



arcola
theatre

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PlayWROUGHT#5: 14 writers. 14 plays. 14 new ways to see the world.

The word wright is an archaic English term for a craftsman or builder. When combined with the word play, this indicates someone who has wrought words, themes, and other elements into a dramatic form, someone who crafts plays.

PlayWROUGHT is Arcola's week long celebration of new ideas, new voices and new writing. PlayWROUGHT #5 is set to be our biggest Festival yet, and will take place in Studio 2 from Monday 24th – Sunday 30th July 2017, with fourteen exciting new plays presented as a series of rehearsed readings.

The playwrights have had 1-2-1's with the Arcola team, developed their work in R&D days, as well as taken part in Master Classes led by Lisa Goldman (former Artistic Director of Red Room and Soho Theatre). Joined now by exciting directors and actors, each play offers a unique insight into a world in flux.

The Festival is a culmination of a unique development process and aims to celebrate and support new and emerging talent, regardless of age, by providing these fourteen playwrights with the guidance, space and support in which to develop their ideas.

Since the first PlayWROUGHT programme in 2014, Arcola have produced or presented five plays from the programme (including Offie Award Winning *Clarion* by Mark Jagasia in 2015, and most recently Asif Khan's *Combustion* in June 2017). Other plays developed in the programme have been presented at venues such as Hampstead Downstairs, Theatre Royal Stratford East, Theatre 503 and Leeds Studio, with writers going on to join the BBC and Headlong Writers Groups, produce their work for radio, or on attachment at theatres across the UK.

We are delighted to present new, daring, original and important voices.

We hope to see you at PlayWROUGHT #5!



Arcola Theatre Production Company. Company Number: 5242988. Charity Number: 1108613



ENGLISH SETTLEMENT by Peter Knowles
Monday 24 July at 6.30pm

“Being a human being. It’s not a narrative. It’s not a story, is it? We can’t face not knowing what happens next. We can’t face the abyss. It’s your fault. The storytellers. The sweet talkers.”

A small group of people who work together on the restoration of a medieval hall agree to take part in a series of market research interviews to be used on a social media site. The wry interviews, begun as a favour to the social media manager, become absurd, the progress of the work is disrupted, and tension develops between the ordinary lives of these people and the algorithms of consumerism.

Director: Kay Michael

Peter Knowles began writing at St David’s University College. THE SHIFT (National Student Playwriting Competition, first prize.) After a 1 year post-graduate course at London Academy of Performing Arts, he joined writers’ programmes with Made in Wales, Theatr Clwyd, and Soho Theatre. His previous play OWNER/OCCUPIER was produced at Arcola, in a production directed by Mehmet Ergen. He lives in London with his partner Miriam Buether, and hangs out with three other great guys aged 16, 8 and 4.

DEAD YARD by Matthew Turner
Monday 24 July at 8.30pm

“Call off the funeral, Mummy! Chuck him in a skip and be done with him!”

Pop-Pop is dead. Yet his widow, Coral, is more intent on making war than mourning her late husband. And the children are her target. Battle commences at the family home over the traditional nine nights of festivities with old-time music, painful memories and shocking revelations.

Come join the family. Mingle with their curious guests. Fill your belly and pay your respects as tensions rise to unbearable levels. This is no ordinary wake. *Dead Yard* is a new dark comedy about the limits of familial love.

Director: Yasmeen Arden

Matthew Turner’s plays include *The Interview* (Arcola 2010), *The Inside Man* (Brighton Fringe 2011), *Inside My Head* (Bread & Roses 2013) and *A Certain Kind of Girl* at The Miniaturists (Arcola 2016). He has written four short plays for Theatre503 and his last full-length play, *Closed*, reached the final 40 of the 2015 Bruntwood Prize. For more information see www.matthewturner.info



KILLER LANDSLIDES by Alice Malin
Tuesday 25 July at 6.30pm

“Welcome to England, Claire.”

It's Carol's birthday. Her forty-first, if you believe Carol, and her fiftieth, if you believe her birth certificate. Claire, Carol's younger sister, has turned up out of the blue, with a box of Ferrero Rocher and a bottle of wine, to celebrate. But Carol's none too pleased; she doesn't like Ferrero Rocher and she doesn't see anything worth celebrating in turning forty-one. Because Carol's got problems. There's Mum, who's got dementia; there's Den, Carol's ex; and then there's the biggest problem of all, which Carol's not telling anyone about. But Carol's not the only one with secrets. Her sister Claire's got a few of her own. And when these secrets come out into the open, so do childhood rivalries. Before long, the living-room of Carol's sleepy little terrace house has turned into a battleground.

A funny, poignant new play, set in the Welsh Marches, about class, national identity and family. A play about why we run away from home, and what brings us back to it.

Director: Blythe Stewart

Alice Malin is currently associate director at Actors' Touring Company. Previous productions include *Daddy's Girl* (Vault Festival), *Birthday Suit* (Old Red Lion), *10,000 Smarties* (Old Fire Station, Oxford), *Treasure* (Finborough Theatre), *fiji land* (Southwark Playhouse), *The Fever* (Old Fire Station, Oxford), *Freefall: A Double Bill of New Plays* (New Wimbledon Studio). Associate directing includes *A Room with a View* (Bath Theatre Royal & tour). Assistant directing includes *Ross* (Chichester Festival Theatre), *Measure for Measure* and *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare's Globe), *Play Strindberg* and *Intimate Apparel* (Theatre Royal Bath, Ustinov Studio), *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Royal & Derngate), *Roots* and *As You Like It* (Clwyd Theatr Cymru). Drama school directing includes *Andorra* and *Spring Storm* (Oxford School of Drama).

NO BIRD by Nichola Rivers
Tuesday 25 July at 8.30pm

“We're all capable of great things, Iz. We just don't do them well without pre warning. Or practice...”

Lorraine; a woman trapped inside her home, but with a mind that flies free.
Elizabeth; her daughter, beginning to question their static environment and her lack of memories. When the countryside is swamped with protesters and the national media, Lorraine must try and hold on to her secrets, and her family by any



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means - as Elizabeth fights back against the overwhelming protection of her mother and demands to spread her wings. But their time is running out...

A highly comic, yet deeply meaningful play exploring the idea of freedom, and identity. Are we 'where we come from' or what we make of ourselves? And do we ever learn the difference?

Director: Andrew Keates

Nichola Rivers' previous works include *Definable Ether* (Canterbury Fringe Festival) and *Delivery* (Arden Theatre). Her first full-length play, *No Bird* was longlisted for the PapaTango prize 2016. She is currently developing her new play, *Charlie* for performance, and is commissioned to write another which will premiere next year.

***FIRE BLIGHT* by Louise Breckon-Richards**
Wednesday 26 July at 6.30pm

'If you don't let anyone in then you will break, good and proper. No one likes seeing what's there, inside. We're pretty ugly fuckers, humans. But when times are like this, we have to look out for each other. We have to...'

Forced out of home and moved into a cramped, social housing block in North London, Amber, a young ex dancer with a new baby, struggles to keep her territory safe from her new, invasive neighbours. She fends off overbearing, lonely Shona with her unwanted advice and alcoholic John with his second hand gifts. Even the communal garden is no escape. Only Shona's son Tom seems to be able to crack Amber's protective shell, but he is currently in 'two places'. In an environment where you can be lonely but never alone, boxed in together, they have no choice but to impact on each other's lives.

Director: Alice Fitzgerald

Louise Breckon -Richards is an actress and playwright. Most recently she co-created, produced and starred in her one woman show 'Can you hear me running?' which ran for three weeks at The Pleasance Theatre to a great response supported by ACE. She has written three plays, *Fire blight* (longlisted for the Theatre503 playwriting award), *Trace* (reading at Mountview Academy of Arts), and is currently re- drafting a new three hander play that deals with the aftermath of a serious crime in London. She trained as an actress at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama and has worked at the National Theatre, West Yorkshire Playhouse, with the English Shakespeare company, Colchester mercury theatre and many touring productions. <http://louise-breckon-richards.com/>
@BreckonRichards



***WE BE SLUMBERING* by Callum McGowan**
Wednesday 26 July at 8.30pm

"Blood in your nostrils, swinging a slaughterman's axe. Crocodile teeth and metal blades. You're a walking shadow of death. Ain't no doubt."

"You keep killing god's creatures; he'll turn away from you. He did from me."

Jacob Freeman, a young worker seeking isolation gets dragged through the world of Union and Corporate desires. Drawn into battle between corporate greed and organized labor in a 1930's rural America, already transformed by a process of industrialization that would dispossess the lives of ordinary men and women.

The industrial world begins to leave its city heartlands to forever change homes and communities amongst the farm and ranch lands of the Southern American states. Set against the backdrop of the American slaughterhouse, *We Be Slumbering* examines one community's tragic disintegration.

The conveyer belt of flesh and soul has begun.

Director Kaliou Kadri

Callum McGowan is an actor and writer from London. His work has been performed at The Pleasance Theatre, The Lost Theatre, St James Theatre and more. His award winning play *No Place Like Hope* will have its debut London run this September & August at The Courtyard Theatre. *We Be Slumbering* is McGowan's first full length play.

***ALI AND DAHLIA* by Tariq Jordan**
Thursday 27 July at 6.30pm

"My father used to say, nearly everything in the world is made in China; except courage, this is made in Palestine."

Accused of kidnapping an IDF soldier, Ali awaits his fate in an Israeli interrogation room. But when an old lover steps in to question him, the two are forced to confront their past and find themselves torn between bitter loyalties.

A harrowing Palestinian-Israeli love story set against the backdrop of the



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construction of the West Bank wall. A story of love, occupation, sacrifice and redemption that looks unflinchingly at the loss of innocence in war, the longing for lost homelands, and the political forces that shape our lives.

Director: Lucy Dunkerley

Tariq Jordan is an actor, teacher and writer. Since graduating from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in 2007, he has worked extensively as a performer on stage and in film, with TV credits including *White Girl*, *George Gently*, *Spooks* and *Shameless* and theatrical credits with Sadler's Wells, the Tricycle Theatre, Kneehigh and Border Crossings. As a drama teacher, Tariq has worked with young people both in the UK and abroad, including Palestine with Ashtar Theatre in 2014. His debut play *Ali and Dahlia* was inspired by his experiences in Palestine as well as his experience as an Iraqi-Jew, with dual Arab-Muslim and European-Jewish heritage. *Ali and Dahlia* had its first public reading as part of the Nour Arts Festival in 2016.

LONDON/BUDAPEST by David Thame
Thursday 27 July at 8.30pm

"What a trail we leave behind us.....And we never look back to see who is shoveling it up."

Rent boys and writers; saunas and spies: two deadly Sunday evenings in a London flat, fifty years apart.

Two men take a high-stakes gamble. One in the shadow of the Cold War Burgess/Maclean defection and the anti-gay purges of the 1950s. The other caught up in today's chilly relationship with Putin's Russia. Their choice is between desire and politics, success and failure. But what happens when your history catches up with you, and you cannot press "delete"?

LONDON/ BUDAPEST is a tense, tender and compelling look at the price of getting it wrong inspired by real life Hungarian emigée Adam de Hegedus, author of the UK's first gay bestseller *The Heart in Exile* (1953); and by the notorious spy-in-the-sports-bag case of 2010.

Director: Richard Speir



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David Thame's first play, *Dancing*, was produced in Manchester earlier this year, whilst a short play *Changing Rooms* is to appear at this August's Arundel Festival (winning the Joy Goun Award). He is a member of Cheltenham Everyman Theatre Writers' Lab, author of short-story collection *Canal Street Gothic* and works as a journalist writing for titles in London and Manchester. He has also been a university lecturer in English and a sheep farmer.

***THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENT* by Neasa O'Callaghan**
Friday 28 July at 6.30pm

'You think Europe's closing up, because of a vote? That we need to go see it before we have to pay a fee or fill in some paperwork? That's my world, already. Gates and borders, closed shut.'

Determined and ambitious, twenty-four-year-old Abiola Okonkwo is en route to becoming a solicitor; an assistant at a top law firm in London, she has finally saved enough money to start her training. That is until she learns she is below the newly introduced Minimum Pay Requirement, and has three months to leave the UK ... or else she will be deported to Nigeria. *The Minimum Requirement* explores current immigration policy in the UK, friendship, and the lengths a person will go to attain a sense of belonging.

Director: Jack Gamble

Neasa O'Callaghan is a playwright from the West of Ireland. She holds an MRes in Playwriting Studies from the University of Birmingham. She has previously been a 503Five Resident Writer at Theatre503, a Writer-on-Attachment to the Oxford Playhouse, a Writer-in-Residence at North Wall Arts Centre, and a member of Soho Theatre's Writers' Lab. Her work have been performed at Bank of Ireland Theatre, Galway, Ireland; Old Joint Stock Theatre and the Outlet Festival, Birmingham; Oxford Playhouse and North Wall Arts Centre, Oxford, and Theatre503, London.

***THE MAYOR OF HACKNEY* by James Harris**
Friday 28 July at 8.30pm

"When I entered politics I made two resolutions. One was that I would not be ideological. My second was that I would always give as clear and brief an answer possible to any question I was asked."



The Mayor of Hackney tells the story of a political adventure, and the man, Paul Archer, who embarks upon it. Paul's initially semi-serious bid to become Mayor of Hackney succeeds beyond all his imaginings and leads to his comic and disturbing ascent to the threshold of the highest office in London. Featuring a huge cast of real-life political figures historical and modern, the play examines the nature of electoral politics through the prism of Archer's surreal political career, which encompasses everything from Niccolò Machiavelli to Boris Johnson in a tutu.

Director: Quentin Beroud

James Harris was born in Nottingham in 1982, and studied English Literature at Oxford University before moving to Berlin, where he lived from 2005-2013. His screenplay *The Village In The Morning* was produced by Rebel Without Crew Films in 2015. www.shoeleatherexpress.org

***WHITE LIGHT* by Tom Powell**
Saturday 29 July at 6.30pm

"I'mma tell you a secret. Yeah. I am. I'm gonna tell you a secret and you can't stop me."

White Light is the story of a young white man who is radicalised online, of how a 14 year-old from West London is seduced by conspiracy theories and his personal quest for the truth.

It's also about a kid who has a shit day at school, sees a Lamborghini outside his house and thinks, 'why can't I have that?'

Director: Georgie Staight

Tom Powell won the OTR National Radio Drama Award and the Footlights' Harry Porter Prize when he was a student. He is part of the Soho Writers Alumni Group, and his first play, *the bear hunt*, was shortlisted for the Soho Young Writers' Award in 2015. This year, he attended the Royal Court Introductory Group and was shortlisted for HighTide's First Commissions programme. He has contributed to 6 x 6 x 6, which will be the Pleasance Dome for the duration of the Edinburgh Fringe. He is represented by Simon Blakey at The Agency.

***LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC)* by Eva Edo**
Saturday 29 July at 8.30pm

"Families like ours don't do raising children"



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It's 3am and Alicia a seemingly tough 15- year-old has broken her curfew at the children's home - again. At the top of an abandoned car park she contemplates her chaotic world which is now spinning out of control. Why? Because something has happened. Something so terrible it could destroy her fine tuned plan of an endless supply of fried chicken, being reunited with her imprisoned father and finding a place to call home.

Looked After Children is a urgent plain talking play that examines how society looks after its vulnerable children but does not necessarily care for them. It brings humour and light to the world of troubled children and the decaying systems in place which are meant to protect them.

Director: Lynette Linton

Eva Edo a former child protection lawyer writes plays about the influence the "State" has on modern Britain and the communities within it. Her short plays have been recently performed at The Southwark Playhouse, N16 and The Rose Playhouse. Eva's new full length play *Wonder Girl* is being developed and was part of The Pleasance Futures showing in June 2017. *Looked After Children* has been shortlisted for several awards to include the Alfred Fagon and has had readings at the Dark Horse Festival - London Writers Week and RADA. Eva has some exciting projects coming up to include a collaboration with Out Of Joint Theatre. She is represented by Nick Quinn at The Agency.

***THE ROAD TO SKIBBEREEN* by Angela Walsh**
Sunday 30 July at 5pm

"I always wanted a daughter. A red-haired girl. I longed for you more than I ever did for any man.

Finally you came. You'd no red hair mind, but I didn't care. I was besotted from the start."

Lianna is used to dealing with learning difficulties: she's had them all her life. But now her boyfriend keeps morphing into Dr Who, her mum is trying to walk from Liverpool to Skibbereen and she herself is deeply troubled by what drove Lady Macbeth mad.

Tender and funny, this is a bittersweet and highly topical play about that most difficult of all things to learn: how to let go... with love.

Director: Elva Makins

Angela Walsh has worked extensively as an actress in theatre, film and TV including playing Carole Salter in *Brookside*, Sheila in Philippa Lowthorpe's *Eight Hours From Paris*, and Eileen in Terence Davies's multi award-winning film *Distant*



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Voices, Still Lives. The Road To Skibbereen was inspired by people and events in Angela's own family and by her experience of working with learning disabled adults. It is adapted from an acclaimed shorter version which was selected for Liverpool's Write Now Festival and played to four and five star reviews at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival where it was selected as one of Paul O'Grady's BBC Radio 2 Highlights.

WONDER BOY by Ross Willis
Sunday 30 July at 7pm

"You say these words be power. I say nah. Power is somethin you can use, like actually use, like an Octopus with six machine guns."

Fourteen year old Sonny struggles to tell the difference between fantasy and reality. Recently struck by the death of his mum, stuck in a crumbling schooling system and inflicted by a severe stammer the future looks pretty bleak.

When Sonny is cast in his school production, with the help of an unconventional teacher, he must learn to confidently speak and what begins as a punishment could possibly be a new beginning.

Shortlisted for Soho Young Writers' Award, receiving Special Commendation, Wonder Boy is a dynamic and tender new play exploring the failings of language and grief. A play about the conversations we will never be able to have.

Director: Bec Martin-Williams

Ross Willis is a currently a resident Playwright and under commission at Theatre503 through 503Five. A Writer on Attachment at Bristol Old and Tamasha Theatre Company, a member of Soho Writers Alumni Group and about to start an Arts Lab residency with The North Wall.

