oval House); *The Butterfly Defect* (Theatre 503, Rapid Write Response); *The Fabulous Derek Alfrick*, *The House at the End of the Road* (Southwark Playhouse); *Serengeti* (Omniwrite, Clapham Omnibus).



Pentabus is also supported by The Millichope Foundation.