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The magazine for Drama and Theatre at York St John University


York St John
University

yorks.j.ac.uk/theatre


CREATE

ISSUE 10. CREATE FESTIVAL EDITION. SPRING 2015

THEATRE PAGES

ISSUE 10. CREATE 2015.

Welcome to the **Create Festival** edition of **Theatre Pages**!

Create is York St John's annual graduate showcase, including performances, exhibitions, screenings and other events from across the Faculty of Arts. For final year theatre students it marks the end of their degree and celebrates their creativity and vision.

Drama and Theatre at YSJ is characterised by its diversity, its aesthetic experimentation and its engagement with social contexts. During this festival you might witness how theatre can be a rehearsal for life, partake in afternoon tea, experience some physical theatre, discover what happened to the monkey washed ashore at Hartlepool and ponder if the hokey cokey really is what it is all about.

Don't miss out. Don't be elsewhere. Don't doubt. Be here and come and see for yourselves.

Partnerships and Projects

We are also delighted to take the opportunity in this edition of Theatre Pages to profile just a few of the ongoing partnerships and projects that form part of the rich extended environment of Drama and Theatre at York St John. These give an insight into some of the research, student, community and participatory projects taking place with companies and in organisations beyond the University.

Editors: Kiran Tanna and Matthew Reason

Cover image: from Dzamaland, Level One Theatre. Photo: Nathan Walker.

If you have any suggestions for future issues of Theatre Pages, or would like to find out more about Theatre at YSJU, then please visit us at www.yorks.ac.uk/theatre or email theatrepages@gmail.com or m.reason@yorks.ac.uk

FESTIVAL LISTINGS.

Tuesday 12th May

8.00pm. *Dzamaland*. Level One Theatre Ensemble. York St John University Quad.

Monday 18th May

7.00pm. *The Dancer's Facade*. Light Switch. Theatre 1.

6.00pm & 9.00pm. *Real?* Nobody Knows. Theatre 3.

Tuesday 19th May

11.00am. *Follow Us...* F-Birds. Exhibition Square.

2.00pm. *For Them*. Around the Corner. Theatre 1.

6.00pm. *Real?* Nobody Knows. Theatre 3.

7.30pm. *The Three Landscapes Project*. Drift. The Guildhall, St Helen's Square.

Wednesday 20th May

1.00pm. *One Place, A Thousand Voices*. Stolen Moments. Theatre 3.

6.00pm. *50 Shades of Hokey Cokey*. Self Same. Theatre 1.

5.00pm & 7.00pm. *Things One Needn't Worry About*. Northern Brew. Theatre 2.

Thursday 21st May

2.00pm. *Within the Walls*. Out 'n' About. Theatre 1.

For further information, visit: yorks.ac.uk/create

Level One Theatre present

DZAMALAND

Take a walk into the forest... Draw in the night time noises as you are surrounded by narcoleptic trees, swaying in their dreams. Now move deeper and deeper into the ink-stain dark.

After the crash... After the bang... The moon shines on the forest's souls, on every branch and shaking paw. Settle into this unknown world. Watch reality burn away into the shadows as you stumble along this seldom - perhaps never before - travelled path.



FREE
EVENT

The Dancer's Façade

Light Switch Theatre

Light Switch Theatre are a sextuplet of artists, creating theatre through a range of techniques and personal styles. Theatre is an ever-changing form – creating it isn't as simple as the flicking of a switch. Our theatre looks at cultural beliefs and social hierarchies, and at humanity as a whole. Our work invites you to lose yourself in a show whilst thinking about the situations you witness.

The Dancer's Façade explores our constant need to put up a front to the people we know, love and cherish – when something as simple as a dance could allow us

to break down those walls and reveal our true selves. We began by exploring far eastern traditions; the tradition of the feast; now we present patterns, motifs, 60s dances and carnival games, all of which we have situated within this battle ground we call the stage.

Light Switch Theatre are Jessica Chaney, Emma Gullon, Lily Hewett, Charlie Johnston, Kathryn Pennington and Claire Robson.

For more information, visit:
lightswitchtheatre.wix.com/lightswitchtheatre



Real?

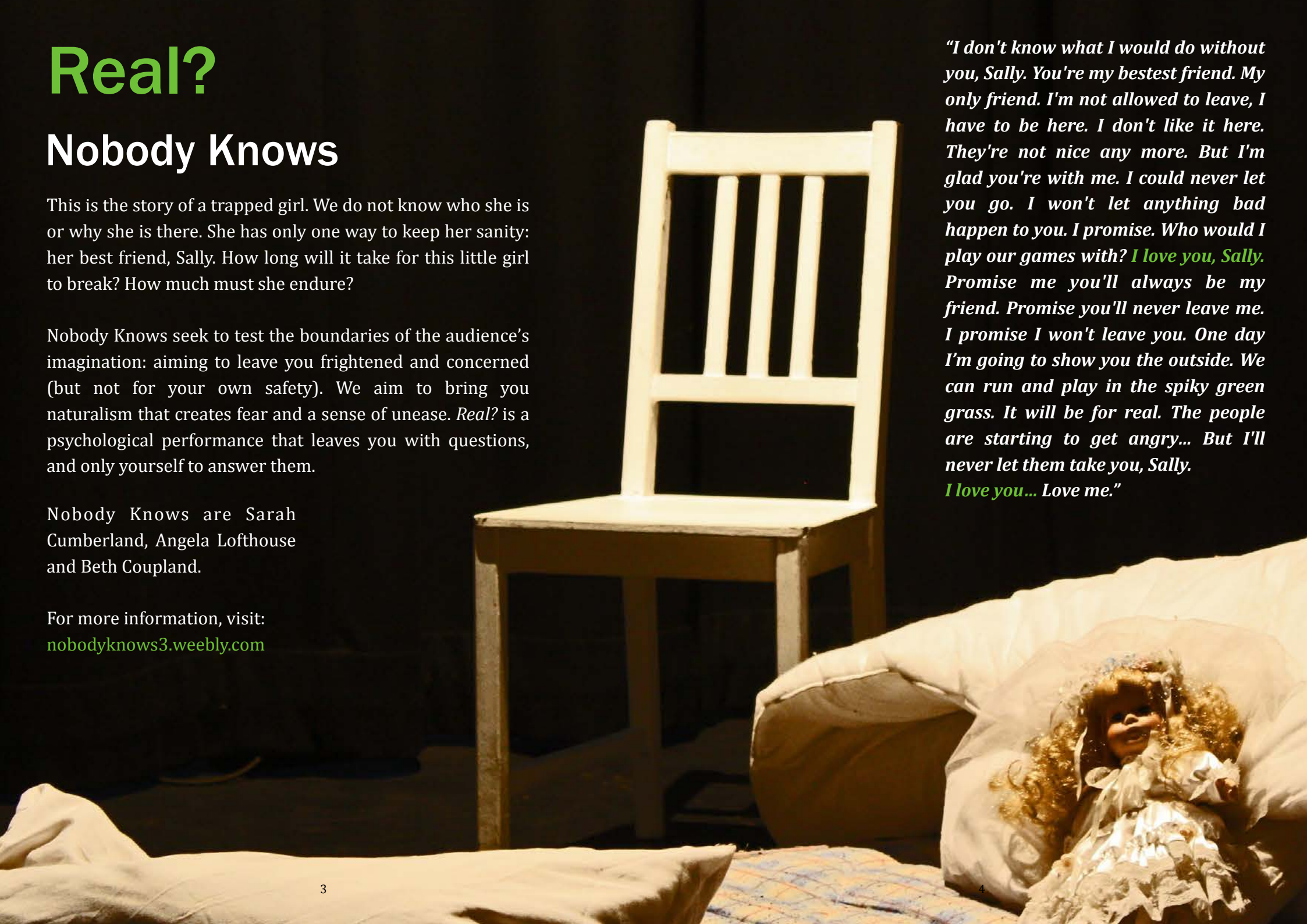
Nobody Knows

This is the story of a trapped girl. We do not know who she is or why she is there. She has only one way to keep her sanity: her best friend, Sally. How long will it take for this little girl to break? How much must she endure?

Nobody Knows seek to test the boundaries of the audience's imagination: aiming to leave you frightened and concerned (but not for your own safety). We aim to bring you naturalism that creates fear and a sense of unease. *Real?* is a psychological performance that leaves you with questions, and only yourself to answer them.

Nobody Knows are Sarah Cumberland, Angela Lofthouse and Beth Coupland.

For more information, visit:
nobodyknows3.weebly.com



*"I don't know what I would do without you, Sally. You're my bestest friend. My only friend. I'm not allowed to leave, I have to be here. I don't like it here. They're not nice any more. But I'm glad you're with me. I could never let you go. I won't let anything bad happen to you. I promise. Who would I play our games with? **I love you, Sally.** Promise me you'll always be my friend. Promise you'll never leave me. I promise I won't leave you. One day I'm going to show you the outside. We can run and play in the spiky green grass. It will be for real. The people are starting to get angry... But I'll never let them take you, Sally. **I love you... Love me.**"*

Follow us...

F-Birds

Follow us... On a journey featuring history and humour – a tour that cannot be missed.

The F-Birds have an interest in the history of places and the happenings of everyday life. We create work that presents our findings and feelings through a series of outdoor interventions accumulating in a tour of York.

Whether it's the woman over there with all the bags or an umbrella taking a man for a walk, the question is: should we watch, should we stare, or should we carry on without a care?

Maybe you're the only one to notice, with your keen eye for detail, or maybe it's something you see everyday? We observe the ordinary and show you what we have found.

So join us for a tour like no other... Come spread your wings with us.

The F-Birds are Fay Beesley, Emily Midgley, Hattie Slevin and Amy Woodier.

For more information, visit: f-birds.wix.com/thef-birds



For Them

Around the Corner

We have a passion working with young people. This is where Around the Corner Theatre began.

As a company we use Augusto Boal's Forum Theatre. We form workshops to engage young people in issues specific to them, from which we create a performance. This allows the workshop participants to be heard and gives them a rehearsal for life in realistic situations.

Our performance of *For Them* explores a variety of themes presented to us in a series of workshops with Year 9 and 10 students from Hull. It addresses themes such as social networking, pressure, money, friendships and body image.

"Theatre can help us build our future, rather than just waiting for it." Augusto Boal

Around the Corner are Maddy Beercock, Emily Moran-Hall, Faye Jones and Alex Bower.

Image: collages created by Year 9 and 10 students from Hull Collegiate School.

For more information, visit: aroundthecornerthe.wix.com/aroundthecorner



The Three Landscapes Project [Drift Performance]

We are an ensemble of practice-lead researchers, committed to producing work about the interconnected relationships between people and place.

At the heart of our practice is walking. It is, for us, a kind of mapping, and mapping is a way in which we attempt to locate ourselves in the world physically, culturally and psychologically.

The Three Landscapes Project interweaves autobiography and topography in order to write place through self and investigate the complexities of belonging. During the project we have carved new paths and discovered old folktales.

From the watery grave of Malham, the monkey washed ashore in Hartlepool, to the plague pits of St Georges Field.

Have a wander down. We want to share it all with you.

[Drift Performance] are Clare Marsh, Cameron Morton, Chance Marshall.

For more information, visit: www.driftperformance.org/



One Place, A Thousand Voices

Stolen Moments

How wonderful would it be to have a place that became a story? And what if the people within this place became its authors...

We are Stolen Moments. We believe in one simple thing: that at the heart of a community lie the hidden memories of its people.

Our work is their work and we are merely the storytellers. We like a good story – so if you talk, we will listen.

Stolen Moments are Jake Winterburn and Josie Taylor

For more information, visit:
[stolenmomentstheat.wix.com/
stolen-moments](http://stolenmomentstheat.wix.com/stolen-moments)

*"You wrapped us up in
memories,*

*And sealed them with a smile,
topped off with a glimmer of
hope.*

*We saw the playful child gleam
through your eyes,*

*We listened with such longing
and you didn't disappoint.*

*We would like to open the door
to our lives and share a piece of
us with you.*

*But, we ask for one thing in
return...*

*Cherish your memories because
they are meant to be heard.*

*So go back to that playful child
and tell us your story*

*and we will play the playful
child alongside you*

*as we make a space for your
memories to be shared."*

16th Dec

happy,
day was an excellent
everyone went out to see

Fifty Shades of Hokey Cokey

Self Same Theatre

Fifty Shades of Hokey Cokey is a duet, a lecture, a performance that sets out to ask and answer the question: what if the Hokey Cokey really is what it's all about?

Join us as we explore the history, culture and folklore of the Hokey Cokey. Follow our (mis)understanding of 'what it's all about' as we experiment, demonstrate and dance for – and with – you.

Inspired by a shared passion for contemporary dance, Self Same Theatre create a range of highly-relevant physical performances focusing on the female body.

Self Same Theatre are Jennie Day and Samantha Wilkinson.

For more information visit:
[selfsametheatre.wix.com/
selfsametheatre](http://selfsametheatre.wix.com/selfsametheatre)





Things One Needn't Worry About

Northern Brew Theatre

We aim to create work that submerges into the social and political issues in contemporary society. We use bodywork and spoken word to communicate the main themes in the production: mental health, man and the natural world and life, consciousness and existence

Things One Needn't Worry About is an adaptation, our take on Steven Berkoff's version of *Metamorphosis*. It is a choreographic expression of ideas through movement.

In *Things One Needn't Worry About*, we use physical theatre to explore delicate social and political issues along with the complex aspects of human relationships.

Northern Brew Theatre are Naomi Dale, Bradley Bramham, Lisa Donnelly, Kate Shury and Sophie Oesterlain.

For more information, visit: northernbrewtheatr.wix.com/northernbrewtheatre

Within the Walls

Out 'n' About

Roll up roll up, come see the sights, the grand standing minster, the quint city lights.

Welcome to York ladies and gentlemen, do step off the train, today you've been spoiled, we're forecast no rain. Welcome to Betty's, the windows are magic a perfectly transparent no man's land between us and the tragic.

We are explorers, making journeys into the city's attractions, both well known and hidden, even those that have been forgotten and discarded. As we travel through the city, we mutate, becoming not only the resident, but the tourist, the barber, the taxi driver.

Our quest to find different lenses through which we view the city has allowed us to meet

people from beyond our social sphere, gathering stories and objects which are not necessarily typical of the city.

The stories and objects that we unearthed became our performance; we tell and re-tell stories that we found, using the discarded objects that we collected from our journeys around the city. We use these objects to construct and deconstruct a site specific narrative as we tell the stories of a city.

Out 'n' About are Amy Palmer, Hannah Prole, Jessica Mellor, Orlando Wind-Cowie and Craig Bestford.

For more information, visit:
[outnabouttheatre.wix.com/
out-here-theatre](http://outnabouttheatre.wix.com/out-here-theatre)



MA Theatre and Performance



MA Theatre and Performance is an exciting taught postgraduate degree allowing you to focus on the development of your own arts practice. Aimed at recent graduates and current practitioners, this MA will enhance the conceptual, creative and compositional strategies that you employ in making work.

For more information visit: yorksj.ac.uk/MAPerformance

Partnerships and Projects

There is always more going on in Drama and Theatre at York St John University than merely inside the confines of the campus and the walls of our buildings.

Theatre is a naturally gregarious form, working through collaborations, partnerships and networks. It is also an inherently public and outward facing form, seeking to impact on the people communities around us in both small and big ways. To do this we have to work with others in the city, region and world around us.

These put both staff and students into contact with organisations and individuals who are leaders in their field, providing opportunities to learn, impact,

change and grow through collaborative practice. For staff these partnerships have resulted in world leading research projects; for students they provide placements, internships and other enhancements that can lead to lifelong careers.

The following pages profile seven projects – just a few of the many ongoing partnerships at York St John.

For further information, visit: yorksj.ac.uk/theatre

Fuse Theatre

Fuse Theatre are part of Connecting Youth Culture at NYCC. They are an integrated youth theatre working in the North Yorkshire region with SEN & mainstream young people with the aim of creating high quality theatre.

Graeae Theatre is an internationally recognised company who work with disabled and deaf artists.

Theatre student Jemma Johnston writes about her experience of working with the two companies.

“It’s been one of the most rewarding experiences that I’ve ever had - irrespective of how clichéd and commonplace that might sound.”

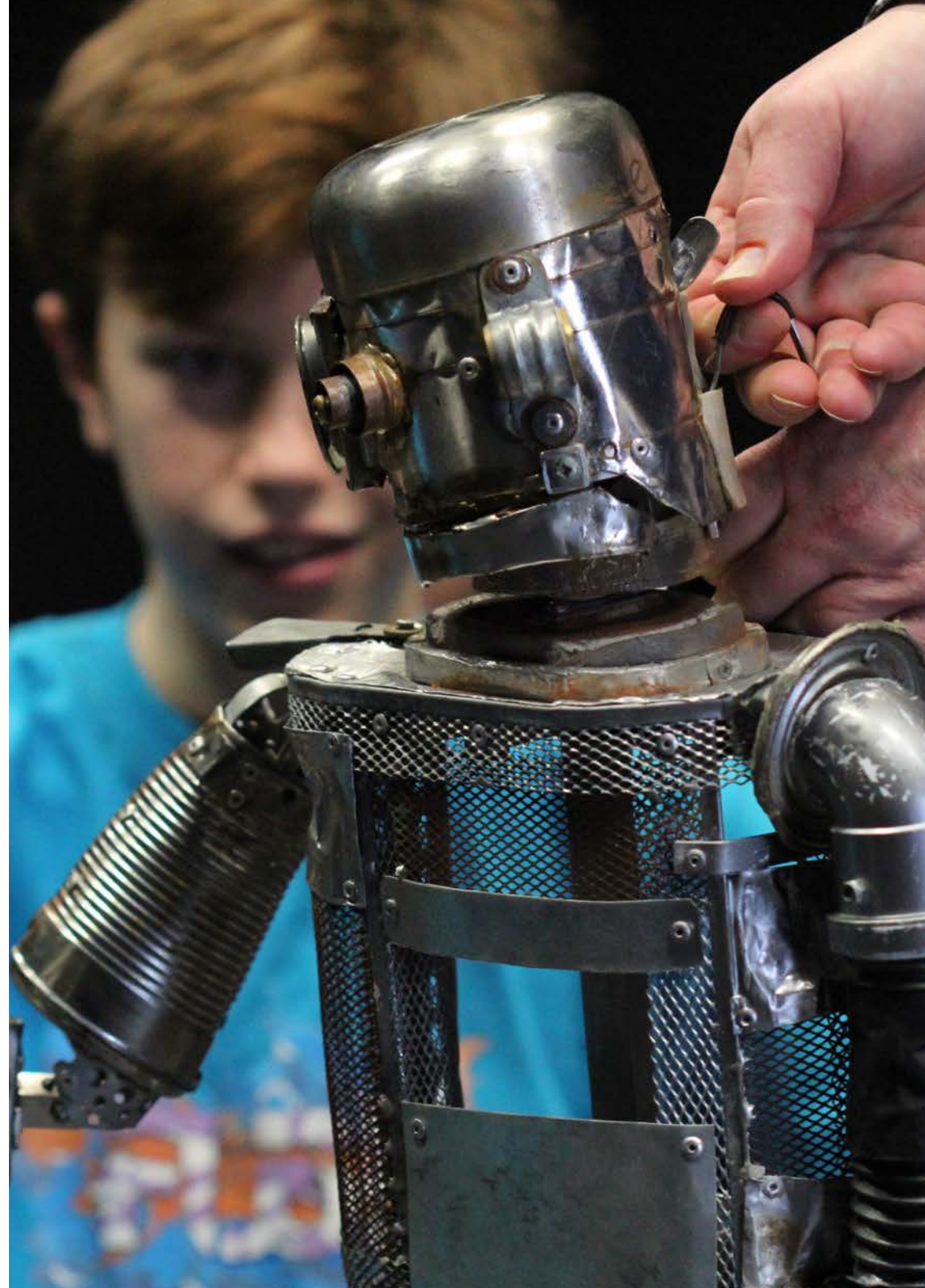
“I feel that my having the opportunity to run drama workshops in the community

has been very enriching for me. I feel like I’ve learnt a lot too - not just about how to adapt specific drama facilitation methods to suit the sensibilities of a specific group of young people; or about how important it is to properly engage a group if you really want to bring out their full potential either - but also about the kind of drama practitioner that I want to be in the future.”

“I’ve also learned that the real reward comes from nurturing the innate talents of people that society would normally label ‘disabled’, despite an abundance of artistic talent.”

“So yeah, I’m incredibly grateful, and I do, genuinely, feel like this is one of the most rewarding experiences that I could possibly have had.”

Image courtesy of Graeae Theatre.
Text: Rachel Conlon.



Converge

Converge offers courses to local people who experience mental health problems. We work closely with the NHS and offer courses in theatre, dance, music, fine art, creative writing, business start-up, life coaching, psychology and sports exercise.

How can theatre students be involved? We offer an introductory course in theatre that progresses towards a performance in the Create festival, we have a new postgraduate led theatre group named Conker and support Out of Character Theatre Company.

Converge aims: to work together as artists and students; to build a community where we learn from each other; to engage with and enhance the university and wider community; to provide a supportive and inclusive environment; to respect others and to value ourselves.

Students said: “Through working with Converge, I have become interested in mental health and issues that surround it. The work has helped me think about my future.”

“Doing this has given me a lot of experience in supporting adults who have used the mental health services, learning how to facilitate theatre with this group and now after this experience, when I graduate I am considering pursuing a career around this. I hope that I have had as much of a positive, learning effect on some of the students’ lives as they have had on mine and on my career.”

For further information visit:
convergeyork.co.uk

Image courtesy of Converge.
Text: Nick Rowe.



KMA

New Methods for Audience Engagement in Interactive and Digital Practices is a project run in collaboration between Dr Eirini Nedelkopoulou and Professor Steve Purcell of YSJU, and Kit Monkman and Tom Wexler of KMA.

KMA create work for theatre, film and television and have been producing public artworks since 2005, exploring the ways that audiences can individually and collectively act as significant players within an artwork itself.

Drawing on their latest interactive kinetic light installation, *Congregation*, this research and development project focuses on the exploration of the audience's status and experience in the creation of participatory art.

Four thematic strands inform this process: 1) audience dis/engagement; 2) publicness and (audience) performance; 3) aloneness and togetherness and 4) alternatives of mapping people in a space.

The partnership aims to assist KMA in developing new approaches to audience engagement, experimenting with different interactive platforms and encouraging the development of interactions between people in public spaces, using digitally-controlled mechanisms.

This work is funded by the Yorkshire Innovation Scheme, European Union. For further information visit kma.co.uk

Image: from *Congregation*. Photograph courtesy of KMA. Text: Eirini Nedelkopoulou.



ICAN

ICAN is the International Centre for Arts and Narrative.

One way of understanding narrative is to see what people do with the stories they encounter. York St John and York Theatre Royal's joint research centre is not a place but a focus of enquiry. We try in different ways to look inside the mind of the story-listener, at the way in which stories are received and transformed creatively, individually and collectively. We try to discover, through story-centred practice and research, the value of the human relationship with narrative in education, wellbeing and the public sphere.

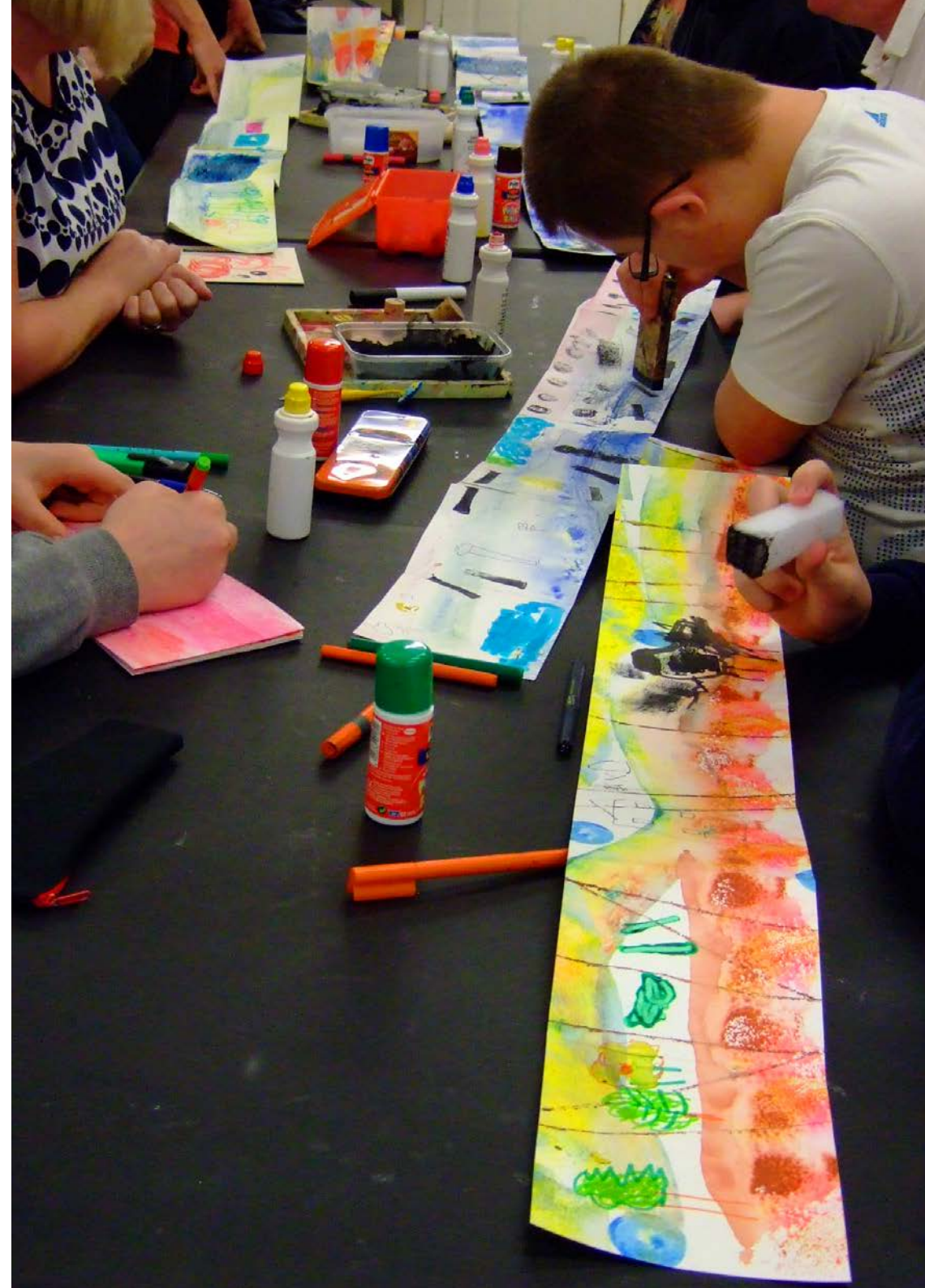
So we hold weekly narrative and arts workshops for community and school groups, host a PhD in storytelling with

adolescents, and also organise studio discussions with speakers on 'Narrative and... food / mental health / prisons / democracy...

In an ICAN community workshop, the authorship of the day is shared: by the storyteller; by the community artists who shape the story she tells and facilitate exploration of it in their different art-forms; by the participants who pass the story through the prism of their own experience and create their own collective retellings. We examine not just how narrative shapes culture and people, but how people can shape them in return.

For more information visit: artsandnarrative.co.uk

Image courtesy of ICAN.
Text: Cath Heinemeyer.



Schools Partnerships

Theatre students work with schools in both primary and secondary settings on a Level 2 module.

Working from a brief, set by the host school, students get to work alongside theatre lecturers, teachers and early years theatre specialists in the planning, development, delivery and critique of weekly sessions within their chosen school context. Facilitating a 'live' understanding of theatre in education.

Jess Long, teacher at York High School comments: "Working with Level 2 theatre students has been a very valuable experience for myself and my pupils. I had the opportunity to go into the university at the planning stages to offer advice and ensure that my pupil's needs were being met and that the students were pitching the creative work at the right level."

"My colleagues and I offer feedback to the students

throughout their time with us. This has ranged from timing issues to breaking down instructions and I've watched the students grow as drama practitioners each week. This was a pleasure to see."

Level 2 theatre student, Jamie Heelbeck said: "The opportunity to deliver drama workshops in school on my degree, has been hugely beneficial, due to range of skills I have learned relating to the career I wish to pursue in the future."

Photograph of *Bird* by Laura Lomas. Presented by Root Theatre and Ros Terry for Echo. A contemporary and cutting edge drama that steps inside the mind of a teenage girl to explore the crucial issue of child sexual exploitation. In 2014 pupils from York High were invited to YSJU to see *Bird* at Performing House.

Image courtesy of Root Theatre. Text: Rachel Conlon.



Prison Partnership Project

This has been a busy year working in partnership with HMP Askham Grange and Clean Break Theatre Company.

It started with an ICAN talk at York Theatre Royal exploring issues around Narrative, Women and Prison. Throughout the year, Drama and Theatre students have worked with residents in HMP Askham Grange, on various creative projects, from co-running weekly workshops with the prison drama group to working towards a performance with the Askham Voices singing group.

This group was originally formed by enthusiastic residents and graduate theatre students who shared a passion for singing. The project has facilitated the women to share their ideas towards creating original songs and fostered a sense of empowerment and ownership by using the words of not only themselves, but the past and present community of Askham Grange.

The project was awarded funding from the North Yorkshire Police & Crime Commissioner. Theatre students have also been working with a film maker on a commission from Barnardo's family support service, designed to explore issues of motherhood and the effects of parental imprisonment on children. The partnership also connected with Clean Break on prison theatre residencies and I supported Clean Break's work with the Donmar Warehouse's all female production of *Henry IV*.

Performing House hosted Clean Break's, *Sounds like an Insult*, a play written by Vivienne Franzmann. Afterwards students took part in a workshop with Anna Herrmann, Head of Education for the company. There are exciting plans for the partnership for next year and we thank the students, residents and staff at HMP Askham Grange, and Clean Break, for their continued support and commitment to the Prison Partnership Project.

Image courtesy of Clean Break.
Text: Rachel Conlon.



East Riding Theatre

Theatre and drama students need a professional environment in which to train: somewhere plugged directly into the theatre industry. Such institutions provide a platform on which to develop and display new work and, in turn, they keep that industry breathing.

In 2014 York St John supported the opening in Beverley of the East Riding Theatre. With an incredible board of directors including artistic director Vincent Regan (300) and producer Richard Avery (A Touch of Frost) (as well as a host of students, graduates and local volunteers) the team at ERT resurrected a disused (and stunning) Baptist chapel turning it into one of the region's most striking new performance venues.

York St John looks forward to an exciting and ambitious relationship with ERT. In December the theatre produced a critically well received adaptation of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. Most recently, they have received

Shafted (a new play written for and performed at ERT by John Godber). Between these productions ERT hosted a showcase of undergraduate work created on the Theatre degree at YSJU titled *Drifting East*.

YSJ's head of programme for Drama and Theatre (John Merrylees) also sits on the board of directors at ERT. He sees an exciting future in which undergraduates will be able to perform and work at the venue. As a former production manager at Hull Truck Theatre, we're pretty certain that John knows what he's talking about.

This sort of relationship, that reaches out and builds on existing professional opportunities, is vital to the development of new theatre in the Yorkshire region: an amazing opportunity for everyone involved.

Image: *Grandmotherlands project: Nostos* by Chance Marshall, performed at *Drifting East* at ERT. Photo: Samantha Jayne Roxane. Text: Kiran Tanna.

