

British Theatre Guide

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Pan

Adapted from J M Barrie by Dave Carey, Jo Collins, Hector Dogliani, Ashley Driver, Phil Haines, Will Lawrence, Cara McNanny, Paul Morrall, Sebastian Ross and Aine Smith

Chickenshed Theatre, London

5 December 2024–11 January 2025

The rich colours and design of the stage set designed by Andrew Caddies can't fail to catch your eye as you walk to your seat. A rock-like central platform decked with greenery sits on a warm, velvet stage carpet within a semicircular wooden frame, one side of which is labelled NW, W, SW and the other side with the letters NE, E, SE.

This is a story of a journey in which the three children, Wendy (Mouse O'Hehir), John (Sebastian Lack) and Michael (Aiden Martins), one night meet the mysterious Peter Pan, who takes them to places they could barely believe were possible.

It wouldn't have happened if their father hadn't banished their nanny, the dog Nana, a striped puppet, to the outside kennel, something he will regret because in its absence Peter Pan comes to the children's bedroom looking for his lost shadow and invites the three curious children to fly with him to Neverland and the Lost Ones.

Their adventure will also include a worrying encounter with the dangerous Captain Hook, played with impressive comic timing by Jonny Morton.

A huge band of pirates assists the notorious Hook in his mischief, which seems focused on getting revenge on Peter Pan. They, along with the Lost Ones in the Green Rota, are listed in the programme as being played by 125 performers, and across the five rotas, the cast numbers 800.

That is an incredible number to choreograph, but Bethany Hamlin's choreography is stunningly good. It enhances scenes and sometimes grabs your attention with the sheer rhythmic energy and coordinated movements of the dancers.

The show is peppered with some 17 songs, from the gentle opening number "Calling You Home" to the rousing act two rendition of "Clap If You Believe in Fairies", which has the cast lining the stairs alongside the seating as they encourage the audience to take part in the song to revive the dying Tinkerbell, who swallowed poison to save the life of Peter Pan (Demar Lambert). It's one of those occasions when the demonstration of collective hope and concern for others works.

That is probably one of the memorable moments that led to *Pan* becoming the 50th anniversary Christmas show after receiving 2,287 votes.

Reviewer: [Keith Mckenna](#)