



# XTRAX

# XTRAX SHORTS

Presentations about work currently in development  
that will be available for touring in 2016

Saturday 27 June

Festival Central Marquee

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## XTRAX SHORTS AT GDIF 2015

We are delighted to bring the fifth edition of XTRAX Shorts to the GDIF2015 showcase weekend.

XTRAX Shorts is designed to give artists an opportunity to present new ideas in a concise format and in a supportive environment, and to give showcase delegates a sneak preview of projects that are hoping to reach production or tour in the next season.

This model has proven to be successful, and many of the companies who presented work last year at XTRAX Shorts have gained bookings, or even commissions, as a result.

Outdoor Arts is thriving in the UK, and embraces a great diversity of art forms, concepts and scales. We are pleased to have a great range of work from new and established artists to share with you. This year, we will be presenting artists from England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, all highlighting the breadth of work available from all corners of the UK. We will be rounding off XTRAX Shorts with a preview of international work coming out of France, Spain and Portugal.

The following pages will introduce you to all of the artists presenting at XTRAX Shorts this year.

We are also very pleased to be continuing our long-standing partnership with **ICEC - Creative Catalonia**, and on Sunday we offer you the opportunity to hear about new projects from artists based in Catalonia, selected by **Jordi Duran**, Artistic Director of **FiraTàrrrega**. We extend our thanks to the Catalan artists for sharing their work at the festival and to ICEC and FiraTàrrrega for their continued support which has greatly contributed to the success of XTRAX Shorts.

We would like to say thank you to all the artists who are sharing ideas with us at GDIF2015 and thank you to Arts Council England for supporting this programme through Grants for the Arts.

We hope you will find the presentations of interest and we look forward to hearing your feedback.

The XTRAX Team

# XTRAX SHORTS PRESENTING ARTISTS SCHEDULE

**VENUE:** Festival Central Marquee, Pepys Lawn  
Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich SE10 9NN

## SATURDAY 27<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2015

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| 10:00 -10:30 | Coffee and Networking   |
| 10:30-12:00  | XTRAX Shorts: Companies pitching about project which will tour in 2016.<br>Chaired by Mikey Martins, Artistic Director of Hull Freedom Festival   |
| 10:30        | Southpaw Dance Company – <i>Rush</i>  |
| 10:40        | Puppets with Guts! – <i>Citizen Squid</i>   |
| 10:50        | Mischief La-Bas – <i>The Magnificent Organ</i>  |
| 11:00        | Conflux – <i>Community Street Theatre Tour &amp; Car Men</i>  |
| 11:10        | Chloe Loftus Dance– <i>The Bank Heist</i>   |
| 11:20        | Les Commandos Percu & Deabru Beltzak - <i>Danbor Talka / le Choc des Tambours</i>   |
| 11:30        | Cão à Chuva – <i>Lullaby</i>  |
| 11:40        | A spotlight on upcoming, UK-produced, large-scale work which will be available for national and international touring in 2016. Projects include work from: dotComedy IOU, Motionhouse and NoFit State Circus and Tangled Feet |
| 11:55        | Meet the delegates: all delegates are invited to briefly introduce themselves. We invite you to join us for a drink whilst you meet other delegates and colleagues before the programme starts.                               |
| 13:00-23:00  | Festival Programme - Various Locations  |



## Southpaw Dance Company

Robby Graham

Artistic Director

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Combining world-class dance, physical theatre, and innovative set design, **Southpaw Dance Company** creates visually engaging and entertaining dance theatre performances for indoor and outdoor audiences alike. Many of Southpaw's performers have a background in BBoying (breaking) which adds a unique dynamic quality to the work, producing a "raw and distinctive movement quality... as fluid as ballet and yet visceral and explosive".

Formed in 2013 by Robby Graham, Southpaw has been touring *Faust* since 2014 and this summer they will tour their second major outdoor production *Carousel*. *Rush* was presented on Easter weekend 2015 in South Shields with a community cast of over 100 performers.

### ***Rush***

*Rush* started life as a commission from The Cultural Spring, a Creative People and Places organisation working in Sunderland and South Tyneside. Its main focus therefore was engaging creatively with people from the most disadvantaged wards in those two metropolitan districts.

Southpaw Dance Company and producer Event International delivered a politically engaged mass movement spectacle drawn from the experiences and aspirations of people living in difficult circumstances. *Rush* was an exciting, ambitious performance opportunity that engaged over a hundred local dancers and free-runners alongside a small professional cast of dancers and leading projection mapping creative studio Novak. Under the leadership of Southpaw Artistic Director and Choreographer Robby Graham, the *Rush* performance saw people take to the streets to demonstrate pride in their community, resilience in the face of adversity and hope for a better future.

Prior to the event Southpaw Dance Company worked with 9 groups of community dancers for a period of 3 months. Southpaw and Event International are now developing *Rush* as a project that can engage with similar communities in other parts of the country, retaining a narrative core but taking on the voice and specific concerns of participants from the host community as well as providing a fantastic opportunity for engagement and shared endeavour: "*Never walked away from a project so inspired and full of love. Huge respect to the guys from Southpaw Company. It's been truly amazing!*" (Jessica Furniss, volunteer).



## **Puppets With Guts!**

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**Puppets With Guts (PWG)** is a big puppet theatre company based in West London and presents cutting-edge, interactive and socially aware spectacles. PWG company members have worked on some of the biggest puppet productions in the UK, including the 2012 Olympic Opening Ceremony, Warhorse and Paul McCartney's music video for the song *Appreciate*.

### ***Citizen Squid***

A gigantic squid is displaced and found in the most unlikely of places, and is in need of a home. Immerse yourself in this interactive spectacle about unwanted arrivals and shifting cultural identities, and examine your responsibilities as citizen and as society.

The Lyric Hammersmith Theatre and Watford Palace Theatre have newly commissioned the project in 2015. Developed in 2014 during a devised writing workshop with Byrony Kimmings, the project seeks to unearth concerns about how we show compassion towards those who have been displaced. Importantly, the project develops Puppets with Guts' artistic ambition to make 'socially aware - big puppetry' work of high quality. The project is led by Ivan Thorley (AD / Producer) and Caroline Bowman (Designer), with a team of key collaborators and some of the best puppeteers in the UK. The work is medium scale and multifaceted, with roving elements, soundscapes and pop up choirs, engaged citizenry, an extraordinary kinetic puppet sculpture, and an overall fun interactive spectacle.

Supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England.



## Mischief La-Bas

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**Mischief La-Bas**, formed in 1992, is Scotland's leading street theatre company. Its mission to 'gently warp the underlay of the fabric of society' is achieved by presenting accessible and interactive performances in public places. Funding from Creative Scotland allowed the company to deliver free, outdoor performances throughout Scotland. Other strands of work include commissions from local authorities and commercial organisations.

### ***The Magnificent Organ***

*The Magnificent Organ* is inspired by the mayhem Spike Jones brought to his musical numbers, as well as a nostalgia for British children's programmes of the 1970s. It combines choreography, music and comedy with Mischief's trademark interactive performance, which Director Angie Dight has previously blended together in *Three Feet Left* and *The Scone of Destiny*.

The original musical score will be embellished with ingenious musical props and a welter of moving pulleys, levers and limbs. The 'Organ' itself will bring together bespoke cabinet-making with colourful, carefully painted detail. The structure will be robustly built and designed to be a self-sufficient performance with no technical requirements.

*The Magnificent Organ* will be an anarchic, screwball, outdoor show suitable for all ages. It can be performed 2 -3 times a day and its anticipated duration is 30 minutes. It uses limited English dialogue so is suitable for non-English speaking audiences. With use of multiple art forms (physical theatre, live and pre-recorded music, theatre and kinetic sculpture) it will have wide appeal.

The structure is built on casters making it easy to move from one location to another.

The creative team for *The Magnificent Organ* is made up of 7 artists, 4 of whom have worked with Mischief for many years and 3 who are new to the company.



## Conflux

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**Conflux** runs projects to develop street arts, physical theatre and circus in Scotland. We work with artists, performance companies and educators at all levels of experience. We also run SURGE, our annual festival, which takes place each July. SURGE brings new Scottish work and cutting edge international performances to the streets, theatres and unusual spaces of Glasgow. We are a key partner in the development of the Briggait in Glasgow to form The Briggait Creation Centre for circus, dance, physical theatre, street arts and aerial performance.

### ***Community Street Theatre Tour & Car Men***

*Community Street Theatre Tour (CST)* delivers street theatre workshops to community participants across Scotland, leading up to the groups performing at a local festival. We work with approximately 50 local participants for a week in each area teaching improvisation, movement and character work and the basics of street theatre.

This is the 4th year of the project and each year a new theme is developed with a community group for a week to test out new ideas and costumes. This year we worked with college students to develop the theme of "Public Circus". CST plays a key part in Conflux's development of street theatre at a grassroots level, inspiring participants to perform on the streets, often for the first time. CST is available to book by UK festivals and arts organisations and for a comparatively small budget they will have 5 street theatre acts performed at the festival, make strong links with community groups and generate interest in the festival in the area.

Creative Team: Director, Graham Hicks (Eggmen & RAW); Costume, Annie Hiner; Mentor, Alan Richardson. Each year we employ a new Assistant Director to the project, who is mentored by Conflux and who will then go on to support the tour (all of whom have gone on to develop other work within the sector).

*Car Men* is a new professional street theatre show developed by Conflux through a residency process. 3 professional opera singers directed by highly accomplished street theatre Director Alan Richardson perform as mobile mechanics performing *Carmen*...

*"Showing up on pedestrian streets to promote their mobile car garage, these bumbling mobile mechanics conceal their incompetence by turning to their hobby – opera! Led by a desperate amateur, this unlikely trio live up to their name, performing Carmen in all its greasy glory."*

Creative Team: Director, Alan Richardson; Composer, Stephen Deazley; Costume, Liz Young.





## **Chloe Loftus Dance**

Chloe Loftus  
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Over the past decade, Cardiff based **Chloe Loftus Dance** have been creating vibrant dance theatre productions that have toured extensively to critical acclaim. Greatly inspired by collaboration, Chloe Loftus has recently become Associate Artist at the Wales Millennium Centre and in 2013 was nominated for a Theatre Critics of Wales Award for Best Small Scale Dance Production.

The company's desire to engage new audiences with the art form has found them touring physically vibrant small to mid-scale outdoor work. Chloe Loftus Dance have received funding from Arts Council, Kevin Spacey Foundation, PRSF and Articulture amongst others, and have collaborated with the Welsh School of Architecture creating a 4-metre geodesic dome structure.

### ***The Bank Heist***

*The Bank Heist* is a 12-minute show originally commissioned for Blysh Festival 2014 with mentoring from Le Navet Bete and receiving fantastic responses.

Two criminal masterminds chaotically clown, flip and cling for dear life in harnesses as they scale down the height of the venue. Clowning and aerial acrobatics combine as they chaotically spill the contents of their swag in farcical slow motion. As they reach the bottom, they strip down to their garish 'incognito' costume and perform a fast, physical, quirky comical dance duet as they attempt to make their escape out into the crowd.

The piece was originally performed scaling down the walls of the Wales Millennium Centre and incorporates abseil and wall-running, however if no walls are available the piece can be adapted so that the performers abseil down into the centre of a space or without the aerial section.



## **Les Commandos Percu (FR) & Deabru Beltzak (SP)**

Lisa Trouilhet

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For more than 20 years, **Les Commandos Percu** have travelled the world with their innovative percussion work and specialized knowledge about fireworks. The fusion between music and fireworks stands as its main mechanism. A language that is new and ancestral at the same time goes through several cultures and genres.

With their new show *Danbor Talka / Le Choc des Tambours*, Les Commandos Percu combine their talents with the Basque company **Deabru Beltzak** (SP) with a clear objective: to reclaim the streets.

### ***Danbor Talka / Le Choc des Tambours***

*Danbor Talka / Le Choc des Tambours* is a large scale, night time, outdoor show. The creative team is composed of 12 musicians-pyrotechnicians coming from France and Spain.

*Danbor Talka* can be translated in English as **CLASH OF DRUMS**: Percussions, movement, aesthetic of shapes, art of sudden shifts, fireworks. From the street to the final big stage, the audience is fully immersed.

The show includes two parts:

- Procession: 20 min

Out of nowhere, drummers march towards each other pounding stretched skins. Street to street, their drumsticks twirl, their colourful faces sizing each other up for a confrontation of rhythm and light. What will be the outcome of the clash? The sole purpose of this symbolic confrontation is to turn collision into interaction, to sublimate fury into language, to light the unifying fire that brings hearts together.

- Fixed set: 30 min

At the end of this wild parade through crowded streets, the blazing musicians climb onto the stage for a clash of drums. They light a huge fire that seems to burst from their instruments, as if every percussion note sparks an explosion in the starry sky. But this is just a transition point. The black and yellow devils again take to the street and disappear just as they came: surrounded by fire.



## **Cão à Chuva (PT)**

Rui Paixão

Director | Actor

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**Cão à Chuva** – an Imaginarius creation - is new artistic project based on clown and physical theatre to explore new approaches in the interaction with public.

Cão à Chuva is the first creation by Caixa das Artes – CCTAR (resulting from an artistic residency which took place at the old municipal Slaughterhouse). Their projects are able to surprise the international market and create work suitable for European touring.

### ***Lullaby***

*Lullaby* is the first creation of Cão à Chuva and works with one performer and one musician alone in the city. The show starts with one appeal to the public and runs to an immersive experience where the public is the main actor!

It provides a dynamic and good humored interactive performance, which gives room for an improvised play between a clown and his spectators. It is an adventure in search of laughter, complicity and emotion, powered by live music.

**The following companies are presenting as part of our spotlight on upcoming, UK-produced, large-scale work**



**dotComedy**

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Artistic Director

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**dotComedy** is renowned for its unique take on reality – creating installations, walkabouts and shows that mix the mundane and the absurd with hilarious results. True mavericks of the street scene, dotComedy will mark your event with an unforgettable comedy edge that will stay in the collective memory long after they've gone.

dotComedy has created over 25 productions (and counting), ranging from the large scale dotMaze: Get Lost!, to solo shows, smaller installations and walkabout pieces. It specializes in site-specific commissions, including pieces for The Manchester Commonwealth Games, The Brit Awards and the 2011 Rugby World Cup in New Zealand.

***Doll's House***

*Doll's House* is an outdoor immersive theatre installation inviting the audience to come and play in a giant size doll's house where they will meet the dolls and have adventures in each of the rooms, discovering the secrets that hide within the sometimes big, the sometimes small mysterious world.

Supported by Arts Council England and 101 Outdoor Arts Creation Space



## **IOU**

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Led by one of the original founder members, David Wheeler, **IOU** has excited and delighted diverse audiences all over Europe. IOU's work is created by teams drawn from an international pool of professional artists, makers, performers, poets, musicians and technicians who have a range of experience working with the company - from founder members, new collaborators to recent graduates. Executive Director Joanne Wain, a highly experienced Producer and Arts Manager joined the company in 2014.

IOU is a producing organisation with 38 years' experience making original work across art forms including sculpture, music, theatre, interactive digital works and virtual worlds. IOU creates original and unpredictable art works to engage audiences and artists to change perspectives and share in curiosity and wonder. We create immersive work locally and nationally for both the indoor and outdoor sectors, in established and non-traditional arts spaces. We support the development of independent artists' creative practice and offer opportunities to emerging artists (regionally and nationally) across a range of disciplines to develop their ideas, creative and professional skills. We also deliver a learning and participation programme to the local community, schools and families.

### ***Rear View***

*Rear View* presents the same 'story' seen from different points of view. To do this, different groups of audience watch and participate in different aspects of the narrative from different places and in different ways. There will be a number of digital ways to engage with *Rear View* before, during and after the live event and the live show will be streamed for people to view online.

A key element of the show is an eye-catching converted bus fitted with backward facing raked seating. This enables an audience to watch scenes played out behind the bus as it travels along. For part of the show, the scenes that the audience see from the bus are transmitted live to audiences watching and engaging in different ways in different places.

The audience follows the journey of the main character, backwards and forwards through their life with real and imagined encounters along the way. The main theme of the show will remain the same but can be adapted and extended to incorporate the particular physical features and historic events that have taken place in the host town. The ordinary and familiar places will be seen in new ways, set against extraordinary, mythical and dreamlike events.

### **R&D supported by Without Walls**



## NoFit State Circus / Motionhouse

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**NoFit State Circus** is the UK's leading contemporary circus company, delivering work on all scales. They create work that is poignant and poetic, using large-scale imagery, circus, live music, movement and innovative design.

**Motionhouse** is one of the UK's foremost dance theatre companies, touring highly acclaimed productions throughout the world. Rooted in dance, their dynamic productions draw on theatre, acrobatics and film.

Together, they present **BLOCK**, a new work for public spaces.

### **BLOCK**

Twenty oversized blocks, fashioned to resemble giant breeze blocks, double as both the performance equipment and the set. Continually deconstructed and reformed, they create an infinite variety of shapes to play on, move with and explore. The constant shifts of forms echo the transitory nature of our city centres, the changing landscapes of our environments and within this context, creates a platform on which the bodies talk about change, obstacles, repetition, failures and successes.

**BLOCK** is about living in the city, its contradictions and its challenges.  
Living large, living fast and sometimes living in the cracks.

**BLOCK** began life as a research project for NoFit State's resident trainees in 2012 – 2013 and in 2014, NoFit State approached Motionhouse about creating **BLOCK** as a collaboration.

**BLOCK** will be created in Autumn 2015 – Winter 2016 and will tour from Spring 2016.





## Tangled Feet and Alex Chinneck

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Founded in 2003 by a group of ten like-minded individuals **Tangled Feet** is one of the UK's most exciting theatre ensembles. We create original, visually stunning, politically resonant productions, sometimes inside theatres but often in other public spaces. We make innovative, uniquely staged, story-driven theatre. We have developed a trademark style of experimental performance which always begins from a process of physical improvisation and play. The performances we make come from our own experiences, the stories of the people we meet, and the tensions we feel in the world around us.

**Alex Chinneck** is a British artist and designer whose large-scale public installations intersect the disciplines of art, architecture, engineering and construction, creating disruptive illusions in public space. He is currently preparing the centre-piece sculpture for the 2015 European Capital of Culture, Belgium. Previous works includes *From The Knees of My Nose to The Belly Of My Toes* (Margate, 2013) and *Miner on the Moon* (London 2013). Forthcoming commissions include *Hovering Building* (working title), Covent Garden Piazza, London, 2014.

### ***Fissure***

*Fissure* is a cross-artform collaboration between artist Alex Chinneck and Tangled Feet which will marry the disconcerting impact of Alex's large-scale visual installations, and the dynamic and dramaturgically strong physical performance style of Tangled Feet.

The work will creatively connect the agendas of growing inequality and climate change – which, as Naomi Klein has articulated in her recent book 'This Changes Everything', are actually interconnected problems, which we are all implicated in, and which we are all affected by.

Starting off as an installation, over the course of a week a narrative develops in a public space, of an imminent crisis or increasing threat of disaster. Something large, alarming and impossible to ignore has happened to the landscape. At the end of the week a large scale performance happens at the 'epicentre' which exposes the recent event as not threatening but hopeful and one in which the public can affect.

We are aiming that *Fissure* tours to UK locations in 2016 and are looking for commissioners to help us develop it.

**R&D supported by Without Walls**

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