

SOMETHING A LITTLE BIT DIFFERENT

FEELING CURIOUS


THE LOWRY

WINTER/SPRING
19/20

THE FUTURE OF HIP-HOP

**BOTIS SEVA REINVENTS
HIP-HOP DANCE IN BLKDOG**

INSIDE

QUEERING OUR STAGES

**A WORKSHOP OF
FILTHY CREATION**

thelowry.com

EXTRA WEEK ADDED DUE TO PHENOMENAL DEMAND!

ARAGON
BOLEYN
SEYMOUR

SIX

CLEVES
HOWARD
PARR



DIVORCED ★ BEHEADED ★ LIVE!
THE WEST END SMASH HIT

TUE 3 DECEMBER - SAT 11 JANUARY

thelowry.com/musicals

Photography by Johan Persson

887 P29

HELLO THERE

Feeling Curious? Good. Get your 2020 diaries open (you have bought them haven't you?) as our cultural pick'n'mix for next year has more to offer than ever! From established mavericks and disruptors like Kneehigh and Robert Lepage, to bright young theatre makers in our Aldridge Studio and Quays Theatre, our building is full of those artists who are taking risks and pushing the boundaries: from defiant and diverse dance companies to a season of queer artists who refuse to fit into boxes. Our Galleries are no exception as international artists at the forefront of creative digital technologies ask if technology has corrupted or enhanced who we are. Finally we are thrilled to reveal the return of WEEK 53, featuring a very special artist who is very definitely 'out of the box'...

Stay curious.

The Lowry Centre Trust is a not-for-profit charitable organisation and registered charity (no. 1053962). All income supports our world-class Theatres and Galleries programme and our life-changing Learning & Engagement work.

GMCA Greater Manchester Community Association COMMUNITY FUND Greater Manchester Community Foundation ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

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3

A WORKSHOP OF FILTHY CREATION

9

MY NIGHT WITH REG

17

THE LAST QUIZ NIGHT ON EARTH

19

QUEERING OUR STAGES

23

A MONSTER CALLS

27

CRONGTON KNIGHTS

29

A GIANT OF MODERN THEATRE

33

BLKDOG

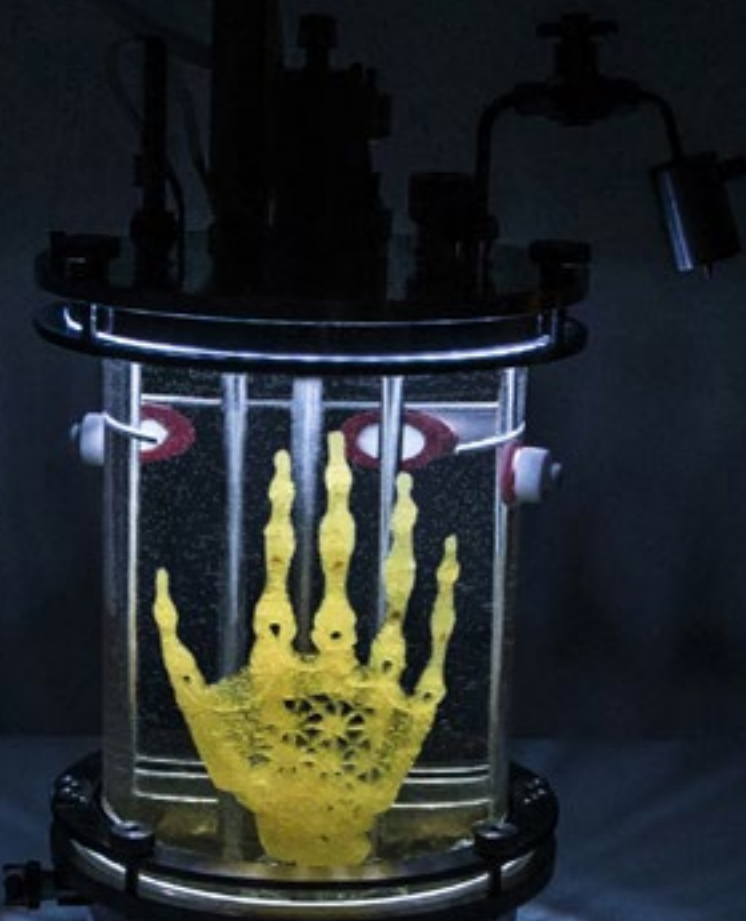
35

THE LAST OF THE PELICAN DAUGHTERS

REGENERATIVE RELIQUARY

ARTIST: AMY KARLE

'Regenerative Reliquary' is a bio-printed scaffold in the shape of a human hand skeleton design installed in a bioreactor.



Matthew Biederman

Kurt d'Haeseleer

Amy Karle

William Latham

Marshmallow Laser Feast

Isaac Monté

Charlie Murphy

Mac Daniel V Palima

& Hettie Holman

Patrick Tresset

::vtol::

'A WORKSHOP OF FILTHY CREATION'

An in depth look into new international exhibition 'The State of Us' with curator Lucy Dusgate

Mary Shelley wrote in 'Frankenstein' that the human body was a 'workshop of filthy creation' - and never has that statement been so accurate. Technology has enabled us to imagine the distance between truth and fantasy. It's a fascinating area that contemporary artists have experimented with to transform, manipulate, reinvent or reshape how we see and understand ourselves.

The State of Us features an exhibition of artworks by ten international artists from Belgium, Canada, France, Netherlands, Philippines, Russia, the UK and the USA.

We sat down with exhibition curator Lucy Dusgate.

What can visitors expect from The State of Us?

This is an exhibition with something for everyone, whether you're a regular gallery visitor, a techno geek or someone looking for a day out. It looks at how we might reshape, reimagine and redesign the human form. Think of it like a series of artistic experiments on how technology changes who we are, inside and out. Artworks range between sculptures, digital screens, VR, robots and comic books, showcasing some of the best international artistic talent at the forefront of their fields.

You quote Mary Shelley in the exhibition's interpretation. Why do you think 'Frankenstein' is a useful starting point for understanding the exhibition?

Mary Shelley was a future thinker of her time. She understood the excitement in innovation, but the responsibility that goes with this. 'Frankenstein' is a tale of moral caution, but also a window to see the possibilities that technology offers to life itself. It warns us to accept and take responsibility for what we have created, and to consider the potential consequences. These artworks examine similar ideas in their different ways, hopefully nudging visitors to think more about the impact technology and experimentation may have on our bodies and lives.

Where did your inspiration for the exhibition come from?

Putting an exhibition like this together takes around 18 months of preparation from concept to installation. The original idea came from my interest in how technology influences the natural order. Around the same time I saw Isaac Monte's artwork 'The Art of Deception', which features in the show. From this piece I began to collect other ideas of artists I had already seen, and started to seek out other artworks that would fit the exhibition. After many conversations with many different artists, I was able to reduce the log-list down to the ten artworks we see today.

As we enter a new decade, how does The State of Us reflect today's world?

From comic-book ideals of human enhancement from the 20th Century, to new technologies in stem cell replication and designer organ transplants, these artists explore some of the scientific and moral questions that come with the evolution of technology. Through creative and sometimes playful provocation they contemplate just how far technology influences how we live and the choices we make.

What do you hope visitors will take away from The State of Us?

Hopefully to think a little more about what choices are being made in human development, and who is in control of making them. Do those people decision makers represent us all? If not then is it time we got involved?

Finally, technology has undoubtedly changed us. Is this for better or for worse?

Change is inevitable and technology is just one of those instruments of change. Right now we are in the middle of a second Industrial Revolution, and it is digital. The best we can do is chose what works well for us and leave the rest to others.

THE STATE OF US

A FREE EXHIBITION OPEN UNTIL SUN 23 FEBRUARY



ANATOMY OF DESIRE

ARTIST: KURT D'HAESELEER

A virtual jury dissect the memories of an anonymous criminal character, viewing the criminal's stream of disturbing and uncanny mental images. Flashbacks, memories and emotions overflow from the accused, whilst all the time being watched by a virtual jury.



UNTIL I DIE

ARTIST: ::VTOL::

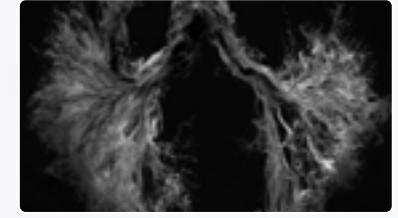
This work was originally presented as an art installation using batteries that generate electricity using the artist's blood. The electric current produced by the batteries powers a small electronic algorithmic synth module.



ART OF DECEPTION

ARTIST: ISAAC MONTÉ

With this collection of transformed hearts the artist explores how biological interventions and aesthetic manipulation can be used as tools for the ultimate deception: the transformation of inner beauty, from grotesque to perfect. Can organs be objects of design? Will humans be able to manipulate organs for aesthetic purposes?



THE TIDES WITHIN US

ARTIST: MARSHMALLOW LASER FEAST

Where does the living body begin and where does it end? By peering under our skin we explore the tidal rhythms flowing through the branching ecosystem of the human body.



HUMAN STUDY #1, RNP

ARTIST: PATRICK TRESSET

In this installation the human visitor is sketched by a robot, in a scene reminiscent of a life drawing class. When the sitter arrives, they are seated in a chair as an assistant attaches a sheet of paper onto the robots' desks and wakes the robot up.



INSIDE THE HERPES VIRUS

ARTIST: WILLIAM LATHAM

This virtual reality (VR) experience places the viewer inside the centre of the microscopic world of a virus – Herpes. The result is a beautiful, intricate 3D form for the viewer to interactively explore and play with in this VR room.



MARVEL COMICS

COLLECTED BY: STEPHEN JOSLAND

A selection of rare Marvel comic characters is to show the transformative progress from the early days of naive physical depiction to the muscle-bound perfection we associate with them today. All Marvel Comics characters and the distinctive likeness(es) thereof are Trademarks & Copyright © 1941-2019 Marvel Characters, Inc. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



SEKSENEUTRAAL

ARTIST: MAC DANIEL V PALIMA & HETTIE HOLMAN

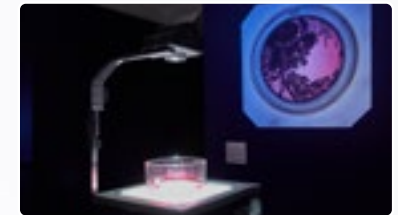
Short film 'Sekseneutraal' explores the restraints and responsibilities of gender through movement. The performance offers a lens, an understanding, and a nod to accepting the fluid nature of gender.



A GENERATIVE ADVERSARIAL NETWORK

ARTIST: MATTHEW BIEDERMAN

A machine-learning algorithm was trained with a dataset gleaned from millimetre-wave security scans. Rather than using it for security screening as intended, an algorithm creates new images of imaginary people.



BRAINS IN A DISH/ EMBODIMENTS

ARTIST: CHARLIE MURPHY

'Brains in a Dish' investigates the activities and structures of brain cells grown in the lab through glass, light and projection. 'Embodiments' challenges prescriptive medical representations of gender and sexual experience.



Elsie Kilbane, 'Patterns', 2019

THE ART OF NOW IS THE ART OF THIS GENERATION

TEDDY FLOOD, ARTIST

Venture Arts is a progressive studio that support people with learning disabilities to reach their life potential through the visual arts.

Since 1985 their professional studio in Hulme, Manchester, has provided a stimulating, nurturing and social environment for people with learning disabilities. They run a busy and varied programme led by professional artists. Every year they work with over 250 people with learning disabilities both at their studio and through outreach and works programmes. They ensure Manchester's learning disabled artists are visible, valued and able to play a full and active role in our culture.

'The Art of Now' brings together engaging new artworks by young creators from their Young People's Art Club and their

schools outreach programme. Imaginative and playful works move between media to encompass painting, ceramics, sculpture, textiles and moving image.

'The Art of Now' is kindly supported by BBC Children in Need.

Venture Arts is part of Arts Council England's National Portfolio and is a cultural partner of Manchester City Council 2018-22. www.venturearts.org



VENTURE ARTS: THE ART OF NOW

NOVEMBER 2019 - JANUARY 2020

Circle Bar Case Exhibition, outside The Lyric Theatre



THE LOWRY
ASSOCIATE
ARTIST

CREATIVITY FROM BIRTH: MAKING WORK FOR BABIES WITH COLOUR THE CLOUDS



Colour The Clouds Theatre Company believe that making theatre for babies is massively important. From encouraging the development of milestones, to providing a friendly, accepting and welcoming space for every family – high quality theatre for babies can benefit the whole family as well as venues and the wider theatre and arts sector. When asking someone when they started going to the theatre, how lovely would it be if they can answer, 'from birth'?

So we asked Colour The Clouds, how do they make a theatre show for the youngest audience members?

'There is a lot of research about what babies need, what they enjoy and what they're able to engage with – and you might be surprised by how much that is! We carefully choose a setting that is familiar to children, gentle and welcoming; like all of us, babies respond best when they feel safe and relaxed. Over the years we have learnt that visually exciting objects – colourful birds flying across the space, interactive puppets, fireworks projected on to a canopy above the audience – are the most popular, captivating the attention of babies as young as three months old. These key features provide lots of exciting 'wow' factors that parents can draw their baby's attention to. We hand make our own props

and provide in-show opportunities for the babies to touch, cuddle (and occasionally smell!) elements of the world we have created for them.' Alyx, Catherine, Christabel, Mark and Sarah, Colour The Clouds.

Read Colour The Clouds' full article at thelowry.com/artistdevelopment

Don't miss Colour The Clouds' latest immersive show for babies and their families this Christmas!

SNOWBABIES

TUE 17 - TUE 24 DECEMBER

Parent & Baby tickets: £12
Additional adults: £2 Older siblings: £5

0-2

10am

12pm

2pm

FIVE THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HIV

HIV is an easily managed medical condition if diagnosed early.

People who don't know that they're HIV+ are more likely to pass it on during sex.

'U=U' – People living with HIV who are taking effective treatment cannot pass HIV on to anyone else. Undetectable = Untransmittable.

HIV stigma and discrimination haven't gone away.

Testing for HIV has never been easier.

George House Trust has been providing HIV support and advice services since 1985. They are a service user-centred organisation with a diverse team of highly trained and knowledgeable staff and volunteers.

If you would like to find out more visit www.gh.t.org.uk or call 0161 274 4499

GREEN CARNATION COMPANY PRESENT

MY NIGHT WITH

Reg

WRITTEN BY
**KEVIN
ELYOT**

Funny, sad and sweet, Kevin Elyot's dark comedy play about the relationships of a group of gay men and their connections to the unseen yet magnetic Reg is a moving exploration of friendship, happiness and love, and their fragility in the shadow of the 1980's AIDS crisis. First opening at The Royal Court in 1994, winning the Olivier Award for best comedy, among others it has since enjoyed several revivals including a 1997 film and a second Olivier Award-winning revival at the Donmar Warehouse in 2014.

Green Carnation Company will bring Kevin Elyot's legendary razor-sharp wit to life in a stunning, visual feast that captures the decadence celebration and uncertainty of the 1980's London gay scene. They will work with award-winning young Leeds-based designer George Johnson-Leigh (one of the designers behind Opera North's Little Greats season at The Lowry in 2017) to recreate the 1980's aesthetic through stunning neon visual effect and an elegant, deconstructed set design.

Green Carnation Company are a Manchester based theatre company dedicated to presenting quality theatre telling queer and LGBTQ+ stories. 'My Night with Reg' explores a crucial moment in LGBTQ history in which fear of transmission of HIV was huge and it was impossible to escape its shadow. However things have changed drastically since – for the better. Green Carnation are proud to be working with and supporting George House Trust, a Manchester based charity providing services people living with, and affected by HIV today.

Green Carnation Company

MY NIGHT WITH REG

BY KEVIN ELYOT

THU 23 - SAT 25 JANUARY

3pm 8pm 14+

Sat

Tickets £19-£22
Conc £2 off



SHOWSTOPPER! THE IMPROVISED MUSICAL

THU 16 & FRI 17 JANUARY

Ever considered 'Hamilton in Space'? Or a geordie version of 'Les Miz' with extra tap? Whether you're an improv fan, or a loud-and-proud musical theatre geek, you'll be rolling in the aisles with musical theatre parodies all created from the audience's imaginations.

Tickets £18 - £20 Conc £2 off

8pm

Created by Debs Gatenby with curtain raiser from Theatre and Performance students from the University of Salford

HIYA ANXIETY & THIS IS NOT FOR YOU (PS. SORRY)

WED 22 JANUARY

Debs Gatenby revisits her original performance about caring for her mother and herself. Five years on we're invited back to see the mess they are in now: a mother who can't remember this morning and a daughter who wishes she couldn't.

Tickets £12 Conc £2 off

7pm

Tangram Theatre

REVELATIONS

by James Rowland

14+

FRI 24 JANUARY

Last seen at The Lowry enacting ancient Viking rituals for a fallen friend, James Rowland returns with another part of his trilogy, touchingly titled 'Songs of Friendship'. Embracing friendship in all its messy glory, this is James' true autobiographical story about a request for sperm donation, from one friend to another. Prepare to laugh. But also prepare to cry a little.

Tickets £12 Conc £2 off *Contains Nudity*

8pm



A DIGITAL DOUBLE BILL



OBERMAN KNOCKS & COMFORT ZONES

8pm

SAT 18 JANUARY Tickets £10 Conc £5 off

COMFORT ZONES

An audio-visual poem for digital dreamers. Spatial symbiosis of photons floating on the waves in neurochemical synaptic dance. Familiar shapes morph into statues of biological time where warm drones spread in canyons veins. Artists liberate ideas through a stream of organic afterimages and moody vibrations.

OBERMAN KNOCKS

With no interest in tech-talk, plug-ins or trends, tracks are all about the creation and manipulation of sounds. Spurning sterile accuracy and clinically happy tunes for sounds that bring back some of the dirt and darkness that has been swept away of late, these are tracks happy to inhabit the dark corridors of the mind.

FUTURISTIC CHANDELIER WITH A SENSE OF HUMOUR

Gandini Juggling have a long and proud history of performing genre-blurring juggling feats at The Lowry. From their first performance of 'Smashed' (which returned as the grand finale of 'Sampled' in 2018) to collaborations with ballet and dance including choreographer Seeta Patel.

This Spring they present the nine-time winner of the world's most popular juggler poll: Wes Peden. From New York, now living in Stockholm, his inspirations range from Sumo wrestling, fast-food packaging and 1950's playgrounds!

His performance Zebra (so named for the show's black and white nature) displays why he is truly the master of the juggling arts. Mixing surreal imagery (he performs dressed like a lampshade and describes his aesthetic as a 'futuristic chandelier with a sense of humour') with exceptional skill, as he uses his juggling to create optical illusions and moments of breathtaking beauty.

Performed and created by Wes Peden
Co-produced by Gandini Juggling & Maison des Jonglages
- Scène Conventionnée Jonglages

ZEBRA

MON 20 JANUARY

8pm

Tickets £14 Conc £2 off



WTF ARE WTF WEDNESDAYS?!

A series of evenings presenting work that is challenging, quirky, off-the-wall, on-the-nose and really pushing the boundaries of performance. We want you to take a risk, to step outside your comfort zone and experience something totally new. And to make things easier for you, all our WTF Wednesday events are 'Pay What You Decide' (with a suggested donation of £5) – meaning that you don't pay until after the show, and even then you only pay what you think the performance was worth! Who ever said asking 'W T actual F' was a bad thing?

The Lowry in association
with Word of Warning
Warping Genre | Threatening Convention | Fuelling Curiosity

Harry Clayton-Wright

SEX EDUCATION

WED 12 FEBRUARY 8pm

18+

One parent refuses to talk about sex. The other buys their child gay porn DVDs. 'Sex Education' explores how we learn about sex and how it shapes our lives.

Jo Bannon

WE ARE F*****D

WED 1 APRIL 8pm

16+

Jo Bannon's new show uncovers the hard work it sometimes takes to live in a world which is not designed for you. It is both ecstatic and excruciating, euphoric and unforgiving. It's also quite sexy.

WTF
WEDNESDAYS

PAY WHAT
YOU DECIDE

Kneehigh

UBU SAYS WHAT HE THINKS

GP

POOP!

KNEEHIGH'S

UBU!

A SING ALONG SATIRE

UBU SING

WILLYSONFACE

CONCEIVED BY CARL GROSE, CHARLES HALZ LEWOOD AND MIKE SHEPHERD
CREATED BY THE COMPANY BASED ON THE PLAY BY ALFRED J ARBY

Photos by Steve Tanner, Illustration by Daryl Waller



'KNEEHIGH'S UBU! IS AN ANTIDOTE TO THE BROKEN WORLD. IT STANDS IN DEFIANCE AGAINST DIVISIVENESS AND BRINGS AUDIENCES TOGETHER THROUGH THE JOYFUL ACT OF SINGING AND THE POWER OF TOGETHERNESS'

CARL GROSE, CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

TUE 28 JANUARY - SAT 1 FEBRUARY

7.30pm

1.30pm

THU 30

Tickets £25.50 Conc £2 off

WELCOME TO THE APOCALYPSE. IT'S YOUR ROUND.

‘THE END OF THE WORLD QUIZ WAITS FOR NO MAN, LITERALLY. ONWARDS EVER ONWARDS TO OUR FIERY DECLINE. ROUND THREE..?’

It's the end of the world. The last night on earth. An asteroid is heading straight for us. Fancy going out with a bang? It's the final countdown. Landlady Kathy invites you to the last quiz night on earth with Quizmaster Rav. He's the host with the most. But with time ticking, some unexpected guests turn up out of the blue. Bobby wants to settle old scores and Fran wants one last shot at love. Expect the unexpected to the bitter end.

Following two sold-out tours of 'Chip Shop Chips', Box of Tricks brings explosive new pre-apocalyptic comedy 'The Last Quiz Night on Earth' to your local. So grab a drink and join us for a night you won't forget with plenty of drama. Let's get quizzical, quizzical!

1. The Handmaid's Tale and The MaddAddam Trilogy are dystopian novels by which Canadian Author?

- a. Michael Onatdje b. Alice Munro
c. Yann Martel d. Margaret Atwood

2. Complete the title of this post-apocalyptic zombie film: 28 Days...

- a. Later b. Alligator
c. Kat Slater d. Sober

3. Roland Emmerich's disaster film about the end of the world, starring John Cusack, is called what?

- a. 1999 b. 2012
c. 2019 d. 2048

4. The Doomsday clock is currently set to what time?

- a. Tea time b. Two Minutes to Midnight
c. About half past three d. Midnight

5. Which of these is NOT a pub in the Simon Pegg comedy, The World's End

- a. The Four Horsemen b. The Famous Cock
c. The Two-Headed Dog d. The World's End

Box of Tricks

**THE LAST QUIZ NIGHT
ON EARTH** WELCOME INN, ORDSALL

6. 'It's the End of the World As We Know It (And I Feel Fine)' was a hit single in 1987 for which American alt-rock band?

- a. The Smashing Pumpkins b. Wilco
c. REM d. Counting Crows

7. Michelangelo's fresco 'The Last Judgement' is housed in which famous Chapel?

- a. The Chapel of the Holy Shroud, Turin
b. Heaton Chapel
c. King's College Chapel, Cambridge
d. The Sistine Chapel

8. In Douglas Adams' The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, Planet Earth is destroyed by the Vogon constructor fleet to make way for what?

- a. A parking lot
b. Donald Trump's new golf course
c. A hyperspace bypass
d. Nothing – they just didn't like the look of it

SCORE

2 or less: pretty poor! It's back to the classroom for you, though of course, there are no schools any more!

3 - 5: Average at best... when the world ends, you're more likely to go out with a whimper than a bang based on these results

6 or above: Winner winner, chicken dinner! Head to the bar to collect your prize, though be warned, your cash won't be worth much in the morning...

Fancy trying your hand at another quiz to celebrate the end of the world? Head on down to the Welcome Inn, Ordsall as Box of Tricks presents Alison Carr's new play, The Last Quiz Night On Earth.

Answers: 1. d 2. a 3. b 4. b 5. a 6. c 7. d 8. c

TUE 11 - SAT 15 FEBRUARY

7.30pm Tickets £12 Conc £2 off

QUEERING OUR STAGES

GROUND-BREAKING LGBTQ PERFORMANCES AT THE LOWRY

THICK & TIGHT QUEER-DANCE DUO DANIEL HAY-GORDON AND ELEANOR PERRY DESCRIBE THEIR WORK AS A FUSION OF DANCE, MIME, QUEER CULTURE AND OUTSIDER ART.'

BUT WHAT DOES 'OUTSIDER ART' MEAN? WHAT IS 'QUEER CULTURE'?

LGBTQ artists have for decades created a queer space for themselves on stages – from the cabarets and drag performances in The Royal Vauxhall Tavern to some of the most powerful plays of the 20th and 21st centuries ('Boys in the Band', 'Bent', 'Rotterdam', recent Olivier Award sensation 'The Inheritance'). On these stages they are able to subvert expectations, break boundaries and defy labels – not just against restrictive societal norms but against the notions of genre themselves. Art after all is supposed to reflect life. And the LGBTQ artists in our spring season are no exception...

In their dance-cabaret celebration, duo Thick & Tight are joined by artist/designer Tim Spooner and two fabulous soloists; Harry Alexander (Michael Clark Company) and Vidya Patel (BBC Young Dancer South Asian Finalist). Together they will use a vibrant mixture of theatrical styles (including mime, ballet, drag, lip-syncing and video) to evoke infamous and remarkable historical figures including Derek Jarman, Marcel Proust, Andy Warhol and a two-head Barbara Cartland?! Their aim: To not only make the most entertaining, brazen and bizarre creations but to also create work which envelopes the breadth of human feeling.

'Too Pretty To Punch', written and performed by transgender/non-binary spoken word artist, animator and theatre maker Edalia Day, is a comedy about gender and not fitting the boxes. Armed with a banjo and kick-ass video-projection, Edalia takes you on a hilarious and uplifting journey through what it means to be trans in 21st century Britain, taking on the world one troll at a time.

Challenging labels and assumptions is also at the "bottom" of Willy Hudson's one-man comedy. 'Bottom' challenges gay society to lose the labels of sexual preference and get-over internalised homophobia as he challenges assumptions and asks, are you a top or a bottom?

Finally, if you're feeling adventurous be sure to check out Harry Clayton-Wright's 'Sex Education'. We guarantee he'll have you gasping within the first 10 minutes...



THICK & TIGHT



TOO PRETTY TO PUNCH



BOTTOM

THICK & TIGHT

MON 17 FEBRUARY

8pm Tickets £15
Conc £2 off

TOO PRETTY TO PUNCH

Written and performed by Edalia Day

SAT 29 FEBRUARY

8pm Tickets £12
Conc £2 off

BOTTOM

by Willy Hudson

THU 5 - SAT 7 MARCH

8pm Tickets £12
Conc £2 off

DON'T MISS...

Harry Clayton-Wright's 'Sex Education' as part of our WTF Wednesday series on Wed 12 February. See p14

Traditional theatre once insisted that theatre for children should be gentle, fun and without challenge. An annual trip to a pantomime, for example, allows children to join in a fairy-tale world in which the worst mishap is a custard pie in the face or a slapstick encounter with a ladder. However, contemporary theatre has become more understanding of the needs of children and young audiences, and aware of the importance of exploring difficult and challenging subject matter.

In 'A Monster Calls', the reader often responds viscerally to Conor's loss and his refusal to fully confront the truth that he will soon lose his mother. Patrick Ness, in the original novel says 'Stories are wild creatures. When you let them loose who knows what havoc they might wreak?' and some people may suggest this is exactly the reason why challenging subject matter should not be staged for young audiences.

Children's books, however, frequently present difficult subject matter. From Roald Dahl to JK Rowling, we are constantly confronted with orphans, neglectful parents and even murderers but the written word can sometimes seem less threatening than live theatre in which the reality of such issues can hit hard.

In her 2013 article 'Why Children's Theatre Matters', Lyn Gardner wrote, 'Theatre, particularly for children, fires the imagination, it gives our children the skills and the creativity necessary to face the world, to understand it and perhaps to change it too.'

'A Monster Calls' also encourages young audiences to engage their imagination through the non-naturalistic style of both performance and design. The minimal set and aerial work encourages the audience to 'fill in' many of the gaps and process the content simultaneously.

THE OLIVIER
AWARD-WINNING
SHOW, DIRECT FROM
THE WEST END



A MONSTER CALLS

BY PATRICK NESS
INSPIRED BY AN IDEA BY SIOBHAN DOWD



Director Sally Cookson says 'That's what I like doing when I'm in an audience. I don't like to be fed every idea and be told what I'm meant to be feeling in every single moment. I am always trying to offer-up different interpretations. Each person who sees it will take something different from it.'

Live theatre enables audiences to explore and engage with challenging issues because it gives them the imagination and creativity to do so in a safe place. Just as we find in grief and sadness, theatre also allows all of us to experience joy and happiness and the ability to navigate a way through the complexity and contradiction of life.

TUE 25 - SAT 29 FEBRUARY

7.30pm

2pm

Wed 26, Thu 27 & Sat 29

Tickets £19.50 - £29.50 Conc £3 off

THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE PHENOMENON

GHOST STORIES

WRITTEN BY JEREMY DYSON AND ANDY NYMAN

TUE 18 - SAT 22 FEBRUARY

WARNING: PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT GHOST STORIES CONTAINS MOMENTS OF EXTREME SHOCK AND TENSION. THE SHOW IS UNSUITABLE FOR ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF 15. WE STRONGLY ADVISE THOSE OF A NERVOUS DISPOSITION TO THINK VERY SERIOUSLY BEFORE ATTENDING.



THELOWRY.COM/DRAMA

UNDER 26 TICKETS AVAILABLE

ARE YOU
BRAVE ENOUGH
TO BOOK?



Scratchworks Theatre

THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY

SAT 1 FEBRUARY

8pm

It was the heist of the century. But what happened to the ones who escaped justice? This physical theatre foursome recreate the feisty forgotten females from the Great Train Robbery as they decide to abandon the kitchen-sink for a life of mischief and mayhem! Well, wouldn't you join them?

Tickets £12 Conc £2 off

Joseph Toonga

BORN TO MANIFEST

THU 13 FEBRUARY

Joseph Toonga uses his hip-hop dance double bill to challenge racial prejudice. Drawing from real life encounters and experiences, Joseph Toonga is unafraid to land some stark home truths about the experiences of young black British men. In his own words: 'you say I'm just a black guy. I know who I am, do you know who I am?'

Tickets £12 Conc £2 off

8pm

Lewis Doherty, The North Wall and Nottingham Playhouse

BOAR

Created, written and performed by Lewis Doherty

14+

SAT 22 FEBRUARY

Lewis Doherty is only one man, but he is armed with a medieval fantasy, your imagination... and a stool. 'BOAR' is for anyone who can quote too much of 'The Lord of The Rings' or has missed out on sleep binging 'Game of Thrones'. Enter a world of fantasy as Lewis conjures magical worlds and over 40 characters without breaking a sweat. (Disclaimer: he may end up quite sweaty).

Tickets £12 Conc £2 off

8pm



Removing barriers to theatre for deaf audiences is at the heart of what fingersmiths does.

Working as a sign language interpreter, I originally set fingersmiths up with writer Kaite O'Reilly and Deaf actress Jean St Clair, as at that time there was very little theatre on offer for d/Deaf audiences and d/Deaf actors had very few opportunities to perform especially if their preferred language was BSL.

Using well-known, contemporary plays, we not only make these stories accessible to a deaf audience for the first time but we add 'the fingersmiths' twist' - a multi-layered approach to language performed by deaf and hearing actors using British Sign Language (BSL) and spoken English and a physical style of storytelling which has been described as HD theatre! It's also been described as a style of storytelling that 'makes you see language'.

'My Mother Said I Never Should' by Salford writer Charlotte Keatley is the perfect fit for fingersmiths - an exploration of the lives of four generations of women in one family, shifting back and forth in time, with their choices, secrets & expectations played out against the huge social change of the 20th century. For years, it was the most performed play by a female playwright, but has never been produced for d/Deaf audiences in BSL.

Working closely with the writer, we have added deaf cultural elements across the generations, providing a snapshot of the Deaf community's rich history from 1900-80s when BSL was banned in schools & an oral approach enforced. The themes resonate with today's Deaf & wider communities: language choice, Deaf peoples' opportunities & expectations and women's equality.

The end result is a moving, funny and visually powerful story that we hope you will enjoy watching as much as we have creating it.

Jeni Draper, Artistic Director of fingersmiths

fingersmiths with Sheffield Theatres and New Wolsey Theatre

MY MOTHER SAID I NEVER SHOULD

by Charlotte Keatley

TUE 3 & WED 4 MARCH

8pm

Tickets £12 Conc £2 off



STORYTELLING THAT 'MAKES YOU SEE LANGUAGE'



SIX FRIENDS. ONE BIG ADVENTURE.

CRONGTON KNIGHTS

BY ALEX WHEATLE

ADAPTED BY EMTEAZ HUSSAIN, DIRECTED BY COREY CAMPBELL & ESTHER RICHARDSON

Life isn't easy on the Crongton Estate but when the magnificent six set out to help a friend in trouble, much larger problems come their way.

Although, with the help of a few good friends nothing is impossible, and lessons learned the hard way are ones you'll never forget. That's when a crew becomes a family.

Coming of age and exploring who you might become as you grow up is something everyone experiences, and Pilot Theatre bring those stories to the stage. They created the shady pier of 1930s Brighton with the dangerous teenager Pinkie Brown in the Graham Greene classic 'Brighton Rock' at The Lowry in 2018 and found love in the violent dystopian world of Malorie Blackman's 'Noughts & Crosses' earlier this year.



Now, in 2020 Pilot are bringing the inner city adventures of McKay and his friends in Alex Wheatle's 'Crongton Knights' to life on stage.

'Crongton Knights' takes the audience on a night of madcap adventure as McKay and his friends find themselves on a journey that goes further than any of them imagined. Following the hypnotic music score from Hannah Peel for 'Brighton Rock', Pilot are again bringing music into the world of 'Crongton Knights' with the compositions of beatboxer Conrad Murray the cast brings the pulse of the city to the stage with a soundscape of vocals.

"I AM VERY PROUD THAT PILOT THEATRE ARE ADAPTING MY NOVEL, CRONGTON KNIGHTS, FOR THE STAGE. IT'S A MODERN QUEST STORY WHERE ON THEIR JOURNEY, THE YOUNG DIVERSE LEAD CHARACTERS HAVE TO CONFRONT DEBT, POVERTY, BLACKMAIL, LOSS, FEAR, THE TRAUMA OF A FLIGHT FROM A FOREIGN LAND AND THE OMNIPRESENT THREAT OF GANGLAND VIOLENCE. THE DIALOGUE I CREATED FOR THIS AWARD-WINNING NOVEL DESERVES A PLATFORM AND I FOR ONE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THE CHARACTERS THAT HAVE LIVED IN MY HEAD FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS, LEAP OUT OF MY MIND AND ONTO A STAGE NEAR YOU."

Alex Wheatle, author of "Crongton Knights"

Pilot's shows are places to encounter, express and interrogate what it means to grow up now - whether you are experiencing theatre for the first time or coming back for another great story.

TUE 10 - SAT 14 MARCH

7pm

Tue 10 &
Thu 12 - Sat 14

6pm

Wed 11

2pm

Thu 12 & Sat 14

Tickets £20.50 - £23.50 Conc £2 off

PREVIOUSLY FROM PILOT THEATRE...



TRAITOR - 2017

An immersive thriller in a secret, hidden location - Pilot Theatre put audiences in the decision-making seat with this piece inspired by the actions of Edward Snowden.



BRIGHTON ROCK - 2018

Pilot Theatre joined forces with our WEEK 53 Festival to bring Graham Greene's story of gang-land crime to life in a thrilling coming of age story.



NOUGHTS & CROSSES - 2019

Pilot Theatre adapted Malorie Blackman's best-selling young-adult novel of first love, revolution and racial and social division for the stage for the first time.



WHO IS ROBERT LEPAGE?

Robert Lepage is probably one of the most influential theatre makers of our time – though his influence far outweighs the number of people who have had the opportunity to see his work and his rare visits to the UK have become international cultural calendar highlights.

Born in Quebec, it was his 1985 production 'Dragons Trilogy' which established his reputation as a master of theatre – and which we presented at The Lowry way back in 2005 on his only previous visit to Salford. In 1994 he founded his own company, Ex Machina, and has gone on to create a series of extraordinary productions that are truly unique in their scale, vision and ambition, cementing his global reputation as a master of theatre and winning him a raft of international awards.

Technological innovation and ambition are crucial to his productions, along with an extraordinary attention to detail – his production '887' requires three full days

of work to painstakingly recreate the set and lighting to his exact specifications – and yet every Robert Lepage production remains beautifully intimate and fundamentally human.

'887' is without doubt his most autobiographical work to date – the number refers to the street number of the house he grew up in and the set consists of a fabulously detailed replica of his family home – an intricate story box of his memories. Directed by, written by and starring Robert, this is one of only two appearances in the UK this year. The show explores the enduring impact of our childhood upon our later lives – why do certain moments remain fresh in our minds long after other episodes have been forgotten?

This is a magical evening in the presence of a true giant of modern theatre at the very height of his creative powers.

An Ex Machina production

887

Written, Designed, Directed and Performed by Robert Lepage
English Translation by Louisa Blair

WED 18 & THU 19 MARCH

8pm

Tickets £9 Conc £3 off

A TRUE GIANT OF MODERN THEATRE



ALEXANDER WHITLEY
DANCE COMPANY

OW OVERFLOW O

Alexander Whitley has received significant attention for his past works investigating the impact of technology, such as artificial intelligence on contemporary human experience and his ground breaking use of interactive technology to redefine the parameters of choreography.

If you saw his 2017 piece '8 Minutes' you will recognise his cutting-edge integration of such interactive technology within his choreography.

'THE MOUNTING PILE OF DATA DOES NOTHING TO ANSWER THE SIMPLE QUESTION 'WHO AM I?'

His latest piece 'Overflow' explores what it's like to live in the era of big data and considers how the drive to turn

everything into data and information impacts on human subjectivity. The internet, initially celebrated as a medium of boundless liberty, has become a mass surveillance project in which the compulsive 'sharing' of experiences amounts to a willing participation in our own exploitation. Behavioural data, mined from human experience, is now the primary commodity in a communication system designed to know everything about us while remaining unknowable to us. Recording our every 'like' in order to predict and modify our behaviour, such a system effectively renders the future closed.

WED 18 MARCH 8pm

Tickets £15 - £17

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CASH CARRAWAY • SOPHIE MACKINTOSH • STUART MACONIE
WENDY SMITH • PROF DAVID CRYSTAL • JACKIE HAGAN

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BOTIS SEVA'S

BLKDOG

SADL
ERSW
ELLSFAR
FROM THE
NORM

A genre-defying blend of hip hop dance and free form antics, BLKDOG explores the inner battlefield of an ageing artist trying to retain his youth.

Botis began working on 'BLKDOG' in 2018 as part of the Sadler's Wells 20th anniversary commission 'Reckonings', which went on to be awarded an Olivier for Best New Dance Production in April 2019.

Botis explains that BLKDOG is a piece about finding the coping mechanism to deal with life. Taking inspiration from science and neurology, Botis starts his process by working with images and visuals, and is inspired by the states and feelings that emerge from listening to a piece of music or from observing people and his surroundings.

"BLKDOG BY BOTIS SEVA WAS THE MOST INCREDIBLE DANCE I HAVE EVER SEEN. IT'S MOVED THROUGH ME. IT'S CHANGED ME."

Yolanda Ohene, audience member.

Established in May 2009, Far From The Norm is the dance company founded by artistic director Botis Seva and is a collective of dance artists renowned for experimenting with hip hop form and challenging conventions within dance theatre. Their work tackles



socio-political concerns that take audiences on visceral journeys balancing conceptual performances with compelling truths. Working collaboratively alongside Botis, the company all bring experience and knowledge in a variety of dance styles such as B-boying, Krump, Popping, Hip-Hop, House, Locking, Lindy Hop and Contemporary.

If you saw Far From the Norm perform '60 Sec' in Sampled in 2018 you will know this company is definitely one to watch.

"I'VE NEVER SEEN HIP HOP PERFORMED LIKE THIS BEFORE AND I THINK THE FUTURE OF THIS GENRE IS VIRTUAL REALITY OR AT LEAST THAT IS WHAT THE MOVEMENTS REMINDED ME OF. A FUSION OF ANIMATION AND REALITY LIE ON STAGE IS THE BEST WAY TO DESCRIBE IT...INCREDIBLE!"

Monisola Omotoso, audience member.

A co-production between Far From The Norm and Sadler's Wells

THU 26 MARCH

8pm

**Tickets £16
Conc £2 off**

Like Ayckbourn on acid!

Senior Programmer Matthew Eames talks about his
2019 Edinburgh Fringe highlight

Bristol-based theatre group Wardrobe Ensemble return to The Lowry for the third time with their latest show, 'The Last of the Pelican Daughters', a stand-out hit at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival this summer.

We asked our Senior Programmer Matthew Eames what it is about this company that makes them special and why he is excited to have programmed this show:

What makes the Wardrobe Ensemble special?

I first saw Wardrobe Ensemble at a scratch night in the bowels of the Bristol Old Vic when I was there to support one of The Lowry's Developed With artist companies. Wardrobe Ensemble stood out as different - not least due to their size - there was loads of them! I watched an early version of 'The Future of Sex' (here in the Aldridge Studio in 2016) and I loved it. But how could they ever tour? How could they ever make it pay? It took them a while but a hit Edinburgh helped pave their way. And they haven't looked back. 'Education Education Education' was the big leap into larger scale work with big producing partners. It was a great show, very funny and charming and the era really chimed with audiences. (And me, believe it or not I was finishing sixth form in 1997...)

'They are always so fluid, so surprising, so funny. And they always have a great soundtrack.'

Their brand of work speaks to everything I love to see in theatre. Essentially interesting stories told in interesting ways. They are always so fluid, so surprising, so funny. And they always have a great soundtrack. For a company that devises together I am always amazed at the ambition in their storytelling - I don't think they have many peers in that respect. And they are quite an unusual, unlikely bunch which makes me like them even more.

So, what is the show about?

A family of estranged sisters return to their family home after the death of their mother. There is a lot going on and a lot to sort out. It's a family drama for today; inspirational mothers, family and the pressures of modern living.

Why was 'The Last of the Pelican Daughters' an Edinburgh highlight for you this year?

I was really interested that they chose this story to tell. It felt very current and surprisingly sensitive, but also close to being a classic farce at times. A great bunch of characters in one family, in a testing situation, it's like Ayckbourn on acid! I wondered how working with an internationally-reputed company like Complicité would impact on the work and they didn't disappoint. They continue to develop their style, especially visually.

Matt Eames, Senior Theatres Programmer and Producer

A Wardrobe Ensemble, Complicité and Royal & Derngate,
Northampton Co-production

THE LAST OF THE PELICAN DAUGHTERS

TUE 31 MARCH - THU 2 APRIL

Tickets £18.50 Conc £3 off

8pm





RENDEZ-VOUS IN BRATISLAVA

SAT 14 MARCH

Cabaret (far from being a musical vehicle for Liza Min[nelli]) is steeped in a history of activism, defiance and rebellion. This is the musical story of cabaret handed down through generations in an extraordinary true family story of one man's remarkable actions and his granddaughter's mission to revive them.

Tickets £12 **Conc** £2 off

8pm



BEST OF BE FESTIVAL: PRECEDENTS TO A POTENTIAL FUTURE | YELLOW PLACE | LEVITATIONS

SAT 21 MARCH

14+

Best of BE FESTIVAL at The Lowry is fast becoming a fixture of the city's cultural calendar. A medley of dance, circus and physical theatre highlights from across Europe, all in one night. This year festival's top picks bring companies from Belgium, Spain and Hungary to Salford for an evening of intercontinental surprises (and free food).

Tickets £16

7.30pm



The Thelmas

LADYKILLER

16+

FRI 3 APRIL

The Thelmas are flipping the gender rule book on psychopathy in this unflinching one-woman show that's literally dripping with blood. Written by Madeline Gould and performed with bright-eyed chilling brilliance by Hannah McLean, they re-examine the study of serial killers through the lenses of class, gender and comedy. For anyone who's ever read 'The Psychopath Test' and has counted themselves out.

Tickets £12 **Conc** £2 off

8pm



**WEEK
53**

FRI 24 APRIL - SUN 3 MAY 2020

FULL LINE-UP TO BE ANNOUNCED.

FRI 24 APR - SUN 3 MAY 2020

WEEK
53

A FESTIVAL

Something To Aim For present

LE GATEAU CHOCOLAT

Pandora

SAT 2 & SUN 3 MAY 2020

Ft. Manchester Camerata

Commissioned by The Lowry for WEEK 53 and the Lawrence Batley Theatre. Supported by Arts Council England.

The festival returns. WEEK 53 – the Lowry's biennial festival for the compulsively curious – is back. And we are announcing it in style with the first of several major commissions.

Le Gateau Chocolat is an artist like no other. An international personality in the drag and contemporary opera scene (how many people can claim that?), Le Gateau will present the world premiere of 'Pandora'.

The legend of Pandora comes from Greek mythology; the story of the first woman on earth whose act of opening a forbidden box results in the unleashing of all the world's evils, leaving behind only the small but bright glimmer of hope. Through the show Le Gateau Chocolat uses this fable as a metaphor for the loss of innocence and the perceived contamination of our identities through an unleashing of traumas that force us to evolve, adapt or be destroyed – something the artist has experienced first-hand.

This will be Le Gateau's largest solo show to date and audiences can expect the larger-than-life performer to be accompanied by a 15-piece orchestra from Manchester Camerata performing classical pieces reflecting Le Gateau's operatic background, alongside original compositions and numbers from some of the biggest pop stars the world has known.

Unapologetic, visually stunning and musically exquisite, if 'Pandora' is anything to go by then WEEK 53 2020 will be bigger and bolder than ever.

TICKETS £10 **THELOWRY.COM/WEEK53**

Photography - Christa Holka | Art Direction - David Curtis-Ring | Stylist - Gia Mitchell | Makeup Artist - Jin Ong



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STEPHEN K AMOS
CLINTON BAPTISTE

ED BYRNE
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A per-ticket booking fee applies for all ticket bookings made over the phone and online (excludes Studio shows and activity bookings).

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