

XTRAX



XTRAX Shorts at Mintfest 2014



**Presentations of new outdoor
projects in development**

Sat 30 Aug - 10.30 - 12.00
Sun 31 Aug - 11.00 - 12.00
Town Council Chamber
Kendal Town Hall

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XTRAX SHORTS AT MINTFEST 2014

We are delighted to once again bring XTRAX Shorts to Mintfest as part of the showcase weekend.

XTRAX Shorts is designed to give artists the opportunity to present new ideas in a concise format and in a supportive environment, and gives showcase delegates – many of whom are festival promoters and programmers - a sneak preview of projects that are hoping to tour during the next festival season.

Artists presenting in XTRAX Shorts have been selected from over 65 applications, and we are pleased to have such a great range of work from new and established artists to share with you.

As you may be aware Mintfest is taking a break next year and as such, we would like to take this time to thank Mintfest 2014 for their continued support of outdoor arts and we look forward to the festival returning in the near future.

Also, a big thank you to Arts Council England for supporting this programme and to all the artists who are sharing ideas with us at Mintfest 2014. We hope you will find the presentations of interest and we look forward to hearing your feedback.

The XTRAX Team

MINTFEST 2014: XTRAX SHORTS SCHEDULE

Saturday 30th August 2014

10.00 – 10.30 - Coffee and Networking

10.30 – 12.00 - XTRAX Shorts: Companies pitching about project to be presented in 2015/2016

10.30 – 10.40 - **Fullstop Acrobatic Theatre – *Outside The Box* (Belgium)**

10.40 – 10.50 - **Stefano Di Renzo – *Hold on***

10.50 – 11.00 - **Beautiful Creatures Theatre – *The Fortress***

11.00 – 11.10 - **Dam Van Huynh – *Cliff Diver***

11.10 – 11.20 - **NoFit State Circus - *Block***

11.20 – 11.30 - **MUFTI – *Massive Battleships***

11.30 – 11.40 - **Retouramont – *Voluminosity (Voluminosité)* (France)**

11.40 – 12.00 **Meet the delegates + Networking:** all delegates are invited to briefly introduce themselves and meet the other delegates before the Festival programme starts.

12.00 - 23:00 - Festival Programme - Various locations

Sunday 31st August 2014

10.30 – 11.00 - Coffee and Networking

11.00 – 13.00 - XTRAX Shorts: Companies pitching about project to be presented in 2015/2016

11.00 – 11.10 - **Red Herring Productions – *Funny Peculiar***

11.10 – 11.20 - **Etta Ermini Dance Theatre – *Bar Story***

11.20 – 11.30 - **Whalley Range All Stars – *Ye Gods***

11.30 – 11.40 - **The Urban Playground Team - *Steam***

11.40 – 11.50 - **All About Dance – *URBAM* (Portugal)**

11.50 – 12.00 - **Lost in Translation Circus – *Cirque Bordello***

12.00 – 13.00 - **Meet the delegates + Networking:** all delegates are invited to briefly introduce themselves and meet the other delegates before the Festival programme starts.

13:00 – 17:30 Festival Programme – Various locations

All About Dance

Vitor Fontes

Artistic Director

Portugal

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All About Dance Company is a Portuguese semi-professional dance company founded in 2001. The company combines a fusion of different dance styles such as hip hop, contemporary and house dance. It is from these various styles of dance that All About Dance Company have developed a professional, creative and innovative reputation renowned for its quality.

URBAM

Combining dance, acrobatics and video mapping, *URBAM* creates an inspirational dance and visual effects experience for events worldwide. *URBAM* captures the technical, aesthetic and energetic essence of the urban dance styles like Hip Hop, House dance, Bboying and Contemporary dance. Tangible dialogues and synergies, that result from interactions between these characters, define the urban atmosphere of *URBAM*.

Beautiful Creatures Theatre

Danielle Corbishley

Artistic Director

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Danielle Corbishley is a professional producer, theatre maker and lecturer. Fanatical about physical and visual theatres she has spent the last year training with Jasmin Vardimon Company. She is an award winning magician and director for Beautiful Creatures Theatre, who have successfully toured *AirQuarium* to street arts festival throughout the UK. Recent projects include *KIN* a cross-generational puppetry project and *The Tipping Point*, featuring 60 diverse performers. Beautiful Creatures also programme theatre corner at Caversham Festival, a new platform, which brings more outdoor theatre to Reading, providing opportunities for young people and community groups to develop work for outdoor audiences.

The Fortress

The Fortress is a beautiful and energetic new mid-scale outdoor show. An epic tale of family and survival played out through breathtaking choreography, magical imagery and innovative music performance.

The show centres around five giants, free standing chimes, which have been specifically commissioned for the project, engineered by Pentatronix in consultation with Nottingham University, and are the only instrument of their kind in the world. Standing 2.5m high and tuned to particular bird song, the dancers perform a mesmerising ritual, complicitly playing an intricate melody that rings out across the landscape alongside a spectacular electronic orchestral soundtrack. This is an entirely unique instrument that has generated new compositional techniques where the movement and melody are intrinsically linked.

The spring 2014 R&D for the show has been supported by ACE, Cultural Partnerships, Space 101 & South Street Arts Centre, and culminated in two preview performances at Caversham Festival in July. The show is now available for touring, performed flexibly in the round, day and night, in urban and rural settings. It is particularly suitable for family audiences, who love the combination of compelling story, engaging characters, movement, music, and snowstorm finale.

Dam Van Huynh Company

Dam Van Huynh

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As a dancer, Dam Van Huynh has worked with companies including Nevada Ballet, Merce Cunningham, Richard Alston, CeDeCe and Phoenix Dance Theatre. Van Huynh Company was formed in 2008 as a creative base supporting Dam Van Huynh's work and collaborations. Dam was appointed Artist-in-Residence at The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts in 2010/12, giving him support for creative development. Current works include: *Gesundheit!*, *Soul of Fado*, *ma ma... Mambo!* and *[Black Square]*. His choreographic commissions include: National Dance Company of Mexico, Unlock Dancing Plaza - Hong Kong, The British Museum, Adugna Dance Company- Ethiopia and more.

Cliff Diver

What happens when you put an original music composition score of rock/beatbox music, a hip hop, break dance artist and a contemporary choreographer together?

Working with leading renown hip hop dancer Franky Johnson and break dance artist Hakim Saber, the team comes together - from different cultural backgrounds and life journeys - forming a powerful, dynamically visceral duet for two male dancers discovering a common movement language. Crafting a 18min duet from a contemporary choreographic view point and transformed through artists from break and hip hop dance backgrounds, the theme of the work unravels the magnetic force of coming together from different life journeys. By closely looking at diversity, each artist comes to the work from different influences both in artistic styles and experience. The duet draws the artists together while sharing with the audience the sensation of the inevitable power of cross-pollination between cultures and art forms.

Etta Ermini Dance Theatre/ Artstrust (Martin Collins)

Etta Ermini

Artistic Director

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Etta Ermini Dance Theatre was founded in 2005 with the aim to explore relationships through cross art form and storytelling techniques. The company is committed to making entertaining but sociocritical outdoor work through humour and with narratives that appeal to all ages and backgrounds. After two highly successful outdoor productions, *Roadworks* (2009, commissioned by Big Dance/The Blue Elephant Theatre) and *Picnic* (2011, commission by Fuse Medway Festival/Arts Council), which have been touring widely in the UK and abroad.

Bar Story

EEDT/Artstrust are creating a new outdoor dance theatre production around the issues of binge drinking within the UK. The project has grown out of the company's existing indoor work, *Bar Story*, set at a real bar and blurring the boundaries between watching and socialising in a portrayal of two bar tenders and one female punter caught up in their quest to get loaded. It uses high energy dancing, story telling and character work, insightful observation, and humour to make an entertaining commentary on social anxiety.

Set designer Mike Patterson (Paralympics 2012) is currently developing a set for outdoor spaces, a multifunctional bar able to stand vertically and horizontally and with technical facilities for aerial, acrobatics and acro-balancing. The bar is used by three experienced performers skilled in various dance styles including contemporary and break dance, as well as acrobatics, aerial and physical theatre.

Dramaturg Durassie Kiangangu will create the storyboard using the original piece as a starting point, to edit the narrative of the three characters, adapt the humour for a new setting and make greater use of theatrical image. The production is funded by the Arts Council England and supported by Spot on Lancashire and Cheshire Dance who offer them rural touring and PANDA arts who offer in-kind mentoring. The work is adaptable to rural and urban settings and features an ethnically diverse cast. It will be ready to tour from March 2015.

Fullstop Acrobatic Theatre

Vicki Pompe

Artist

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Fullstop Acrobatic Theatre are a small circus theatre company who perform physical theatre and dance combined with aerial and acrobatics for street theatre festivals and other events all over Europe

After creating and touring two successful shows, the latest performance from Fullstop works with the inexhaustible theme of gender, bringing a totally new style of performance to the street.

Outside The Box

Outside The Box is a new circus and theatre performance for outdoor spaces. It is played in and around a metal construction bringing aerial to spaces where it would not normally be possible to rig. It will not just be used as a hanging point, like in our previous performance *Waiting on you*, but as décor that the artists jump off, slide down, balance on and climb in. The techniques used in the show are aerial, acrobatics, (physical) theatre and dance. There are two performers (Vicki and Wibbe Pompe) and the work is directed by Craig Weston. The length of the show is 40 minutes.

The performance itself uses the theme of gender as an inspiration source. It is comprised of a series of short scenes. Gender lends itself well to a spectrum of ideas that are presented as light and comical sketches, but also sometimes slightly more confronting and sober images. The scenes flow together, ensuring a cohesive end result and not just a random collage of ideas.

The next step is to create the indoor version of the show *Inside the Box* for Theatres, Cultural Centres and tented Circus Festivals.

Lost in Translation Circus

Annabel Carberry

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Lost in Translation Circus is a dynamic emerging contemporary circus company based in East Anglia. They combine high-level, dynamic circus skills within a strong theatrical context, creating work for both outdoors and indoors. They are interested in creating accessible but multi-layered work through a highly physical language. They aim for a strong comic bent and the ability to amaze and move the audience across cultural and language barriers. Their current outdoor work *La Ballade de Bergerac* has been touring for the last two years throughout England, France, Belgium and Italy and their new indoor show was commissioned this February by Showzam! Festival in Blackpool.

Cirque Bordello

Cirque Bordello is part-circus show, part situation comedy, and part street happening. Using a real house on the street they aim to create a performance on the street and in and through the windows and doors of the houses. The story centres around a bankrupt BnB/Hotel and the crisis the owners find themselves in.

Making use of all their circus skills Lost In Translation want to create a chaotic, emotionally driven, but hilarious world, with significant room for audience interaction. The audience should be part of the environment, and at first almost not know if this is a show or real life.

Mufti

Malcolm Hamilton

Director

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Mufti make larger than life versions of favourite childhood games. They are excited by creative play and education through stealth; encouraging learning through fun interaction in everyday spaces. Based in Bristol and founded in 2013 with their flagship show *L_ve Hangman* (a lifesized sideshow of the paper and pen game) they're currently developing *Massive Battleships* as a wacky team version of the navel strategy game.

Massive Battleships

Massive Battleships is just like the kids favourite naval guessing game... only bigger.

Imagine two teams of punters, hundreds of yards apart, scheming in their own purpose built Battleships. Co-ordinates are signalled through flash cards and spied through binoculars.

Spectacular hits and unlucky misses are reported via the waving of flags. Tension builds in each camp as the fleet is taken out, one by one. Armed with sea charts, wooden boats, and facilitated by our very own Mufti Sea Captains, this blown-up version of Battleships is a terrific team game and a stunning spectacle.

Our vision is to create an adaptable game, playable in a wide range of settings: urban, coastal, rural; we want to play across buildings, harbours, rooftops and by collaborating with digital partners across oceans.

NoFit State Circus

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NoFit State Circus was formed in 1986 and has grown since then to become the most recognised contemporary circus in the UK. The work tours both nationally and internationally and is presented within its own big top, outdoors and in theatres. Productions being performed in 2014 include *Bianco*, *Open House*, *Taking the Air* and *Noodles*.

This project is in collaboration with Motionhouse, which was founded in 1988 by Kevin Finnan and Louise Richards. The company has since become one of the leading dance theatre companies in the UK, making work locally and touring work globally. Productions touring in 2014 include: *Broken*, *Scattered*, *Captive*, *Underground* and *Cascade*.

Block

“If you wish to rise, begin by descending. To build a tower that will pierce the clouds, first lay the foundations of humility”.

Centred on a set of oversized blocks, fashioned to resemble giant breeze blocks, the blocks double as both the performance equipment and the set, which is deconstructed and reformed throughout the performance. The aesthetic of the blocks is unmistakably urban and the modular nature of design concept allows for maximum potential to explore different configurations and ways of interacting with the blocks.

Originally a research project for NFS trainees, NoFit State Circus will partner with Motionhouse to further develop *Block* with a view to touring in 2016. NFS will be the lead partner for the project and the cast of circus performers and dancers, will be directed by Kevin Finnegan (MH).

The collaboration will allow them to explore the space between circus (NFS) and dance (MH) within the framework of a new piece of performance equipment.

Retouramont

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'Vertical dance is part of my background but nowadays I use it to go elsewhere. The notion of inventing new apparatus is the basis of my work and helps me working in 3 dimensions with sculptors, circus artists as well as aerial dancers." says Fabrice Guillot, Artistic Director of Retouramont. Fabrice is also president of AEP, Association of Authors in Public Space, in France. Creations currently on tour: *Cette Immense Intimité* (2011), *Clairière Urbaine* (2010), *Danse des Cariatides* (2011), *Environnement Vertical* (2013) and *Gravitational Waves* (2013). He is now working on the new creation (2015) called *Voluminosity*, mixing circus with aerial dance techniques.

Voluminosity

(Original title in French: Voluminosité)

Voluminosity is based on a new apparatus : an anthropomorphic sculpture, articulated, therefore flexible, made of 5m high metallic tubes. Retouramont will work once again with Vincent Brédif, metal and sound sculptor, with whom they have already collaborated on the last creation *Gravitational Waves*. It will involve two aerial dancers and one circus artist specialised in Chinese pole.

The piece will take place outdoors in a quite intimate space (square, courtyard, park, etc). The audience will sit/stand all around the show, as in a circus ring. This small/middle-scale show will be aimed to about 200-300 people.

It will be created in Chalon dans la Rue festival (France) in July 2015 and a pre-premiere is planned May 31st at National Theatre of Le Creusot, France.

Red Herring Productions

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Red Herring creates outdoor performance that is experimental and provocative, while remaining accessible and engaging. They encourage people to interact with them and join them to look sideways at the way our culture ticks. Red Herring's style is cheeky and irreverent, knocking convention with a good helping of playful humour. They present work in public spaces to reach wide-ranging audiences, including those who don't normally go to the theatre. Red Herring has received commissions from Without Walls, Winchester Hat Fair, Arts Fresco, Market Harborough and Magnetic Events, funding from Arts Council England, The Heritage Lottery Fund and Awards for All.

Funny Peculiar

Funny Peculiar is a theatrical, immersive, location-specific walking performance, exploring local eccentrics and the notion of eccentricity itself. It investigates what it is about a place that draws particular people and lends it a particular type of eccentricity. It's fun and uplifting, with a blend of live performance, audio guiding and gentle interaction, encouraging people to act unconventionally.

The project premiered in Brighton in May 2014, marking the start of a quest to discover Britain's most eccentric place.

Stefano Di Renzo

Stefano Di Renzo

Artistic Director/Performer
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As an artist, Stefano Di Renzo works towards a dynamic fusion between circus and physical language, examining potential theatrical meanings through equilibristic, object manipulation and corporal movement. He graduated at The Circus Space in London.

On my way is his first solo show and has been touring festivals and theatres in Europe since 2012. His second work, *Hold on*, is a work in progress and an outdoor circus theatre show which will be ready for touring in summer 2015. Alongside developing his own work, Stefano has worked with Ockham's Razor, Theatre Rites, Company F.Z. and The Generating Company.

Hold on

The new show will be created around an exciting new piece of circus equipment. It is a self-counterweighted slack rope where the performer holds himself afloat whilst balancing on the rope.

One end of the rope is fixed while the other end is in the hands of the performer. He literally holds himself up, his life in his hands. If he lets go, he will fall. Theatrically, Stefano wants to draw on the metaphorical potential of this rich image, exploring the relationship between a man and the system that governs his life, at times in control of it, at times controlled by it. Stefano wants to touch people emotionally rather than simply being a thrilling spectacle, using circus to create atmospheric, exciting physical theatre.

The Urban Playground Team

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The Urban Playground Team (UPG) is the original Performance-Parkour (2PK) company combining authentic French free-running with urban and contemporary dance in slapstick choreographies that excite and engage the whole family. The UPG outdoor productions have toured the UK for Without Walls and internationally for the British Council, winning awards and audiences worldwide. They undertake extensive teaching wherever they perform, mentoring developing 2PK communities internationally through the 2PK network which we founded. Having designed the world's first touring parkour structures and the UK's first permanent site, their work incorporates elements of architecture and design alongside the drama of dance at speed and height.

STEAM

STEAM will see the UPG Team animate a skeletal steam locomotive through scenes inspired by the silent movies of Buster Keaton, gun fights of the old West, the mystery of the Orient Express, the rooftop stunts of James Bond, the hero-workers of the Soviet Avant Garde and the heartbreak of the first world war.

In a dramatic shift of aesthetic the company that defined the look of parkour on stage will return with a narrative dance-theatre that employs familiar settings to explore an unfamiliar vocabulary of movement and partner it with the spoken word - live, recorded and projected.

This show will challenge audience perceptions of the disciplines they work in and - from experience - their work attracts a high number of young people, particularly those between 14 and 21. UPG are adept at identifying and engaging with local parkour communities, and difficult to reach (often at risk) young people reaching a demographic who might not otherwise see the arts as a place for them.

Performances of *STEAM* will be followed by workshops that take place on set. These opportunities always prove hugely popular. Longer term residencies will see participants create and perform additional scenes for the show.

Whalley Range All Stars

Edward Taylor

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The Whalley Range All Stars were formed in 1982. Since then they have created over 70 different shows in a wide variety of formats and toured to 25 countries over 5 continents. They have won artistic, critical and popular acclaim for their visually striking and imaginative work. Touring outdoor shows on offer are *Pig*, *Brain Wave* and *Compost Mentis. Future*, a 3 day installation/performance using 2 floors of an empty shop is also available.

In January 2014 the company created *Cake* an indoor object-theatre show for children.

Ye Gods

Three figures of fate tower over the proceedings and gradually bring this place to life with a witty use of objects and a vivid soundtrack – church bells are polished and placed in a church belfry where they ring out, a pint of beer is poured into a pub to trigger a boozy sing-along, the local dog's home erupts with barking every time you go near etc. etc.

This builds up and by the time they have finished the whole town is humming with life. However, these three figures are not sentimental and what is built up can easily be knocked down. They create a miniature apocalypse via a set of weather effects on wheels which brings the town to its knees.

All is not lost however and the show finishes on a big visual surprise to demonstrate that life carries on.