

Horizon Showcase announces new wave of England based artists presenting work as part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2021

Horizon - Performance Created in England

August 2021

<https://www.horizonshowcase.uk>

Today, (Tuesday 20 July), a consortium of England's leading artist-focused arts organisations have announced the line-up for Horizon - Performance Created in England, a vibrant new showcase for this year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe taking place from 16 August, with the public programme during the week of 23 August. Nine new, tour-ready, performance works are to be presented in a range of digital settings, alongside seven new projects, supported as part of a 'residency' programme, which enables artists to play with new performance ideas across a range of formats and genres.

The works across both the residencies and live performance strands demonstrate the original idea under which Horizon was first posited earlier in 2021 - celebrating artists who are working across performance disciplines and currently based in England - all born out of a new approach to build deep and sustainable collaborations internationally. Horizon is delivered by a consortium made up of [Battersea Arts Centre](#), [Dance4](#), [Fierce Festival](#), [GIFT](#), [MAYK](#) and [Transform](#).

The performance programme includes Olivier Award-winning choreographer and director **Botis Seva**, founder of Far From The Norm, with *BLKDOG*, a haunting commentary on surviving adulthood as a childlike artist; *Future Cargo*, a sci-fi dance show performed in a 40-foot haulage truck is the latest outdoor work by **Requardt & Rosenberg**, filmed for audiences to experience at home with an intimate sound score. Artist **Janine Harrington** presents a digital online version of her 2018 *Screensaver Series*, a five-dancer-strong movement and sound installation inspired by the obsolete screen-saving programmes of early computing; and performance and installation artist **Joshua Sofaer's** *Opera Helps* will use zoom to bring professional opera singers into audiences' own homes for a one to one performance.

First presented at Contact in Manchester earlier in 2021, **mandla rae** brings short film *As British As A Watermelon* which explores the citizenship process, questions the realities of decolonisation, picks apart the long-lasting effects of trauma, and explores mandla's fragmented memory. Theatre director **Olivia Furber** collaborates with Palestinian filmmaker, writer and actor **Ramzi Maqdisi** on *The Land's Heart is Greater than its Map*. Created especially for Horizon 2021, **Furber and Maqdisi** will lead audiences through a 20 minute presentation of their work which guides participants through the streets of their own town, with a soundtrack designed in the streets of Jerusalem.

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Built with original music and virtual performances, **Chinese Arts Now's** *Every dollar is a soldier/With money you're a dragon* invites audiences to roam freely as avatars through an 'after hours' digital art gallery. Mixing gaming and 3D technology, writer and performer Daniel York Loh compares the apparent success of the once-richest man in America - William Waldorf Astor - with the migration of Chinese people. Multi-award-winning British Asian choreographer **Seeta Patel** presents a screening of their reimagining of Stravinsky's iconic ballet *'The Rite of Spring'* in the classical Indian dance style Bharatanatyam in the year of the 50th death anniversary of Stravinsky; and **Tarik Elmoutawakilis' Marlborough Productions** will enable audiences across the globe to join their widely celebrated *Brownnton Abbey (BA)* an evolving, international performance collective, centring and celebrating disabled, queer people of colour. Adapted for a digital landscape, *Brownnton Abbey: Talk Show* will be a frank and open conversation.

Moving forward from a year of mass cancellations, drastically reduced opportunities, and with creative freelancers now facing more restrictive and costly regulations for touring work, Horizon marks the development of a thrilling new collaborative model. Responding to the need for different and more flexible ways of thinking, the consortium has placed care, innovation, environmental sustainability and accessibility at the heart of the showcase.

Horizon aims to be distinctive from other performing arts showcases by encouraging connections and relationships to be built between artists and programmers at different stages of an artists' journey. The inclusion of the seven residencies will offer this - providing an opportunity for artists to develop their ideas while inviting international delegates into their creative process at an early stage.

The Horizon residencies include *The Dan Daw Show* in which artist **Daw** will look at his relationship to his disability and to kink, and how power, pride and shame all intersect. It is a show about letting go and reclaiming yourself. **Jo Bannon's** *Blind Magic* is a dance piece with two visually diverse/blind performers and one unreliable audio narrator. It explores the imaginative dance between sleight of hand, deception and dexterity present within magic shows, with a canny parallel to the experience of visually disabled people. Artist and producer **Katy Baird** will be workshopping *Get Off* - a funny, relatable and sometimes 'wee bit grim' performance that revels in excess whilst exploring ways in which it unites us. Katy asks, 'what gives us pleasure?' and 'how much is too much?'

PROJEKT EUROPA will be working on *LET YOUR HANDS SING IN THE SILENCE*, a planned performance for one actor to recreate their own personal family tree from memory presented by the international female-led theatre company. Multi-award winning writer and performer **Rachel Mars'** will use her residency to develop *Forge* - a new set of work about memorials, replicas, and human behaviour at spaces with difficult histories. Mars asks what and who memorials are for, and what should happen to places where traumatic events have taken place. **Urielle Klein-Mekongo's** *TRASH* is to be a dark, musical comedy about two working-class black girls who decide to join the expanding industry of earning cash, pushing for financial success at all costs, from social media. ULM will use her residency to explore how *TRASH* will present power and boundaries in this shiny, online world. UKM's first self-

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penned solo show *Yvette* was presented to acclaim at the 2017 Edinburgh Festival Fringe. And rounding off the residencies, British Flamenco dancer and practitioner **Yinka Esi Graves**'s will be working on her first solo creation, *The Disappearing Act*, will draw on her experiences as a black flamenco dancer and the historical questions that have been raised along her journey.

Supported by a community of artists and associates, all performance-makers in the showcase will work collaboratively, and will be encouraged and connected with international artists and partners in order to exchange ideas.

Arts Council England Chair, Nicholas Serota commented:

"Giving England's artists the chance to perform their work on the international stage is vital for nurturing the ambition, innovation and collaboration that will help our cultural sector to thrive after the pandemic. The Edinburgh Fringe is one of the world's most important cultural festivals, and we're delighted to have commissioned Horizon as an opportunity for some of the outstanding performing arts talent in this country to showcase their work to industry professionals from around the globe."

Tarek Iskander - Artistic Director of Battersea Arts Centre, added:

"We are delighted to be hosting and supporting so many remarkable artists and projects in this inaugural year of Horizon. We were inundated with so many brilliant ideas from across the country – ideas that really deserved their place in Edinburgh and the opportunity to engage with new audiences - so this group are simply the tip of a glorious iceberg of the remarkable performance being created in England."

"Taken collectively, this group represent what is truly special about our performance practice... our rich diversity, our ambition to take risk and reimagine what is possible, our openness to ideas wherever they generate, our determination, our profound understanding that arts and culture can truly change the world; our playfulness, our taste for experimentation, and perhaps most of all, our boundless determination to contribute positively to the world, whatever the circumstances. The artists in this programme are committed to provoking and starting important conversations, not jumping to easy answers, and in presenting this work we can help them build the fruitful national and international collaborations that will benefit us all for many years to come."

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe presents an opportunity for artists to sell their work to tour internationally. This showcase of England-based artists will enable strong connections between international festivals, producers and presenters even in this most difficult year for artists and creators. The works will all be presented digitally, but conversations between artists and possible presenting partners will look at future opportunities for presenting the work as digital, or as theatres open up, as live.

Commissioned by Arts Council England, the **Horizon showcase** is being delivered by a consortium made up of **Battersea Arts Centre, Dance4, Fierce, GIFT, MAYK and Transform.**

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The consortium partners are working with several established independent artists to help shape the showcase, including Project O (Alexandrina Hemsley, Jamila Johnson- Small), Javaad Alipoor, Kirsty Housley, Sonia Hughes and Renny O'Shea. Associate partners reflecting different specialisms and art form focuses have also had input into the process, including Akademi, ATC, Bush Theatre, Circus City, The Cocoa Butter Club and Unlimited.

Horizon runs from 16 August, with public programme during the week of 23 August. Visit horizon.uk.

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For information, images and interview requests please contact Emma Costello emma@storytellingpr.com Miriam Attwood miriam@storytellingpr.com

Excellent pix, labeled and credited, featuring all shows / artists available to download here: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/14UoSbsmfrOP5JOLzu6p8IJAgM1NQbeK?usp=sharing>

Battersea Arts Centre: <https://bac.org.uk>

Dance4: <https://www.dance4.co.uk>

Fierce: <http://www.wearefierce.org>

GIFT: <https://www.giftfestival.co.uk>

MAYK: <https://www.mayk.org.uk>

Transform: <https://transformfestival.org>

NOTES TO EDITORS

ABOUT BATTERSEA ARTS CENTRE

Battersea Arts Centre is a hub for everyone's creativity. Based in an iconic building with a radical history, it supports people to take creative risks, to inspire change, locally, nationally, and globally.

Battersea Arts Centre is the world's first Relaxed Venue, the first to have gone through Touretteshero's Relaxed Venue method of identifying and dismantling the barriers faced by disabled people, striving to radically embed access and inclusivity across all its activities. In March 2021, Battersea Arts Centre introduced a new, universal Pay What You Can pricing model across the entire artistic programme, making its work financially accessible to everyone.

bac.org.uk | [@battersea_arts](https://twitter.com/battersea_arts)

ABOUT DANCE4

Dance4 is an internationally recognised dance development organisation based in Nottingham, nurturing new ideas in choreography. With a unique voice in the UK dance sector, Dance4 supports international and UK artists to develop new ideas in choreography alongside the public as participants and makers. Dance4 produces Nottedance, a biennial festival celebrating new choreographic practices and leads on Dance from England, a project to develop new international opportunities for independent artists and producers.

www.dance4.co.uk @Dance_4

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ABOUT FIERCE

Fierce is the West Midlands leading organisation for Live Art with a national and international reputation. Fierce produces the biennale Fierce Festival, with the 2019 edition described as a 'daring whirl of theatrical thrills' in The Guardian's five star review. Fierce transforms the city and the way we feel about it: populating theatres, galleries and hidden, unusual or out-of-the-ordinary spaces like disused warehouses, swimming pools and car parks. You might see theatre, dance, performance art, music, installations, activism and parties or a combination of all those things in a programme of memorable experiences and events. Fierce also produce a number of artist development programmes as well as notorious late night event series Club Fierce. Fierce is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

www.wearefierce.org @fiercefestival

ABOUT GIFT

GIFT: Gateshead International Festival of Theatre is North East England's creative home for contemporary theatre. Placing artistic experimentation and collaboration at its core, GIFT's annual three day festival offers a supportive platform for artists to come together and to push the boundaries of their practice. International in scope and interconnected in approach, GIFT is a carefully curated conversation, providing a meeting point for meaningful exchange between artists and audiences based in North East England and the wider world.

GIFT 2020 rapidly transposed into a virtual edition, and was recognised by the Guardian as a 'virtual virtuoso delight' that 'moved ingeniously online' (Wyver, K. 3 May 2020). Founded in 2011 by Festival Director Kate Craddock, in response to a gap in the regional cultural offer, GIFT is committed to presenting contemporary and experimental practices that otherwise wouldn't be seen in North East England.

www.giftfestival.co.uk @GIFTfest

ABOUT MAYK

MAYK is one of the country's leading live performance producing organisations. Based in Bristol but working internationally, we create dynamic meeting points for participation in world-class live performance both in and out of traditional art spaces. Led by Kate Yedigaroff and Matthew Austin, MAYK was established in 2011 and continues to make a space for a holistic, long term approach to creating memorable experiences that are accessible to lots of people. MAYK curate and produce Mayfest, Bristol's biennial international festival of contemporary theatre. Other recent projects include Still House's *SESSION*, co-produced with LIFT, Racquel Meseguer Zafe's *A Crash Course in Cloudspotting* and Verity Standen's *Undersong*. MAYK is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and a Bristol City Council Cultural Investment Partner.

mayk.org.uk @maykithappen

ABOUT TRANSFORM

Transform is an engine room for urgent, of the moment theatre. We are the creators of the biennial Transform festivals, citywide takeovers of powerful performance by UK and international artists. Focused on reimagining what theatre can look like and what it can do, we present theatre works everywhere from arts venues across Leeds, to city sites and outdoor spaces. Celebrating the independent and adventurous spirit of Leeds, we reflect the socially conscious and radical North, and connect to the world. Transform is led by Creative Director Amy Letman and was established as an independent company in 2015. Commissioning and producing credits include 'The Believers Are But Brothers' by Javaad Alipoor, 'Idol' by Jamal Gerald and guest programme 'Spirit of Change' for the Barbican. Transform leads the Creative Europe supported network 'Festivals of the Future' supporting founder and female led festivals across Europe. 'Transform has changed the way audiences experience Leeds' - The Guardian

transformfestival.org @Transform_Leeds

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ABOUT ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We have set out our strategic vision in [Let's Create](#) that by 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high quality cultural experiences. We invest public money from Government and The National Lottery to help support the sector and to deliver this vision. www.artscouncil.org.uk

Following the Covid-19 crisis, the Arts Council developed a £160 million **Emergency Response Package**, with nearly 90% coming from the National Lottery, for organisations and individuals needing support. We are also one of several bodies administering the Government's Culture Recovery Fund, an unprecedented support package of £1.57 billion for the culture and heritage sector. Find out more at www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid19