

PRESS RELEASE

HOME commissions Bryony Kimmings, Javaad Alipoor & others to create new work in isolation

Manchester arts venue HOME are spearheading a plan to take brand-new live experiences from the homes of artists into the homes of their audiences, defying the coronavirus outbreak.

Homemakers is a series of newly-commissioned work which asks theatre and live art makers to create new works at home, for an audience who are also at home, challenging the definition of "live theatre".

Artists commissioned so far include Bryony Kimmings, Javaad Alipoor, Ad Infinitum and Plaster Cast Theatre.

The final works could be live-streamed performance, video, audio, text, games, personal encounters - or something completely different, and will be made available on HOME's website on a 'pay-what-you-decide' basis. It will be made accessible to the widest possible audience through captioning, audio description, and providing relaxed versions where appropriate.

HOME Associate Director **Jude Christian** said: "This project is a response to the immediate crisis facing artists, audiences and arts organisations. We want to provide artists with a platform to keep making the kind of brilliant, groundbreaking work that venues like HOME exist to programme, and to keep bringing our audiences the best of theatre and live art while our doors are closed.

"Like everyone else, HOME is currently facing an unprecedented and unpredictable situation, and our resources are severely limited. However, *Homemakers* is designed to evolve, and we'll be collaborating with our colleagues across the industry to expand the project."

Bryony Kimmings said: "I'm excited to see how I make work digitally, I've always focused on human bodies living, breathing and feeling all together in a room. What

HOME

happens when you take that away. Is it possible to still create that connection remotely?! Who knows! We'll have a bash."

George Mann, Co-Artistic Director of Ad Infinitum, said: "Cancelling a performance is always devastating. Closing theatres seems unimaginable. But, having theatre as a concept cancelled for the foreseeable, is just absolutely insane and forces you to ask existential questions that make your brain want to pop. It really hits home just how fragile our existence is. We're trying to get to grips with an ever-changing situation, it's altered our future in ways we still don't understand, but we're doing everything we can to protect the people we collaborate with. So, getting an email from the team at HOME inviting us to be creative, and to help make a challenging, uncertain time an opportunity to work with people we love, to collaborate, to stay human, it was really moving - and just what we all needed. We can't wait to share what we come up with!"

The commissions are paid for by part of HOME's Response Fund, set up in the wake of the announcement that theatres across the country would close due to the coronavirus, and designed to protect HOME's financial stability and allow them to support artists and colleagues from across the industry.

The incredible reaction to the Response Fund has allowed *Homemakers* to be announced less than a week after HOME confirmed it would have to temporarily close its doors to the public.

Jude Christian added: "We are working with a 'pay-what-you-decide' model because we want to acknowledge the value of our artists' work and give audiences a chance to support them by paying what they might expect to pay in a live venue. However, we don't want to create any barriers to access and therefore this model provides everyone with the opportunity to engage with all of our work for free."

The aim is for the first work to be available in early April, and more information will be shared as plans develop.

Notes to editors:

For further information or interviews, contact Kat Harrison-Dibbits, Head of Communications at HOME, on 07833 523295 or email kat.harrison-dibbits@homemcr.org.

Any contributions through the pay-what-you-decide model will be divided equally, with half paid to the commissioned artist and half reinvested into the HOME Response Fund.

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. 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
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