

National Theatre

Press Release

National Theatre, in partnership with Cast, launches new podcast series *Stories To Get Us Through* created by the people of Doncaster



3 March 2021

Launching today, [Stories To Get Us Through](#) is a new podcast series featuring stories written and performed by the people of Doncaster, inspired by real life events and created during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The 18 short stories are a collection of personal anecdotes, snapshot memories and poetry, and have been created by people from different backgrounds who came together as part of the National Theatre's Public Acts programme. The series consists of five episodes which explore different themes including imagination, change, fear, friendship and heroes. Muhammed shares memories of his best friend from Gambia and how their lives have intertwined, teenagers Aaron and Beth share their hopes and fears for the future, and Lynn tells the story of finding contentment in her own company.

Stories To Get Us Through is a community performance project through the National Theatre's Public Acts programme to create extraordinary acts of theatre and community, delivered in partnership with [Cast](#) in Doncaster with support from [Right Up Our Street](#). Six community organisations across Doncaster, [B.Friend](#), [Conversation Club](#), [Edlington Community Organisation](#), [LGBTQ Youth](#), [Cast Youth Theatre](#) and [darts](#), have been taking part in the programme and following the postponement of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* in summer 2020, are continuing to take part in creative projects remotely. Participants developed their stories remotely, on Zoom, over the phone, and through postal packs with

creative writing activities, and recorded the stories at home with professional audio recording equipment.

James Blakey, Associate Director of Public Acts said, *“Stories To Get Us Through is a time capsule of the moment our Public Acts Doncaster community convened around a digital campfire in lockdown to tell their stories to each other and the world. Stories have the power to make us feel as though we’re together, even when we are apart and we can’t wait to share them with you. Despite the challenges and restrictions lockdown posed, we came together as a community to deliver this project and we look forward to when we can create live participatory performances together again”.*

Participant **Sam** said, *“I was sceptical at first as I didn’t have a single story in mind that would instil inspiration or start a conversation. But then it occurred to me that there is something I can say, I can talk proudly and push the negative voices down. In sharing stories, we are sharing lives and it is that which gets us through, it’s that you should hold on for. You can learn so much from listening to a person’s story”.*

Stories To Get Us Through can be listened to on www.publicactsdoncaster.com/stories-to-get-us-through and is also available on all podcast platforms.

Stories To Get Us Through is a community performance project delivered in partnership with National Theatre’s Public Acts, Cast and Right Up Our Street, made possible by Arts Council England’s Strategic Touring Fund, Garfield Weston Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Mr & Mrs A Mosawi and Wates Foundation.

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For images of the participants, please click [here](#).

For more information, audio clips and media enquiries please contact Rhian Bennett on rbennett@nationaltheatre.org.uk

About Public Acts

Public Acts is the National Theatre’s nationwide initiative to create extraordinary acts of theatre and community. The programme creates ambitious new works of participatory theatre and is built on sustained partnerships with theatres and community organisations across the UK who share our vision of theatre as a force for change. Our theatre partners are Cast in Doncaster and Queen’s Theatre Hornchurch.

The first Public Acts production was *Pericles* in August 2018, at the National Theatre, in the Olivier Theatre. The second production was *As You Like It* in August 2019 at the Queen’s Theatre, Hornchurch. The third production in partnership with Cast has been postponed

from 2020 however we are rescheduling for a future date and continuing to work with our community partners and creative team over the coming months.

Public Acts is inspired by Public Works, the Public Theater's ground-breaking programme of participatory theatre in New York.

Public Acts is supported by Arts Council England's Strategic Touring Fund, Garfield Weston Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Mr & Mrs A Mosawi and Wates Foundation.

www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/about-the-national-theatre/our-national-work/public-acts

About the National Theatre

The National Theatre's mission is to make world class theatre that's entertaining, challenging and inspiring – and to make it for everyone. It aims to reach the widest possible audience and to be as inclusive, diverse and national as possible with a broad range of productions that play in London, on tour around the UK, on Broadway and across the globe. The National Theatre's extensive UK-wide learning and participation programme supports young people and schools through performance and writing programmes like Connections, New Views and Let's Play, while Public Acts creates ambitious new works of participatory theatre in sustained partnership with theatres and community organisations around the country. The National Theatre extends its reach through digital programmes including NT Live, which broadcasts some of the best of British theatre to over 2,500 venues in 65 countries, the National Theatre Collection, which makes recordings of shows available to UK schools and the global education sector, and now National Theatre at Home. The National Theatre invests in the future of theatre by developing talent, creating bold new work and building audiences, partnering with a range of UK theatres and theatre companies. For more information, please visit nationaltheatre.org.uk

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About Cast

Having opened in 2013, Cast in Doncaster welcomes over 100,000 audience members every year through its doors, establishing itself as a distinctive arts centre, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

The 620-seat theatre presents a wide ranging programme throughout the year, including music, dance, children's shows, comedy and drama. As well as the main auditorium, the Second Space within the venue can accommodate up to 200 people and features the very best of small scale touring shows and early career artists.

Through Cast's partnerships with theatres and artists across the region and country they offer the very best in performing arts, with visits from world renowned companies such as the National Theatre taking place alongside the newest freshest work from emerging artists in our second space.

About Right Up Our Street

Right Up Our Street was formed in 2014 and is funded through Art Council England's [Creative People and Places](#) programme. Creative People and Places is about more people choosing, creating and taking part in brilliant art experiences in the places where they live. From the outset we have held a firm belief that if Right Up Our Street was to succeed our programme needed to be a dialogue between communities, artists and the core team.

Our mission is to provide a programme which is a successful combination of the imagination and inspiration of artists, and the understanding and aspiration of Doncaster's local communities. In simple terms, we need to create great art that the people in Doncaster want to engage with.

@RightUpRStreet

<https://www.rightupourstreet.org.uk/>