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## PRESS RELEASE

### Young Identity reopen HOME's Theatre 1 following coronavirus lockdown



*For immediate release*

HOME's Resident Artists, Young Identity, will be the first live performance in the venue's theatre on October 13, following closure caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

Young Identity have a long history of delivering dynamic poetry and spoken word workshops and performances for young people at HOME, Contact and at events across Manchester and across the globe.

At this one-off special event they will launch their new book of poetry, [Working from HOME](#), with performances from members of the group.

# HOME

An amazing retrospective of the work they have produced over the first five years of HOME, the book showcases Young Identity's creative responses to work performed at HOME across all three of our artforms – theatre, film and visual arts.

Young Identity have worked with some of the most exciting poets and spoken word artists in the world, including Lemn Sissay, Saul Williams, Linton Kwesi Johnson and Kae Tempest.

They have performed across the UK and internationally from The Schaubuhne in Berlin to Frankfurt International School Youth Poetry Slam in Germany, and the Nuyorican Poetry Café, New York.

Copies of the book will also be on sale at the event, and tickets which include the purchase price of the book will be available.

HOME last presented work in March before the venue was forced to close due to COVID-19, and reopened on 4 September after 168 days of closure, with its five cinemas, bar and restaurant the first to come back. During this closure period, HOME has continued to work online, presenting new artist commissions in theatre and visual art, including [a digital festival](#) featuring brand new work from six Young Identity members, part of the critically acclaimed [Homemakers](#) series.

Other lockdown activity included hosting film streams and director Q&As, running a wide-ranging engagement programme and supporting artists through projects and events.

HOME's 500-seat Theatre 1 has been reduced to a capacity of just 120 to allow space for social distancing, but despite this tickets will be priced at just £10 to ensure as many people as possible have the opportunity to return to the theatre.

The new season will also include both live and digital work to provide as many opportunities for audiences as possible to experience great art.

Dave Moutrey, HOME's Director and CEO, said: "Much has changed since we closed in March, but we must do all we can to bridge the potential growth in social inequality as a result to this pandemic. This is why, despite limited capacity due to social distancing, we will make every ticket available for no more than £10. In addition, we will give equal weight to delivering work online, to ensure that audiences who cannot return just yet can still engage with new, relevant work."

700 seats are currently being held off sale to allow for social distancing, and so the arts centre has also launched a new campaign, [Empty Seats](#), to highlight the £130-per-week cost of each unfilled seat and the effect that the ongoing coronavirus pandemic is having on arts venues.

Roisin Joyce, HOME's Director of Development, said: "We're so excited to be reopening our building to the public – but the arts are still facing one of the most pressing challenges we have ever known. Reopening our doors comes with a huge financial risk,

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caused by the fact we've had to take 700 of our theatre and cinema seats off sale to enable us to socially distance our audiences.

"We're launching this campaign with the message that an empty seat is just that – it can't perform any other function for us, be that pulling a pint in our bar, selling a ticket at box office or assisting our technicians with their lighting rig. An empty seat is worth up to £130 per week – and so we are asking the public to step up to the challenge of helping us make up that shortfall until we're back to full capacity."

For more information about HOME's upcoming programme, and the Empty Seats campaign, visit [homemcr.org](http://homemcr.org).

### Note to editors

For more information, images or interview requests, please 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).

### About HOME

**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](http://www.homemcr.org) | @HOME\_mcr | Facebook HOME\_mcr

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