

## PRESS RELEASE

8 January 2020



**TOLD BY AN IDIOT'S NATIONAL TOUR OF  
THE STRANGE TALE OF CHARLIE CHAPLIN AND STAN LAUREL  
COMES TO HOME MANCHESTER,  
TUESDAY 4 - SATURDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2020**

In 1910 the unknown Charlie Chaplin and Stan Laurel set sail for New York as part of Fred Karno's famous music hall troupe. On the journey, Charlie and Stan shared a cabin and then spent two years together touring North America, with Stan as Charlie's understudy.

Stan returned home, later finding success with his soulmate Oliver Hardy. Charlie developed his Little Tramp character and within five years became one of the most famous figures in the world. In Charlie Chaplin's highly detailed autobiography, Lancashire-born Stan Laurel is never mentioned, yet Stan talked about Charlie all his life.

Playing fast and loose with the facts, looking at an unknown period in comic history when two maverick imaginations collided for a brief time, and with an

# HOME

original piano score composed by Mercury Award Nominee Zoe Rahman played live each night, [The Strange Tale of Charlie Chaplin and Stan Laurel](#), is no nostalgic bio-drama. Instead, writer and director Paul Hunter has created a hilarious and deeply moving homage to two men who changed the world of comedy forever.

The cast comprises **Sara Alexander**, returning to HOME after appearing in Bryony Kimmings' *A Pacifist's Guide to the War on Cancer* in 2016; **Nick Haverson**, a regular on TV in series such as *Scott and Bailey* and *Casualty*; newcomer **Jerone Marsh-Reid**, who has a background in breakdancing and brings it to the production, plays Stan Laurel; and **Amalia Vitale**, recently heard as the voice of Lula in *Farmageddon*, the recent Shaun the Sheep film, as Charlie Chaplin.

"As a company who has consistently sought to inhabit the space between laughter and pain," says Paul Hunter. "We were intrigued to uncover a hidden and poignant chapter of comedy history.

"In some ways we set out to create a comically unreliable tribute to two extraordinary artists. We were determined to value fiction over fact, fantasy over reality, and shine a very unusual light on a pair of show business legends."

The events in this play are fictional. This play is certainly not endorsed by the estates of Charlie Chaplin, Stan Laurel, or anyone else for that matter!

### **PERFORMANCE CALENDAR**

Tue 4 February 2020, 19:30 (press night performance)  
Wed 5 February 2020, 19:30 (plus post-show discussion)  
Thu 6 February 2020, 19:30  
Fri 7 February 2020, 19:30  
Sat 8 February 2020, 14:00, 19:30

### **TICKETS**

£10-£24 (concessions from £5)

<https://homemcr.org/the-strange-tale-of-charlie-chaplin-and-stan-laurel/>

@home\_mcr

#CharlieAndStan

**For further information - to request review tickets (press night performance Tuesday 4 February 2020), images or interviews, please contact: Mike Barnett, HOME Media and Communications Manager, +44 (0)161 212 3462, or [mike.barnett@HOMEmcr.org](mailto:mike.barnett@HOMEmcr.org)**



## FUNDED BY:



MANCHESTER  
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Supported using public funding by  
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## NOTES TO EDITORS

**HOME** is Manchester's centre for international contemporary culture. Since opening in May 2015, HOME has welcomed over two million visitors to its two theatres, five cinemas, art gallery, book shop and restaurants. HOME works with international and UK artists to produce extraordinary theatrical experiences, producing an exciting mix of thought-provoking drama, dance and festivals, with a strong focus on international work, new commissions and talent development. After *The Strange Tale of Charlie Chaplin and Stan Laurel*, the next HOME shows are [a little space](#) presented by Mind the Gap and Gecko (12-15 Feb 2020; [Extraordinary Wall of Silence](#) presented by Ad Infinitum and HOME (12-22 Feb 2020), and [Insane Animals](#) presented by Bourgeois & Maurice (28 Feb-14 Mar 2020). HOME's ambition is to push the boundaries of form and technology, to experiment, have fun, take risks and share great new art with the widest possible audience. The patrons of HOME are Danny Boyle, actress Suranne Jones, playwright and poet Jackie Kay CBE, artists Rosa Barba and Phil Collins, filmmaker Asif Kapadia, and actress and author Meera Syal CBE. [www.homemcr.org](http://www.homemcr.org) | @HOME\_mcr | Facebook HOME mcr

**TOLD BY AN IDIOT** was founded by Hayley Carmichael, Paul Hunter and John Wright in 1993 and is known for producing work that is moving, comic and utterly theatrical. The company sets out to discover the epic in the most personal of stories, whilst treading a fine line between comedy and tragedy. Through devising and play, the company aim to tell stories using a wealth of imagery and a rich theatrical language, accessible to all. Since their first production, *On the Verge of Exploding* at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, the company has built up an enviable reputation. In 2017, the company took their family production, *Get Happy*, to the Beijing Comedy Theatre and Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg. 2017 also marked the inaugural year of Told by an Idiot's MA/MFA in Collaborative Theatre Making with Rose Bruford College. In early 2018, the company toured *Napoleon Disrobed* around the UK. Based on Simon Ley's novella *The Death of Napoleon*, this was the second Told by an Idiot production directed by Kathryn Hunter. Paul Hunter, Artistic Director of Told by an Idiot, took the role of Napoleon. Late 2018 saw their last production, *All You Need Is LSD*, tour the UK. This marked the second time Told by an Idiot have brought their devised approach to a scripted play, working collaboratively with acclaimed writer Leo Butler. [www.toldbyanidiot.org](http://www.toldbyanidiot.org) | @toldbyanidiot93

**Did you know that HOME is a charity? We need your support to bring the best film, theatre and art to Manchester and inspire the next generation. Get involved at [www.homemcr.org/support](http://www.homemcr.org/support)**

