

**EAST 15**  
ACTING SCHOOL



BA ACTING & PHYSICAL THEATRE PRESENTS



THURS 21 – FRI 22 MAY | 7:30PM  
SAT 23 MAY | 2:30PM & 7:30PM

**CLIFFTOWN THEATRE**

NELSON STREET, SOUTHEND, ESSEX SS1 1EF  
01702 328335 | [WWW.CLIFFTOWNTHEATRE.CO.UK](http://WWW.CLIFFTOWNTHEATRE.CO.UK)

BA ACTING & PHYSICAL THEATRE PRESENTS

# MACHINAL

WRITTEN BY SOPHIE TREADWELL

DIRECTED BY NATALIE SIMONE



**“Your skin oughtn't to curl—ought it—when he just comes near you—ought it?”**

A young woman is trapped in life's machine, reluctantly marrying her boss whom she finds repulsive – a necessity, not love – and the days tick by in an endless cycle. One day, the woman finds passion with a stranger and longs to break free.

The woman is silenced.

The woman revolts.

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**RUNNING TIME:**

2hr 25mins. This includes a 15min interval.

**RATING: 14+**

This production contains:

Loud or sudden noises; Racist and discriminatory language.

# SOPHIE TREADWELL



Sophie Treadwell, writer of *Machinal*, was an actor, leading playwright and journalist in the early 20th century, but was largely forgotten until a renaissance of her work in the 1990s. She was a pioneer in both theatre and journalism, pushing the boundaries of what was expected of, and possible for, women during her lifetime. As the Daily Telegraph wrote in 1993, 'Treadwell is one of those fascinating people whose life was full of adventure but about whom little was ever recorded.'

She wrote four novels and more than thirty plays, including *O Nightingale* (1922), *Gringo* (1922), *Machinal* (1928), *Ladies Leave* (1929), *Plumes in the Dust* (1936), and *Hope for a Harvest* (1941). In 1910 Treadwell suffered the first of several mental health breakdowns and was admitted into St. Helena Sanatorium. Her mental health is mirrored in her characters, including the young woman in *Machinal*. She died in 1970.

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# NATALIE SIMONE



Natalie (Nat) is a British-Italian theatre director, born and raised in Derby. She creates interdisciplinary, highly visual productions across new writing, devised work, and classical texts. Her work is defined by bold theatricality and a desire to challenge form - stirring the imagination and asking what it really means to be alive.

Originally training as a theatre maker at East 15, Nat later completed an MA in Directing at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, where she won the E Roberts Award for Outstanding Achievement. She was a finalist for the JMK award in 2026, nominated for Best Director at the Off West End Awards for her production of *The Ugly One* by Marius von Mayenburg and was the 2024 Jerwood Assistant Director at the Young Vic.

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The plot is the story of a young woman who murders her husband, an ordinary young woman, *any woman*. The action moves through the stages of her life, in none of which she finds any peace.

*Machinal* is inspired by the real-life case of Ruth Snyder, who was convicted in 1927 for the murder of her husband alongside her lover, Judd Gray. The case became a media sensation, with Snyder vilified in the press and reduced to a public spectacle under headlines calling her "Ruthless Ruth."

At her execution, a reporter secretly smuggled a camera into the chamber and captured an image of Snyder being electrocuted in the electric chair. The photograph was published the next morning, turning her death into public entertainment, reducing her to an image never meant to be seen, stripping away her dignity and humanity.

Playwright Sophie Treadwell drew from this case after attending the trial, using it as the basis for *Machinal*. I am a female director presenting a story of a woman, written by Sophie Treadwell, who had to work relentlessly to be heard, seen and taken seriously. Little did she know this play would become a sensation. Thank you, Treadwell.

This production is for women whose voices were silenced within systems that shape, limit and judge them. And to our woman, Helen Jones.

But now, to business! Thank you to the deeply dedicated and hardworking students who helped bring this production to life. They were my collaborators and I am in awe of them.

- Nat

# CAST

IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

[AWURA AMA ADU](#)



Reporter | Waiter

[HANNAH ACKERLEY](#)



Reporter  
Stenographer

[CHARLIE ARTHUR](#)



Man at Bar | Judge  
Filing Clerk

[JOSEPH BYNOTH](#)



Bailiff | Man

[SAOIRSE CANTY](#)



Woman at Bar  
Priest

[ALEX JAMES CARTER](#)



Husband

[RÓISÍN CARROLL](#)



Young Woman

[MAX DAVID](#)



Guard | Second Man

[AIDAN HARVEY](#)



Boy at Bar | Guard  
Defence Lawyer

[ELLIE HIATT](#)



Mother

[LEAH MADDOCK](#)



Barber 1  
Telephone Girl

[AYA MARUYAMA](#)



Nurse | Jailer

JESSICA-MAE  
NOLAN



Girl | Reporter

NOA OFIR



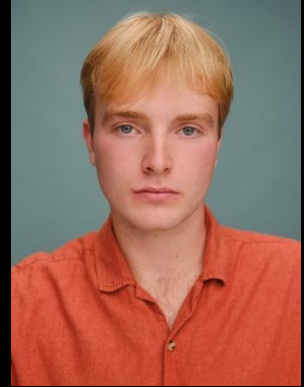
Matron | Adding Clerk  
Court Reporter

LUCAS  
PRICE-TAYLOR



Doctor | Man | Clerk

JOSH TOMLEY



Barber 2  
Prosecution Lawyer

WILL SIMONS



Young Man

# TECHNICAL & CREATIVE TEAM

Written by Sophie Treadwell  
Directed by Natalie Simone

Lighting Design Steve Owens  
Sound Design Yuri Lynch-Furtado  
Set Design Carlos Moral Reis  
Costume Design Olivia Jamieson  
Design Support Joseph Bynoth

Production Manager Steve Owens  
Stage Manager Charlotte Windley  
Wardrobe Supervisor Ali Manners  
Wardrobe Assistant Andrea Wingrove-Dunn  
Set Construction Carlos Moral Reis  
Assistant Director Jessica-Mae Nolan

Head of Course Simon Hunt  
Movement Tutor Steffany George  
Voice Tutor Morag Stark

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