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Jamie Riding, a student of ours studying at the Jellicoe Theatre has landed himself a role as one of the biggest panto legends that's ever stepped on stage. The Jack and the Beanstalk play will be taking place this Christmas from December 17th - January 1st at the Princes Theatre in Clacton. Along with Jamie, there'll be special appearances from TV stars to add that extra magic.

The 21-year-old upcoming actor will put a smile on the faces of his audience who will be looking forward to seeing him perform in the popular costumes worn by the famous pantomime stars John Inman and Malcolm Lord. Being the third-generation actor to have the privilege of wearing such outfits, he can't wait to get out on stage as Dame Daisy Trott.

Jamie stated, "These are probably some of the most famous costumes from the history of pantomime. I feel more than honoured to be carrying that heritage on my shoulders."

Regarding the amount of costumes that Jamie will have to perform in throughout the show, he said, "I will have about 11 costume changes in the show - every single entrance I am on stage I have a different one - from wig, shoes and jewellery and gloves. And one of them I need to put on from top to toe for about 30 seconds."

Playing on stage has always been a pleasure for Jamie and he enjoys the all the rush that comes with the job. It's not always a calm environment and when everyone is able to catch a quick break, Jamie has his work cut out for him. He added, "To be working in an industry I love so dearly is just so special to me. And I know if you captivate the audience, especially the children, they will come back to the theatre for life."

Alongside Jamie on stage, audiences will be able to see former X-factor winner, Ben Haenow, jump on stage and test out his acting skills in the theatre. He is looking forward to his next quest as the main role, Jack, in Clacton's Jack and the Beanstalk.

Jack said, "This is my second time doing panto and it is great to get advice from the rest of the cast. I guess I am out of my comfort zone, it feels quite scary, but exciting at the same time"

Theatre lovers will also see Gemma Bissix, former Hollyoaks and EastEnders star, in the spotlight on stage as the fairy in the show. In the past Gemma has featured in 11 pantos and is looking forward to making this her twelfth appearance. Gemma stated, "I always play baddies in pantos as well so this time it is really nice to be the one that the kids are hopefully going to like," she laughs.

"For some children a panto will be their first experience in the theatre, so we as actors want to show them what our legacy is because we want them to keep performing panto as they grow up.