



Pilot Theatre presents

NORTHERN GIRLS

Co-produced with Explore York and supported by Arts Council England, Creative Europe
and the National Lottery Community Fund.

Last year I had an incredible opportunity to do a part-time leadership fellowship, but one of the things I started to notice at the talks and events I attended, was that above a certain level in the performing arts industry, you encounter far fewer women and you rarely if ever, hear a regional accent.

In my day-to-day life in 2020, constrained like many people to an online working world and otherwise a very local existence, I suddenly began to pay much closer attention to the theatre culture immediately surrounding me. I looked at leadership in theatre in Yorkshire and noticed that here the creative leadership continues to be predominantly white and male. Where are the women I found myself asking? And then more specifically: where are the northern women? I.e. The ones like me who grew up in this region and now are working as creative leaders? Where are my northern sisters?

So at the start this project was about starting a conversation around this – and it was a search for solidarity (and if you go to our website you will find the Tenacious Women panel discussion where some of the amazing northern women in performing arts discussed this subject). This project was about redressing an inequality that has always gone a bit undiscussed in the North perhaps, which is about specifically women and girls empowerment here, and giving them the stage to tell their stories and experiences unfiltered and uncensored. Men have tended historically not to programme work by women on theatre stages which is why the statistics are so bad when it comes to mid and larger scale work - and it's why the syllabus still has so few plays by women on it. These are facts that are connected and they are not an accident. I believe this affects women, and girls growing up, and it deeply concerns me. And it's as much of an issue in Yorkshire and the North East as anywhere else in the country.

This project unashamedly intends to get the participants to stand in their power, to motivate them and to enable them to visualise freedom from this continuing patriarchy. We have called on all the women who've participated in this to be courageous and to step beyond their comfort zone with their work and to write about being set free. I have not the words to say how deeply proud I am of everyone who has risen to this call. Everyone involved has put their whole hearts into this work. I feel honoured to have worked on it, alongside every single brilliant and inspiring person involved in the project.

Northern Girls has been of huge personal importance to many people including to me, and I know it has already raised awareness and created a discourse about these subjects in the North which is good to see. I hope with all my heart it creates the sea change I and many others want to witness. Yet what none of us could have predicted when we programmed this, is how acute the subject matter covered in this performance might feel in October 2021, in the light of recent horrifying national but also locally resonant and painful events. Once again this underlines why work like this, and the continuing fight for women's rights and safety in public spaces is so important. We hope this collection deeply moves and inspires you to speak up too, to write about your experiences too, and to take a stand where you can, to make the world a better, safer and more equal place for women, girls, and for everyone who identifies as female, wherever they may be.

Esther Richardson
Artistic Director, Pilot Theatre

“We have called upon all the women who've participated to be courageous...”

Running Order

Pigeons

Written by Hannah Davies, performed by Maya Bartley O'Dea
Directed by Júlia Levai

Cat Call

Written by Molly Shackshaft, performed by Olivia Caley
Directed by Júlia Levai

Football Gloves

Written by Lucy Havelock, performed by Olivia Onyehara
Directed by Xolani Crabtree

Spark

Written by Lydia Marchant, performed by Holly Surtees-Smith
Directed by Júlia Levai

Comply and Concede

Written Moll Barton, performed by Moll Barton
Directed by Paula Clark

Waitress

Written by Isabel Jatto-Glass, performed by Maya Bartley O'Dea
Directed by Júlia Levai

Ghost, Flame and the Warrior Queen Mother

Written by J.A. Mensah, performed by Olivia Onyehara
Directed by Xolani Crabtree

Whoosh

Written by Kat Rose-Martin, performed by Holly Surtees-Smith
Directed by Paula Clark

WRITERS



Molly Barton

Moll will also be performing her piece.

As the great-great niece of Charlie Chaplin, you could say acting is in my blood! I've acted since I was 6-years-old in a variety of pieces ranging from Les Misérables, in which I was a member of the Ensemble, to a UK tour of Jane Eyre, in which I performed as the eponymous Jane. When I'm not acting, I can most likely be found working on the novel I'm writing, sewing lavender bags on my sewing machine, or working on the album I'm crafting with my father. Northern Girls is the first piece of mine that I've both written and performed, and I'm so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with the amazing people of Pilot Theatre!



Isabel Jatto-Glass

Isabel is 16 years old and born and raised in York, from Irish and Nigerian heritage. Since an early age she has pursued the dramatic arts and creative writing and she hopes to build her future career in this area. Isabel believes passionately in the power of the arts to shine a spotlight on societal issues and reflects this in her work.



Lucy Havelock

Lucy is a 20-year-old saxophonist, originally from Manchester, currently in their final year studying Music at the University of York. Alongside saxophone performance, their interests lie in improvisation, composition, and experimental performance art. Lucy recently completed Psappha's Youth Music Scheme, creating a new work for cello and piano, upon the subject of self-liberation. Whilst at York, Lucy has regularly performed with and composed for The Chimera Ensemble, and has just taken up the role as chair of the ensemble. Recently Lucy has also worked as an intern for Pilot Theatre, as a production assistant on an upcoming project.



Molly Shackshaft

I am currently studying on the BA Acting for Stage and Screen (ALRA Endorsed) course at York College. This has been my first time writing, I was drawn to this opportunity as my goal is to become an actor for stage and screen and I thought it would be a great way to understand the whole process behind a performance. I have had an amazing experience working on my monologue with Pilot theatre and the other northern girls and I am really grateful to be able to share my own work.



Hannah Davies

Hannah Davies is a writer and performer from York. She studied playwriting at the Royal Court theatre, London and her first play was in part of their Young Writers Festival in 2007. She has since worked as a writer with companies including: York Theatre Royal, Trestle, Company of Angels, Dry Write, Pilot Theatre, Ice and Fire, Tara Finney Productions, The Guild of Misrule. Hannah also writes and performs her own spoken word poetry and is an Associate Artist at Say Owt, York's very own gobby poetry night gang. Hannah is Artistic Director of Common Ground Theatre and lectures in Playwriting at the University of York.

Hannah is also Creative Associate on Northern Girls.



J.A. Mensah

J.A. Mensah is a prose and theatre writer and a lecturer in English and Creative Writing at the University of York. She was a Leverhulme Artist in Residence and her plays have been produced by Pilot Theatre in York and Live Theatre in Newcastle, among others. Her short stories have recently appeared in The Book of Newcastle (Comma Press), New Narratives for the North East (New Writing North), and Test Signal (Dead Ink and Bloomsbury). Her debut novel, Castles from Cobwebs (Saraband), was longlisted for the 2021 Desmond Elliott Prize and won the inaugural NorthBound Book Award.



Lydia Marchant

Lydia Marchant is part of the BBC's Writers Academy 2019/2020, led by John Yorke, for which she is writing broadcast episodes of EASTENDERS, CASUALTY and HOLBY CITY. She also has original work in development with Cuba Pictures.

Her first full length play, MUMSY is currently under commission at Hull Truck Theatre, where she is an Affiliate Artist. She is developing her second, STUCK, with Live Theatre through their Bursary Scheme. She is also developing original story content for new VR game THE ARCHIVE with Pilot Theatre. Her previous credits include: Paines Plough, Hull Truck Theatre, York Theatre Royal, Derby Theatre, Middle Child Theatre, Silent Uproar and The Roaring Girls.

Lydia has a Distinction in MA Writing for Stage and Broadcast Media from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama and is a graduate of the Writing Squad. She has previously taken part in writers programmes at Leeds Playhouse, Soho Theatre, Hampstead Theatre, National Theatre, Royal Court and BFI.



Kat Rose-Martin

Bradford born and based, Kat started as an actor working for Northern Broadsides and Shakespeare's Globe.

In 2020 she was selected to be part of the BBC Writersroom Northern Voices.

In 2021 she has won a place on the Sky Comedy Rep project, a writers scheme run by Birmingham Rep Theatre and Sky Comedy which includes a bursary and short script commissions for both companies.

Other theatre work includes: Aphra Behn for Shakespeare's Globe; Jane Hair for Bronte Society and development of £1 Thursdays (Stockroom, formerly Out of Joint) and Pick N Mix (Freedom Studios).

For screen, her TV Drama The Crossleys made the BAFTA Rocliffe TV Drama Top 10 and is now in development in the US. She has original TV projects in development, at treatment stage, with Rollem, Warp, Dancing Ledge, Urban Myths, Red Planet and APC. She has pilot commissions with the BBC and RED.

She is currently in the writersroom for series two of the Paul Abbott Sky series Wolfe and in 2021 she will receive her first broadcast credit as her episode of Holby City will TX at Christmas.

PERFORMERS



Maya Bartley O'Dea

Following her recent performance in *Punk Rock* (Stratford East), Maya is delighted to be making her professional debut in *Northern Girls*.



Olivia Onyehara

Theatre Includes: *Shuck n Jive* (Soho Theatre), *Twelfth Night*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream & Macbeth* (Shakespeare's Rose Theatre), *Jack Lear* (Hull Truck/Northern Stage), *Pride And Prejudice* (Nottingham Playhouse/ York Theatre Royal).

Private Lives (Mercury Theatre), *Our American Cousin* (Finborough), *The Watchers/Tanzi Libre* (Southwark Playhouse), *Time And The Conways* (Nottingham Playhouse), *All Our Daughters?* (New Vic Theatre).

Television: *Casualty* (BBC).

Film: *Lockdown*, *Shalott*, *My Name Is Jo*, *Drone Strike*, *ffervescent Dust Specs*.



Olivia Caley

Theatre includes: *Wendla in the Young Vic's production of Spring Awakening*. *Hattie in Tom's Midnight Garden* (Pick Me Up Theatre).

Other work includes: *Mr Malcolm's List* (short film), *Oak Furnitureland* (commercial), *Axa Life Insurance* (commercial), and *Littlewoods* (commercial), *Gold – Eden* (music video).

Liv is excited to be joining the cast of *Northern girls*.



Holly Surtees-Smith

Holly has recently graduated from Mountview Academy after spending 3 years training on the BA (Hons) Acting course.

Credits: *Northern Girls* (Pilot Theatre), *Beatrice in Much Ado About Nothing* (The Barn Theatre)

Theatre (whilst training): *Alix in A Clockwork Orange*, *Lady Macbeth in Macbeth* and *Marty in Circle Mirror Transformation*.

Holly would like to thank Pilot Theatre for giving her the opportunity to be part of such an incredible show and is extremely honoured to be a Northern Girl!

DIRECTORS



Paula Clark

Paula Clark is a freelance theatre maker and creative director based in the north. Paula has worked for 20 years producing and delivering high quality theatre, co-creation and talent development projects for children, young people and adults.



Júlia Levai

Júlia is a theatre director from Budapest based in London. She trained on LAMDA's MA Directing course and on the Young Vic's Jerwood Assistant Director Program. She recently received an MGC Futures bursary, and was Director in Residence at the National Theatre in Belgrade supported by the European Theatre Convention. Júlia is currently part of the Royal Court's first directors group.

Her directing credits include:
Did I Wake You? (Young Vic as part of 'Five Plays') / The Prince of Homburg (The Space & LAMDA) / Impresario (Lamport Hall) / Sweeties (Theatre503) / Rage Room (Lyric Hammersmith) / Our Town (Drayton Arms) / There Has Possibly Been An Incident (Blue Elephant Theatre) / Amphibious (York Theatre Royal).

Her assistant/associate directing credits include:
Filthy / Rich - The Alchemist & A New Way To Pay Old Debts (Mountview), L'Illusion Comique (National Theatre in Belgrade) / Nora: A Doll's House (Young Vic) / Love Steals Us From Loneliness (LAMDA) / She Stoops to Conquer (Theatre Royal Bury St. Edmunds & LAMDA).

She is also a script reader for the Papatango Prize, the Bruntwood Prize and for Paines Plough's Women's Prize for Playwriting.



Xolani Crabtree

Xolani is an emerging director with a background in dance and movement. Following her training at Northern School of Contemporary Dance, she went on to develop her practice as a dance artist in Yorkshire working with various organisations and schools. In 2021, Xolani stepped into theatre and worked as Trainee Assistant Director for 'A Little Night Music' at Leeds Playhouse. She then went to work on 'Mugabe, My Dad and Me' at York Theatre Royal as Assistant Director. Northern Girls is Xolani's directing debut.

PRODUCTION TEAM



Charlotte Bickley | Sound Design

Charlotte has been working as a composer and sound designer for installations, theatre and radio since late 2017, alongside playing live electronic sets, producing and DJing under the alias CARLOS.

As CARLOS she has released a tape with Manchester-based record label, Cong Burn, and featured on compilations for Reel Long Overdub, Bathtime Sessions and Easy Does It, amongst others.



Luke James | Production Manager

Luke has worked within stage and technical management for several years, on a variety of shows and a number of small and large scale, site-specific and outdoor performances, such as *Zara* (Mind the Gap/Walk the Plank), *Everything is Possible* (York Theatre Royal/Pilot Theatre) and *Blood and Chocolate* (Slung Low/Pilot theatre/York Theatre Royal).

He regularly works with Pilot Theatre on their national tours of *Crongton Knights*, *Noughts and Crosses* and *Brighton Rock*, Tribeca Film Festival 2019 nominated *Traitor*.



Ben Cowens | Lighting Design

Ben trained at The Academy of Live & Recorded Arts in stage management and technical theatre specialising in lighting design for theatre, events & dance between 2011-2013.

Since graduating he has designed productions internationally and re-lit productions around the United Kingdom. He has also been nominated for best lighting designer 2016 in the off west end awards.

Lighting design work includes: *Mold Riots* (Theatr Clwyd); *Romeo & Juliet* (Aiglon College); *The Witches* (Watford Palace Theatre); *Moonfleet* (ALRA Theatre); *Thunder Road* (UK Tour); *Build a Rocket* (Stephen Joseph Theatre); *Even the Stones* (Jacksons Lane).

PILOT THEATRE

Pilot Theatre are an international touring theatre company based in York. We're committed to creating high quality mid-scale theatre for younger audiences, and will be many people's very first encounter with this form.

We also make work outside of traditional theatre buildings, where our projects pursue a relationship with our audience that is often playful, interactive and participatory.

We are always curious about our ongoing and changing relationship with technology, and often explore this theme.

Across all our projects we seek to create a cultural space where young adults can encounter, express and interrogate big ideas, powerfully relevant to our lives right now.

Pilot's most recent productions were *Crongton Knights* by Alex Wheatle adapted by Emteaz Hussain and *Noughts & Crosses* by Malorie Blackman, adapted by Sabrina Mahfouz.

Winners of the Excellence in touring award at the UK Theatre Awards 2019.

Esther Richardson | Artistic Director and Joint Chief Executive

Mandy Smith | Executive Producer and Joint Chief Executive

Sarah Rorke | Company Administrator

Lucy Hammond | Marketing and Projects Producer

Sam Johnson | Digital Officer

Oliver O'Shea | Creative Associate

Helen Nakhwal | Finance Director

Helen Ruxton | Finance Officer

Pilot Livestream Team

Ed Sunman

David Grant

Melanie Paris

pilot-theatre.com



WITH THANKS

Pilot Theatre would like to thank

- Pauline Rourke
- Slung Low
- York Theatre Royal
- Theatre @41Monkgate
- Wendy Kent at Explore York
- James Harvey
- Julian Ollive
- Susan Reape
- Claire Rimmington – Workshop Assistant
- MGCfutures

With thanks for the support of

- York Common Good Trust
- York Bid

Northern Girls York has been curated by Esther Richardson and Oliver O'Shea.



PILOT CONNECTS

We provide a range of educational resources and workshops to accompany all of our productions. Our Pilot Connects programme has been developed in response to the restrictions and uncertainties brought about by Covid-19 to provide different programmes of work suitable for English and Drama students in KS3 and KS4.

Resources

1. Crongton Knights: A comprehensive teaching resources around *Crongton Knights*, Alex's Wheatle's award winning novel which Pilot presented as a stage production in Spring 2020, adapted by Emteaz Hussain.

These packs, tailored for KS3 English and Drama, and GCSE Drama, include exclusive access to the webcast of *Crongton Knights* as part of this teaching package for you and your class to view as many times as you wish over the academic year.

2. Noughts and Crosses: These teaching resources are focussed on our award-winning 2019 production of Malorie Blackman's *Noughts and Crosses*, adapted by Sabrina Mahfouz. This pack is for students studying Drama and Performing Arts and can be used as a text to perform or a devising stimulus for KS3, GCSE, BTEC or A Level. It contains comprehensive lesson plans, handouts, access to filmed scenes of the production, and includes the newly published playtext of the adaptation by the playwright Sabrina Mahfouz

Booking Information

Workshops

Pilot also offer the opportunity to book a workshops (either via Zoom or in school if possible) with a range of creatives – covering areas such as character development, design, beatboxing, directing and writing.

Workshop Offers





ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

LOTTERY FUNDED

Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**