

**BRIGHTON
PEOPLE'S
THEATRE**



PRESS RELEASE

Embargoed until 31st January 2019, 1pm

Brighton People's Theatre launch year-long programme to build a theatre company created by, for and with the people of Brighton & Hove.

Invite to our Launch Event:

1pm-2pm, 31st January 2019, Horatio's Bar, Brighton Pier

Join us for Fish & Chips on the Pier and to celebrate the launch of our programme. Filming/photography requests welcome, launch photos available via dropbox on 1st Feb. Please RSVP here: <https://goo.gl/forms/fLncABNCvWKL2T3X2>

Naomi Alexander, Artistic Director of Brighton People's Theatre, announces a year-long programme in partnership with the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival and Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts (ACCA).

The year-long programme of workshops, masterclasses, theatre clubs and events aims to demonstrate an appetite for a permanent people's theatre in the city, and will seek to work with at least 100 local residents who are not currently engaged with arts provision in the city. All activities are offered on a Pay-What-You-Can basis.

'The wealthiest, best-educated, least ethnically diverse 8% of the population are the main producers and consumers of publicly subsidised theatre. Low engagement is more the effect of a mismatch between the public's taste and the publicly funded cultural offer'. (The Warwick Commission's 2015 report into cultural value)

The programme will be open to all, but specifically aims to involve people who have never professionally, or otherwise, engaged in theatre. Artists including Selina Thompson, Alan Lane, Suhayla El Basra and Luke Barnes will lead workshops, develop new ideas, and work with participants to challenge how theatre is made and consumed in the UK.

Over the year, Brighton People's Theatre will run monthly masterclasses, play-reading groups, theatre-making workshops, audience clubs and backstage theatre tours with the people of the city. Twice a year, Brighton People's Theatre will hold People's Inspiration Meetings where members will decide what stories they want to tell.

As part of our series of masterclasses, participants will stage a live version of an iconic music video with Selina Thompson, create a chain gang with audio-visual artist Sam Halmarack, put pen to paper with Tim Crouch and learn about theatre writing, work as an ensemble through movement with Dan Canham, and play fun, messy, practical games to explore directing with Emily Lim.

Naomi Alexander of Brighton People's Theatre says:

"If all the world's a stage, then theatre is for everyone. We are passionate about changing the way that theatre is made so that it is more reflective of society as a whole.

Brighton People's Theatre is open to anyone who is curious about what theatre could mean in their lives. We've got a fantastic programme of activities over the year for people to try on a Pay What You Can basis. Take a look at our website for more details. Come and play."

Andrew Comben, Chief Executive, Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival says:

"Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival is proud to have worked with Brighton People's Theatre since their first project, 'Tighten Our Belts' was presented at our venue, and more recently establishing 'Your Place' as a vital part of Brighton Festival, enabling communities in East Brighton and Hangleton to make decisions about what arts and cultural engagement means to them. We're delighted to formalise and extend our relationship with Brighton People's Theatre and in working together give more people across Brighton & Hove access to the arts and provide them with the opportunity to help shape the artistic programme throughout the year at Brighton Dome."

Laura McDermott, Creative Director, Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts, says:

'Naomi Alexander has a talent for bringing people together. She makes space for people's passions and ideas. I am confident that Brighton People's Theatre will become a vibrant pulse in the city. We are proud to name them as an associate company of Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts. This relationship is part of University of Sussex's wider commitment to engaging communities in Brighton & Hove and across Sussex.

Richard Attenborough said: "The arts are for everyone and failure to include everyone diminishes us all". We look forward to working with Brighton People's Theatre to connect people with our programme and to explore ideas for new projects together.'

Ushi Bagga, Senior Grant Manager, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, says:

"Paul Hamlyn Foundation is committed to supporting organisations who want to widen access and deepen participation in the arts. Brighton People's Theatre is setting out to explore and test their role as a civic theatre for the city. Their new network for people who want to explore theatre-making, offered on a Pay What You Can basis, provides opportunities for participants to learn from high calibre artists on themes such as storytelling and working outdoors. We are particularly interested in the opportunity for anyone who is part of the network to decide what the company does next through contributing their ideas for future productions and creative projects. We look forward to finding out what the company learns through this process."

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For further information, images and interview requests please contact:
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NOTES TO EDITORS

Listings

Visiting Artists:

Saturday 2nd March: Suhayla El Bushra - creative writing
Saturday 6th April: Alan Lane - working outdoors with headphones and radio mics
Saturday 4th May: Vic Melody - autobiographical work
Saturday 1st June: Kane Husbands - movement
Saturday 6th July: Selina Thompson - making theatre is easy
Saturday 3rd August: Sam Halmarack - sound and composition
Sunday 8th September: Tim Crouch – storytelling
Saturday 5th October: Luke Barnes - playwriting
Saturday 2nd November: Dan Canham - telling your story through movement
Saturday 7th December: Emily Lim - directing

People's Playreading Group:

Tuesday 12th March 12.30-1.30
Tuesday 23rd April 12.30-1.30
Tuesday 2nd July 12.30-1.30

For detailed listings and information about how to book please visit:
brightonpeoplestheatre.org (new website launched on 31st Jan)

About Brighton People's Theatre:

- Brighton People's Theatre (BPT) was founded in 2015 by director and producer Naomi Alexander. The first project; *Tighten Our Belts* was made with people from Brighton Unemployed Centre Families Project over a period of 18 months and enjoyed two sell out shows at Brighton Dome.
- Brighton People's Theatre has also worked in partnership with Brighton Festival, the Hangleton and Knoll Project, Due East and the community steering committees of Hangleton and East Brighton to deliver the successful Brighton Festival event *Your Place* in 2017 and 2018. The project engaged 2500 people from the local communities in 2018 with its programme of free events and activities which took place over two weekends in May.
- In 2018 the Paul Hamlyn Foundation awarded BPT £60k to develop a peripatetic theatre company for the city.

Website: www.brightonpeoplestheatre.org
[facebook.com/brightonpeoplestheatre](https://www.facebook.com/brightonpeoplestheatre) / twitter.com/BtnPeople

About Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival:

- Brighton Dome & Brighton festival is a registered arts charity which aims to champion the power of the arts, to enrich and change lives, and inspire and enable artists to be their most creative.
- Each year Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival presents over 600 events spanning music, theatre, dance, comedy, literature, spoken word, visual arts, film, digital and more as part of its year-round programme as well as

producing the internationally-acclaimed Brighton Festival in May.

- Brighton Dome is the south coast's leading multi-arts venue - a three space, Grade 1 listed building made up of the Concert Hall, Corn Exchange and Studio Theatre at the cultural heart of one of England's most creative cities.
- We have embarked on an exciting journey to restore and reunite this historic estate, starting with a major refurbishment of our nationally important Corn Exchange and Studio Theatre. The transformation will restore long-lost heritage features as well as provide new, state-of the art facilities. Brighton Dome Concert Hall remains open throughout the works and you will also see us pop up occasionally at partner venues across Brighton & Hove.

www.brightondome.org/ourfuture

About Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts:

- Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts is a state-of-the-art cultural hub located on the University of Sussex campus. The centre brings the university, local residents and the wider national and international arts communities together through its programme of music, film, dance, installation, performance, discussion and debate.
- The building is a Grade II* listed building designed by Sir Basil Spence and originally opened in 1969. The fully refurbished space contains a flexible 350-seat auditorium, studios for teaching/research/rehearsal, café/bar and social meeting area.
- The Centre is named after Richard Attenborough (former Chancellor at University of Sussex). The programme at the centre is guided by Lord Attenborough's values: human rights, social justice, creative education and access to the arts for all.
- Formerly known as the Gardner Arts Centre, Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts opened in May 2016, following a full refurbishment and installation of brand new lighting, sound and audio-visual equipment. The public areas are fully accessible.

www.attenboroughcentre.com

About the Paul Hamlyn Foundation:

- Paul Hamlyn Foundation was established by Paul Hamlyn in 1987. Upon his death in 2001, he left most of his estate to the Foundation, creating one of the largest independent grant-making foundations in the UK.
- Our mission is to help people overcome disadvantage and lack of opportunity, so that they can realise their potential and enjoy fulfilling and creative lives. We have a particular interest in supporting young people and a strong belief in the importance of the arts.

www.phf.org.uk