

## PRESS RELEASE

### **New Homemakers works available this week includes live performance from Mumbai and the first instalment of Stockport artist's Wuhan story**



For those choosing to stay at home this weekend despite the pubs reopening, new online works released this week via the HOME website provide the perfect cultural response to coronavirus.

The five new works are the result of commissions by Harrogate Theatre, Chinese Arts Now (CAN), RADA Festival and Music Theatre Wales & London Sinfonietta.

A story told through blog posts and Instagram, an animated spoken word slam, a live adaptation of Luis Borges' *The Book of Imaginary Beings*, an audio-visual trip to the Amazon and a one-woman exploration of grief and friendship make up the latest offerings in the *Homemakers* series, digital works presented by HOME, Manchester, alongside national partners, which invites artists to explore what live performance

# HOME

means when cultural buildings are closed and everyone is watching – and making – from home.

Karen Cogan and Tanmay Dhanania's works are part of the RADA Festival – the first pair in a series of six that will be presented via the HOME website.

Tanmay Dhanania's *A Manual of Fantastical Zoology*, is the only live event to be released by HOME this fortnight – and it will be streaming all the way from Mumbai. Inspired by Jorge Luis Borges' *The Book of Imaginary Beings*, and taking place on Saturday, 18 July at 2,30pm, it is an investigation into the psychology of isolation created by Soumyak Kanti DeBiswas and Tanmay Dhanania. The show asks what tricks our minds play on us in isolation, and what imaginary beings we start inhabiting.

In Karen Cogan's *Turkey Sausage Roll*, performed by Faoileann Cunningham, a young woman is avoiding holding her girlfriend's hand with her left hand and clutching a turkey sausage roll in her right. She's a vegetarian but too polite to say so. Also, she is afraid if she opens her mouth she might vomit from grief. Her best pal is in a box being sung to, aggressively, by Auntie Una. We visit her restless brain as she survives the worst day of her life so far. The RADA Festival is a vibrant annual event that nurtures artists' development and provides a platform for emerging and established work. Usually hosted at RADA over 10 days in June and July, the Festival supports and celebrates the variety of work RADA's graduates create as they form new collaborations, explore different creative practices and develop innovative ideas in theatre-making.

Jo Wiltshire, RADA Festival Producer, said: "While theatres are closed it is more important than ever to come together and recognise each other's strengths by exploring creative opportunities. In the absence of a full RADA Festival this year, we are absolutely thrilled to be collaborating as a partner for the Homemakers programme. It's been really inspiring to watch these lockdown projects develop and be able to continue to support emerging work from across the globe."

Stockport-based Naomi Sumner Chan's, *Wait I'm from Wuhan*, commissioned by Chinese Arts Now, uses serialised blog posts and Instagram posts to follow the story of Jasmine, originally from Wuhan, abandoned as a baby in Hankou train station and adopted by a White British family to grow up in England. For Jasmine, Wuhan was just a word on a piece of paper until now. Suddenly, since the outbreak of COVID-19, everyone is talking about the place where she was born and she's no longer able to ignore her past and those she left behind.

The story begins on Wednesday 1 July when audiences will be able to see Jasmine's first posts on her blog and Instagram page. A new blog post will be added every Wednesday for the following three weeks. Jasmine will stay in regular contact with her followers on Instagram posting every day throughout the month of July.

Edalia Day's *Animation Slam*, commissioned by Harrogate Theatre, is an animated spoken word slam, pairing the ferocity and comedy of some of the sharpest minds and



hearts in the UK spoken word scene with hand drawn animations by theatre maker and video designer Edalia Day.

An international panel of 3 judges will score 6 top poets on their punch, verve and all around awesomeness as they tackle subjects such as dating, relationships, politics, pandemics, gender, ableism, domestic violence and those annoying people who try to help but just end up making things worse. The poets taking part are Aiysha Humpreys, Bogsey, Dami Okhiria, Steve Tasane, Laurie Eaves and Sez Thomasin. The panel of judges includes the UK slam champion Tyrone Lewis, Agnes Török from Sweden, and Rikki Livermore from New Zealand.

Finally, in the Music Theatre Wales and London Sinfonietta-commissioned *Amazon*, Alex Ho and Elayce Ismail have created a poetic reflection in the form of music, text, and visuals, where a trip to the Amazon takes an unexpected turn.

With 16 *Homemakers* works now available, and more yet to be announced, the series has been a critical success with multiple four-star reviews from the *Guardian* and others. The *Guardian*'s Arifa Akbar described Ad Infinitum's *A Small Gathering* as "frightening and funny in equal measure", while Catherine Love said, "at their best, the Homemakers commissions play with what it means to make theatre remotely, embracing the specificities of online performance."

All works will be made available via the [HOME website](https://www.homemcr.org), on a pay-what-you-can model. For more information, visit [homemcr.org](https://www.homemcr.org).

### 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](mailto:kat.harrison-dibbits@homemcr.org).

Any contributions through the pay-what-you-can 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](https://www.homemcr.org) | @HOME\_mcr | Facebook HOME\_mcr



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