



XTRAX / STOCKTON INTERNATIONAL RIVERSIDE FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL SHOWCASE 2019

1 – 4 August, Stockton-on-Tees, UK

XTRAX SHORTS

Presentations about new work available for touring from 2020

Saturday 3 August | 10.00 – 12.00

ARC, Stockton Arts Centre, Dovecot Street, Stockton on Tees, TS18 1LL

Hosted by

Nicola Miles-Wildin and Daryl Beeton (Wild N Beets)

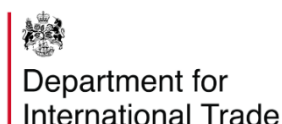
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Welcome to XTRAX Shorts

We are delighted to welcome you to the first XTRAX Shorts event of 2019, taking place as part of the XTRAX / Stockton International Riverside Festival Showcase.

These pitches offer artists the opportunity to introduce their projects, and provide a snapshot of the diverse range of unique work being made by artists here in the UK and overseas. This year we're pleased to present nine UK artists and one company from Spain.

XTRAX Shorts is a popular strand of our showcase activity, giving delegates a look at work that will be available for booking in the coming year. Many artists have benefited from this opportunity in the past, and indeed some of the shows featured in SIRF this year have been presented in previous editions of XTRAX Shorts.

We are delighted that the inimitable Beryl and Cyril from Wild N Beets will host XTRAX shorts, bringing their unique style of Country and Western inspired disability politics to the morning.

We hope you will join us and look forward to your feedback.

The XTRAX Team

Join in the conversation on Twitter:

#XTRAXshowcase | #SIRF2019

@xtraxarts / @SIRF_Stockton

#XTRAXShorts

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BARELY METHODOICAL TROUPE – *NO REGRETS*

Di Robson – Producer

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Barely Methodical Troupe (BMT) Producer Di Robson has an international track record principally in making performance, festivals and events. BMT is an experimental acrobatics company. Its three shows made over five years, *BROMANCE*, *KIN* and *SHIFT*, have toured nationally and internationally. BMT's work has been described as at the forefront of a new kind of physical performance, creating highly entertaining shows that mix the show-stopping acrobatics of circus with the emotional punch of theatre. In 2018 *BROMANCE* was successfully adapted for outdoor performance for the *Denmark International Street Festival*. BMT is currently developing a large-scale outdoor work *NO REGRETS*.

"NO REGRETS"

Introduced by Di Robson (Producer)

No Regrets will comprise of 12 x eight to ten-minute scenes. For each site we will select 60 minutes of scenes, taking into account the location, existing infrastructure and potential audience. This enables BMT to present *No Regrets* as a show, but also as a residency facilitating deeper community involvement. *No Regrets* is about arrivals and departures, who stays, who leaves.

No Regrets will be a promenade performance that can move through a range of indoor and outdoor spaces such as shopping malls, heritage buildings, empty shops, parks, high streets, etc. BMT is a floor-based acrobatic company, no rigging or flying is required. If people are in the air they have been thrown, projected or have jumped.

No Regrets has evolved out of discussions with supporting presenters and venues over the last three years, a number of whom are interested to be involved. We want to work with twelve acrobats, large local choirs and experiment with scale.

NII KWARTEY OWOO – *KWEKU ANANSE*

Issac Kwartey Nii Owoo – Lead Artist & Choreographer

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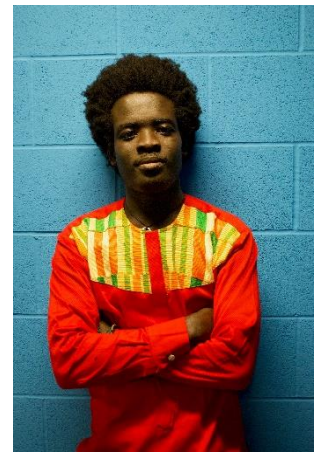
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Originally from Accra, Ghana, **Nii Kwartey Owoo** is a traditionally trained choreographer in contemporary West African dance and music and currently an African Dance Lecturer on the BA (Hons) Diverse Dance Course at Irie! Dance Theatre, London, accredited by the University of Roehampton. He is also a Navigate artist with ACE dance and music, Birmingham, through the Black Choreographic Project. His work is inspired by traditional cultural practices found in West Africa and diaspora communities. His choreography is strongly influenced by his Ghanaian heritage, including spiritual beliefs, storytelling and symbolism, and seek to engage with everyday life and contemporary issues in society.

“Kweku Ananse”

Introduced by Nii Kwartey Owoo (Lead Artist & Choreographer)

I will be presenting a dance choreography based on the archetypal West African character of **Kweku Ananse** (the spider) and his role in bridging cross-cultural traditions from a ‘trickster’ to a symbol of resistance and rebellion. Exploring the folkloric stories and traditions that travelled with *Kweku Ananse* from Ghana to America and Europe during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade through movements, sound, spoken word, imagery and symbolism. Presenting contemporary pressing issues of power shift, polytricks and humanity.

Drawing from my traditions, ancestral practices and knowledge found across Africa and the Caribbean with personal artistic journey encounters to speak to the trickster within and among us. The development of this piece was funded by the Arts Council Project Grant and Leeds Inspired to be performed at the *Leeds West Indian Carnival* on the 26th August 2019 made up of 10 performers. This project is creatively supported by the Geraldine Connor Foundation (GCF), an arts organisation that nurtures new work and celebrates cultures from across the world of which I am a creative associate and ACE dance and music through their Black Choreographic Project, Navigate and Directors Gail and Ian Parmel. This piece can be performed outdoor and on stage with minimal requirements.

KAMCHATKA – ALTER

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Kamchàtka is an artist collective of diverse nationalities and disciplines whose members first met in Barcelona in 2006. Driven by the same interests and concerns they started training intensely in group improvisation on the streets of Barcelona and researching the subject of immigration.

In March 2007 they premiered their show *Kamchàtka*, which after being critically acclaimed in FiraTàrraga went on to become an international success, performing more than 400 times in 30 different countries. In 2010 they premiered *Habitaculum*, a living installation, and in 2014, they created *Fugit*. Both are innovative site-specific theatre projects and have been performed at many festivals worldwide.

“Alter”

Introduced by Gary Shocat (Creator & Actor)

They came from very far away, we saw them, we understood them, we followed them, and we will now discover their story. The story of each one of them. And within every story, the immensity of humanity.

For **Alter**, we rely on the characters who have accompanied us since the beginning of our adventure. We saw the Kamchàtka characters discover new cultures (in *Kamchàtka*), live in amazing places (*Habitaculum*) and flee these places in order to survive (*Fugit*). We believe that they still have a lot to say to each other. We need to know more about them. Starting from their origins, what made them give up their lives in search for another? What was the most intimate reason which drove them?

At this moment we imagine a three-part show:

- An introduction: the creation of a first space that will make everything that will happen possible.
- Different short films: the audience will discover the characters' history, probably shown in different relevant spaces of the city.
- A face-to-face encounter with the characters: Maybe a meal in a peculiar place in the city.

The different parts of the plot should function autonomously, on their own.

First confirmed co-commissioner: *Aurillac International Street Theatre Festival*, France.

TMESIS THEATRE – *WICKED WOMAN*

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Tmesis Theatre create, develop and share, passionate and playful physical theatre, and have been touring their critically acclaimed work nationally and internationally since 2003 and host and curate Physical Fest, Liverpool's international festival of physical theatre.

They have created eight successful indoor productions and have recently begun to diversify the breadth and scale of work they produce, making work for outdoor and alternative spaces. In 2018 they received a Light Night Liverpool Commission to create *Walking Upright* a new outdoor, family-friendly physical piece with live music, and are currently developing a new outdoor piece, *Wicked Women*.

“Wicked Woman”

Introduced by Elinor Randle (Artistic Director) & Claire Bigley (Producer)

The first version of ***Wicked Woman*** was made with our training company for Physical Fest and performed at the Albert Dock, Liverpool and outside the Open Eye Gallery.

Following the success of the piece at Physical Fest and an overwhelming reaction from diverse audiences, we believe it has the potential to be developed and to be an excellent piece for outdoor festivals. This pitch would give us the opportunity to make links/partnerships to take this piece forward.

Wicked Women celebrates extraordinary women from history that changed the world. Ten female performers, each representing an incredible woman (including Boudicca, Frida Kahlo, Harriet Tuban and Malala Yousafsai) are also a 'team' of women, who celebrate moments of these women's incredible lives, in a funny, feisty, uplifting, moving and fast-paced, bold and dynamic physical spectacle.

It feels empowering and relevant now to celebrate a diverse range of women, many of whom we may have never heard of. At the end of the piece, the women hand out business cards to the audience with a bit of information about 'their' woman.

The piece will be directed and developed by Tmesis' Artistic Director Elinor Randle with choreographical support from Eleni Edipidi (Levantes Dance Theatre) and sound design from Meike Holzman.

THE FABULARIUM LTD – *THE HARE AND THE MOON*

Joshua Patel – Company Manager

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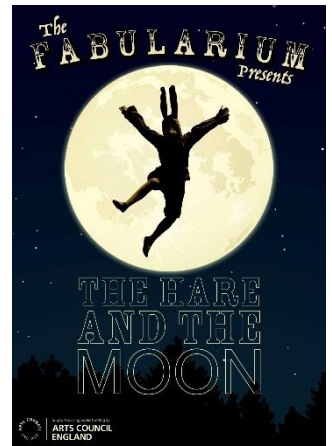
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The Fabularium is a Coventry-based theatre company that specialises in outdoor performance with a medieval aesthetic, depicting stories through various mediums from static performances upon wooden carts with mask, puppetry and live music, to walkabout animations and street acts. With nine years of experience, The Fabularium has toured shows nationally and internationally, and continue to create work that challenges their style and setup. The Fabularium has a longstanding relationship with Coventry University, working with students and graduates in outdoor arts, and are also Artist in Residence at the Just So Festival.

“The Hare and the Moon”

Introduced by Gareth Price-Baghurst, Joshua Patel, Jessica Rowe
(Company Managers) & Lou Lomas (Producer)

The Fabularium will present their new small-scale touring production: ***The Hare and the Moon***. Their new animal show is an adaptation of the Siberian Moon, a traditional Siberian folk tale about how the Hare reclaimed the Sun from a monstrous villain and created the Moon.

This new show will feature the Fabularium’s in-house style of high energy and engaging storytelling, live original music and colourful and vibrant costume and set. Alongside this, the show will also include new skills and styles; new arctic animal headpieces, new puppets, Far Eastern-inspired music and for the first time, The Fabularium will step into lighting effects and illuminations by using lanterns. This show has a heavy focus on female empowerment; reflecting upon where our culture lies now, attitudes and in the end, how wrong we can be.

The set has been constructed upon their touring cart, so that *Reynard the Fox* can tour in repertory with this show, aiming for a potential day-time show of *Reynard the Fox*, and a dusk/early evening show of *The Hare and the Moon*. This will permit minimum LX to light the show, but still allow the lanterns and LFX to have an impact visually.

GANDINI JUGGLING – *STACK CATS & SMASHED 2*

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Gandini Juggling celebrates juggling in all its facets, exploring not just what juggling is, but what juggling can be. Currently, an ever-evolving ensemble made up of a virtuosic core group of jugglers, they regularly expand to include up to twenty performers for specially commissioned events and performances.

Ferociously prolific, they are constantly creating new works, which range from radical art/juggling fusions to accessible theatrical performances, from choreographic studies to commercially commissioned routines. Gandini Juggling's journeys has always been counter-current, an individual voice in the global circus scene, with quotidian risk-taking and fearless upturns. 30 productions and 23 years later, Gandini Juggling is creating some of the most vibrant and challenging performance pieces in the world.

"Stack Cats & Smashed 2"

Introduced by Sean Gandini (Artistic Director)

Stack Cats revisits the landscape of *Smashed*; eight performers inhabit a vaudevillian illusion, quoting classical painting via cartoon violence. Using the company's trademark choreographed juggling the piece addresses serious issues in a silly way, with a lot of vegetables.

Stack Cats continues to trail the fine line between violence and comedy established in previous creations, blurring the frontier of black and white comedy. The development of a gestural language, an exaggerated almost grotesque idiom, will be an intrinsic part of this exploration. Slapstick violence and oversized hitting objects will punctuate Gandini's choreographed juggling vignettes.

Dynamics of tribes and social interaction will play also a central role in the piece, perceived through complex juggling choreographies; precision routines that fuse contemporary dance and juggling, which have become Gandini's signature artistic stamp. Sean Gandini worked on these aesthetics elements in his latest site-specific piece *Cascade* (2018), which looked at evolutionary approaches to choreography.

Smashed 2 is a gender reversal of their popular piece. Seven Women and two men do an exact reversal of the original piece. Again, inspired by Pina Bausch's re-imagining of *Kontakopf* for younger performers and older performers.

TALAWA THEATRE COMPANY – *THE TIDE*

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Talawa Theatre Company is one of the UK's primary Black-led touring theatre company. Our work is informed by the wealth and diversity of the Black British experience, and through that, we create outstanding work by cultivating the best in emerging and established Black artists. We invest in talent, develop audiences and inspire dialogue with and within communities across the UK and internationally. By doing so, we enrich the cultural life of all.

Talawa was founded in 1986 by Yvonne Brewster, Carmen Munroe, Mona Hammond and Inigo Espejel. Today, Talawa is the leading Black theatre company in the UK, with more than 50 touring productions from African classics to Oscar Wilde behind it.

"The Tide"

Introduced by Jade Hackett (Choreographer) & Alison Holder (Producer)

Unknown land, new arrivals, boarded doors and a suitcase full of hopes, dreams and aspirations. Co-created by writer Ryan Cameron and choreographer Jade Hackett, ***The Tide*** explores the narratives and experiences of migration within the United Kingdom whilst holding a mirror to an evolving British culture.

The Tide is a Talawa Theatre Company, Greenwich+Docklands International Festival, and Breakin' Convention co-production.

The Tide successfully toured to Brighton Festival, Norfolk & Norwich Festival and GDIF.

PAUL O'DONNELL – *FRYING PAN ORCHESTRA*

Paul O'Donnell – Theatre Maker & Director

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Paul O'Donnell aims to expose the 'ordinary' in a 'spectacular' fashion. He is an Associate Artist at Birmingham Repertory Theatre and with Theatre Absolute and tours his work both nationally and internationally. Paul's almost entirely imagined Bon Jovi musical *We've Got Each Other* was a hit at *Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2018* and has toured extensively across the UK, Spain and the USA. In 2018 it earned the Audience Prize at *BE Festival* and *Young FITT Festival* in Tarragona where Paul also earned the Best Performer award. Paul has also worked with community theatre groups at Belgrade Theatre, Arcola Theatre and Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

"Frying Pan Orchestra"

Introduced by Paul O'Donnell (Theatre Maker & Director)

I have run a number of workshops in which **Frying Pan Orchestra**, as a concept, has been tested with community groups, including *BE Festival 2019*, Arcola Theatre's Over 50's Community Group 2017, and with Belgrade Youth Theatre 2018. Following a workshop which I led at *Young FITT Festival*, Tarragona, the festival organisers asked me, and the group I worked with, to present what we had worked on as part of the festival's main programme in the evening. We presented the premiere performance of *Frying Pan Orchestra* in the courtyard of Tarragona's Sala Trona Theatre on July 2018 to a lively and enthusiastic audience.

REQUARDT & ROSENBERG – *FUTURE CARGO*

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Requardt & Rosenberg is the partnership of performance maker and Shunt co-founder, David Rosenberg & choreographer, Frauke Requardt. They create dance performance away from the auditorium in outdoor locations or within temporary structures. Their desire is to make highly visible, unique events in order to engage a wide audience in a distinctive format. Their practice combines the spectacle of large-scale dance performances that take an architectural constraint as a starting point and the delicate integrity and intimacy of the audience experience through binaural sound. Requardt & Rosenberg's previous outdoor work includes *Electric Hotel* (2009–2011), *Motor Show* (2012), *The Roof* (2014) and indoor show *Deadclub™* (2017).

"Future Cargo"

Introduced by Luisa Hinchliff (Projects Producer); Lia Prentaki (Producer);
David Rosenberg & Frauke Requardt (Co-Directors)

In the science fiction of ***Future Cargo***, a truck arrives from a distant planet and contains everything required to start over. Dealing with themes of AI & consciousness, we will create a parallel universe where the laws that govern our own world do not apply and we will invite the audience to look and listen in on a world that is both strange and familiar.

A shipping container on a flatbed truck, fitted with an 8-metre traveller will form the basis of the performance space. The audience will sit or stand nearby and listen to the binaural (surround) sound through headphones, allowing for an intimate experience, within a large-scale event.

Future Cargo presents the prospect of touring sustainably while maintaining our aesthetic in creating fantastical and architectural outdoor work. This makes the idea of touring within the UK and internationally much more possible.

The project is currently commissioned by *The Place*, *GDIF* & *DanceEast*. We have already undertaken two weeks of R&D and are having a further week in September 2019, supported by Without Walls Blueprint and an ACE project grant. The creative team consists of Hannah Clark (Set & Costume Designer), Ben & Max Ringham (Sound Designers) & Anna Watson (Lighting Designer).

SIXTEEN RPM – *THE CARPETING*

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Peter Finegan has 30 years' experience as an outdoor performer. He started with Archaos and formed his own street theatre company, The Mahoney Brothers. Peter has worked in large- and small-scale projects including community fire shows with Dogs of Heaven and as a pyrotechnician designer and performer with Walk the Plank. Peter has worked with And Now, EEA, Pif-Paf and as for the special FX team on the London Olympic Games and co-devised shows with Whalley Range All Stars and Avanti Display, currently touring nationally and internationally.

Peter recently formed a new company, **Sixteen RPM**.

"The Carpeting"

Introduced by Peter Finegan (Director & Artist)

Two or more performers will carry large carpet rolls and then slowly and deliberately unroll one red carpet, followed by another continuing from the first and then another and another; meanwhile the first is re-rolled and taken to the front to create a continuous path. There is a sense that the carpet is following its own course, even when this is inconvenient – the performers lay the carpet where the carpet needs to go and the public will become involved where it's helpful and necessary, creating in situ curiosity from the audience.

Who has ordered the carpet? Will it fit in the cafe? Does a fountain need a carpet? Is the carpet for VIPs? Why are they running? Will it go in a taxi?

The performers appear resigned to their never-ending labours but will respond to the situations, environments and people that they find themselves amongst; they will decide the route as they progress and will improvise the interactions, choosing which situation to disrupt with their activity. People may parade down it. No people may parade down it.

The performance is a deliberately simple, non-verbal piece that hopes to blur reality by being humorous, disruptive and irreverent.

Notes:

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