

ISSY, BOSSS AND FRACTAL

Information Pack

*'A trip to the moon and a packet of Venusian Tongue Turners
does seem pretty tempting'*

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Fuel in collaboration with Slung Low, present *Issy, BOSSS and Fractal* – a new immersive show for children aged 7+ able to take up residence anywhere in the UK.

Journeying from the classroom into a newly discovered alien spaceship that only responds to the most creative and intelligent children, *Issy, BOSSS and Fractal* literally puts young people in the driving seat to explore climate change, responsibility and problem-solving together.

There are puzzles to solve, clues to discover, aliens to save and homes to find in this playful, irreverent production. Slung Low's Alan Lane (*Flood*) leads the world-class creative team as director, with writer Keisha Thompson (*Man in the Moon*) and Börkur Jónsson (*Vesturport*) as associate designer. Born out of the desire to engage young people in live performance and creativity, with high production values, at a time when arts provision in schools is severely diminishing, *Issy, BOSSS and Fractal* will have at its heart an inventive educational offer which will directly relate to curriculum themes and promote collaborative problem-solving across the classroom.

Accompanied by a raft of learning resources in line with KS2 aims in numerous subjects, *Issy, BOSSS and Fractal* will combine the excitement of the circus coming to town with tangible learning outcomes useful to teachers and educationalists keen to give their students a new experience.

Fuel will bring this creative adventure directly to school playgrounds, public spaces and family-friendly festivals. Utilising a residency model whereby the production will call a community home for several weeks, we plan to tour UK-wide in 2021/22.

Issy, BOSSS and Fractal is in development throughout 2021, with an estimated run-time of one hour and an expected audience capacity of 30 per performance. Development seeded by Farnham Maltings.

ABOUT THE COLLABORATION

Fuel has commissioned Keisha for the first time after a long standing knowledge and appreciation of her work as a writer. Fuel brought the three collaborators together for a residency as part of the longstanding relationship with Coombe Farm Studios, where the shape of the piece was developed. At second draft stage, the script was developed alongside the design aesthetic at the centre of the production. The final draft and summer 2021 development will work with access and engagement incorporated into the experience's narrative.

Fuel has worked for many years with Slung Low, programming shows into their Hub space prior to the Holbeck. In 2018 the companies worked together to deliver *Tonight We Fly*, a festival of performances and talks across the city of Leeds. *Issy, BOSSS and Fractal* will be the first production created together from conception.

Börkur and Fuel have previously collaborated together on the ground breaking *Electric Hotel*. Prior to that Börkur designed two seminal productions, *Love* and *Metamorphosis*, at the Lyric Hammersmith as part Fuel's programme.

ABOUT THE SHOW

Issy is an Environmental Specialist from the British Organisation for Seashore Surveillance or for short BOSSSSssssssss.

Issy surveys the things that wash up on the coast across the UK: plastic bottles and other types of rubbish. One day something extraordinary washes up on the beach. Humming, glowing, organic – like an organism found deep on the ocean floor. Issy knows enough to know that this has been built by someone very clever and can't possibly be from this planet: it looks like a spaceship. An alien spaceship!

No matter how hard Issy tries, she can't manage to open the door to get inside the ship. After 17 hours and a lot of coffee, she's loaded it into a container on the back of a lorry and brought it to the school car park to ask the help of the smartest key stage two class in the British Isles.

There's not a lot of time to figure out where the spaceship is from and learn everything about it. In three days it gets taken away by the Quarantine and Quash Agents who will tear it apart before it goes into storage...

With the help of an expert Door Decoder found within the class, the group are led in through a tiny door and onto the space ship. Translucent, tactile and full of cables, the seats and controls are perfectly sized for small aliens (or seven year olds). On investigation the class learn the ship is Venusian, that it can talk, and that it's called Bathochordaeus.

Through a series of physical, visual and non-language puzzles Batho's internal messaging software reveals that the ship is programmed to find visitors and transport them to the Moon to the first commander, Fractal. A refugee Venusian stranded on Earth Moon alone, the class are asked to decide whether to venture to the Moon to meet Fractal and return his ship.

On landing on the moon the ship releases the state of the art Gravitational Stabilising Dome, enabling the class to safely venture out of the ship to meet Fractal. Fractal tells the story of their warring home planet and being alone from their family, and Issy offers to bring them back to Earth to live with her.

The class return to the ship and make another intergalactic journey back to Earth. On arrival they are praised for their bravery and support of giving Fractal a new home on their planet, and given a token of recognition for their roles in the adventure.

After farewells, Issy and Fractal take Batho to BOSSsss for further investigation and the class return to the schoolroom.

"This brilliant outdoor spectacle was easily the most artistically inventive thing I witnessed."

The Artsdesk on Electric Hotel

ABOUT THE TEAM

Alan Lane is Artistic Director of Slung Low directing most of their work over the last decade including projects with the Barbican, the RSC, The Almeida, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Liverpool Everyman, Sheffield Theatres, Singapore Arts Festival and the Lowry. Slung Low make large scale people's theatre work on stages, trains, castles, swimming pools, fishing boats and town centres.

Alan has directed in places as wide ranging as the National Theatre of Croatia, a sari shop in Manchester, Buckingham Palace and in a village in Purulia, Southern India.

He was the Artistic Director for the National Commemoration of the Centenary of the Battle of the Somme on 1st July 2016: a ceremony with a people's theatre company of 450.

Keisha Thompson is a Manchester based writer, performance artist and producer. She is currently Senior Manager of Children, Young People and Learning at Arts Council England (maternity cover). Keisha is also the chair of radical arts funding body, Future's Venture Foundation, is a fellow of the MOBO x London Theatre Consortium Fellowship and is a member of Greater Manchester Cultural and Heritage Group.

Earlier this year, she finished touring award-winning solo show, *Man on the Moon*. Her debut book, *Lunar*, features her poetry and the show script. Whilst *Moonwhile* is a poetic mini album featuring music from the show.

She is currently working with commissioners Eclipse Theatre, York Theatre Royal and Pilot Theatre to stage a new play, *The Bell Curves*. The script was made in development with Box of Tricks.

Börkur Jónsson works as a freelance designer for theatre and film abroad and at home. He is a member of Vesturport Theatre and has worked extensively with them since 2002.

Selected Theatre productions include: *The Heart of Robin Hood* (The Royal Shakespeare Company, American Repertory Theater), *The Tempest* (Residentztheater, Munchen), *Macbeth* (The Icelandic National Theater), *Return of Ulysses* (English National Opera), *Electric Hotel* (Fuel, UK), *The Three Penny Opera* (National Theatre of Iceland), *Woyzeck* (Vesturport /Reykjavik City Theatre /Barbican Center UK), *Metamorphosis* (Vesturport /Lyric Hammersmith Theatre, UK), *Romeo and Juliet* (Vesturport/Young Vic, UK).

Recently Börkur was awarded the Danish Reumert prize 2013 Stage Design of the year for the play *Bastards* and the 31st Elliot Norton Award, Outstanding Design for *Metamorphosis* 2013. Börkur has received the annual Icelandic Theatre Awards for Stage Design 2006, 2008 and 2010. He was nominated for the Evening Standard Theatre awards in 2006 for *Metamorphosis*.

ABOUT FUEL

Fuel works with brilliant artists to enable them to share their artistic vision. We develop and present an adventurous, playful and significant programme of live, digital, and multi-disciplinary work for a representative audience across the UK and beyond.

Fuel is a registered charity whose work is supported by Arts Council England (National Portfolio Organisation), the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the Wellcome Trust (Sustaining Excellence), the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and the Garfield Weston Foundation, amongst others.

Since our story began in 2004, we have:

- produced over **143 shows, 7 festivals, 4 films, 36 podcasts**, an app and **three books**.
- Supported the development of **107** artists and companies.
- Reached over **700,000 live audience members, 660,000 online audiences** and **8,750 participants**.
- **Won 18 awards**.

Fuel has built a reputation for a distinctive approach to artist development due to our reach, with work presented all over the UK and internationally. We are celebrated across a broad range of art forms, for our building-free model and approach to collaborative partnerships, and for our commitment to and experience of growing new audiences for our work and for contemporary performance more widely.

"The maverick producing organisation who are prepared to invest in adventurous artists ."

The Herald



ABOUT SLUNG LOW

Founded in 2000, Slung Low is an award-winning theatre company specialising in making epic productions in non-theatre spaces, often with large community performance companies at their heart.

Slung Low created Flood by James Phillips, a year-long epic for Hull UK City of Culture told online, live in Hull and on BBC2. Over a half million people saw a part of Flood and the show won a Royal Television Society Yorkshire Award for excellence. In 2016 Slung Low built a camp of artists who lived for a week in the grounds of the RSC working with visiting public to create a ceremony that attempted to open the portal to the fairy world.

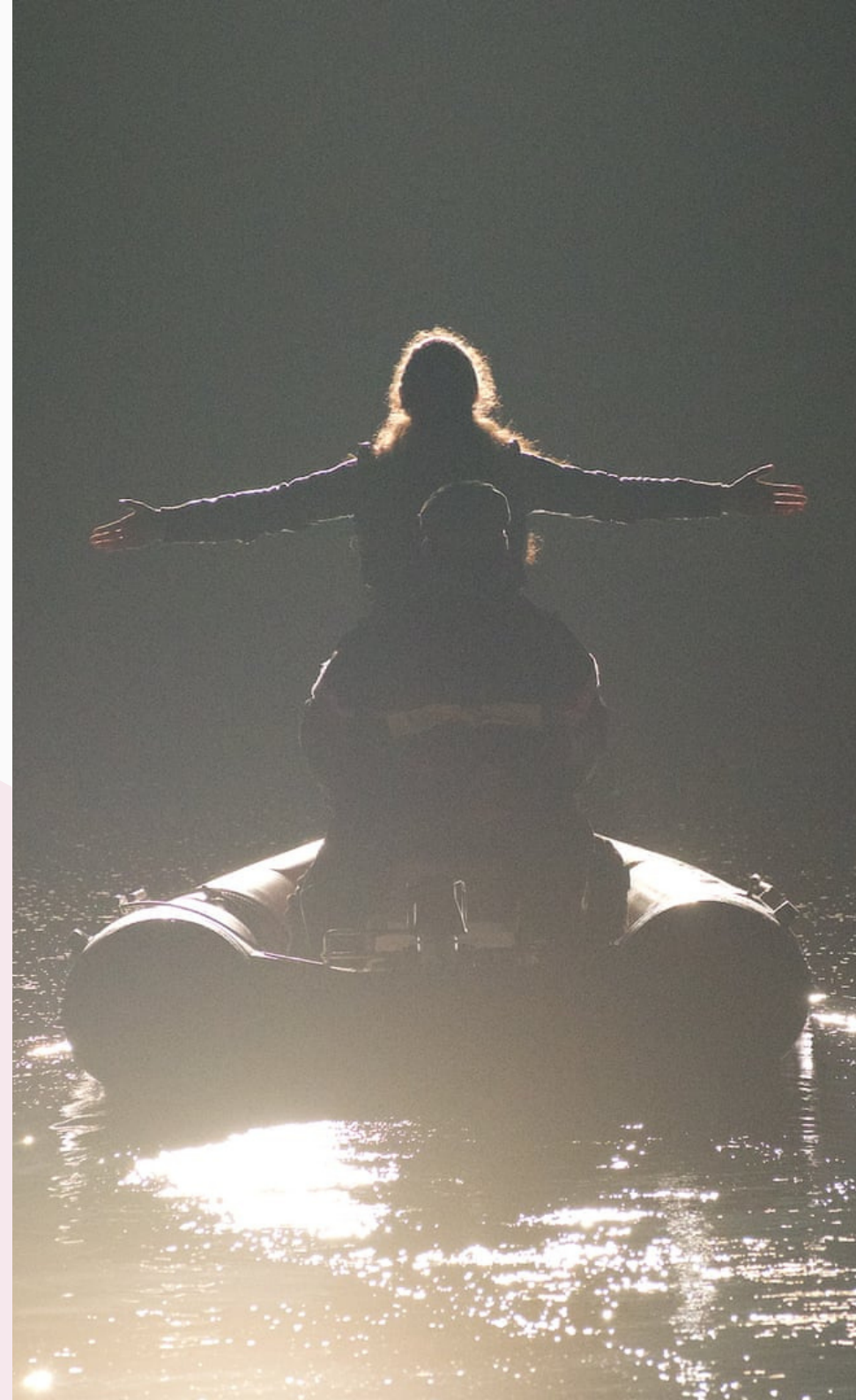
The company recently relocated to The Holbeck in Leeds: the oldest working men's club in Britain. They run the bar as a traditional members' bar and the rest of the building as an open development space for artists. In Autumn 2018 Slung Low launched a Cultural Community College based in Holbeck; a place where adults come to learn new cultural skills – from stargazing to South Indian cooking, from carpentry to singing in a choir – and all workshops, supported by Paul Hamlyn Foundation, are provided on a Pay What You Decide basis. We believe that access to culture is a fundamental part of a happy life. We believe that actions, however small, can have a big impact.

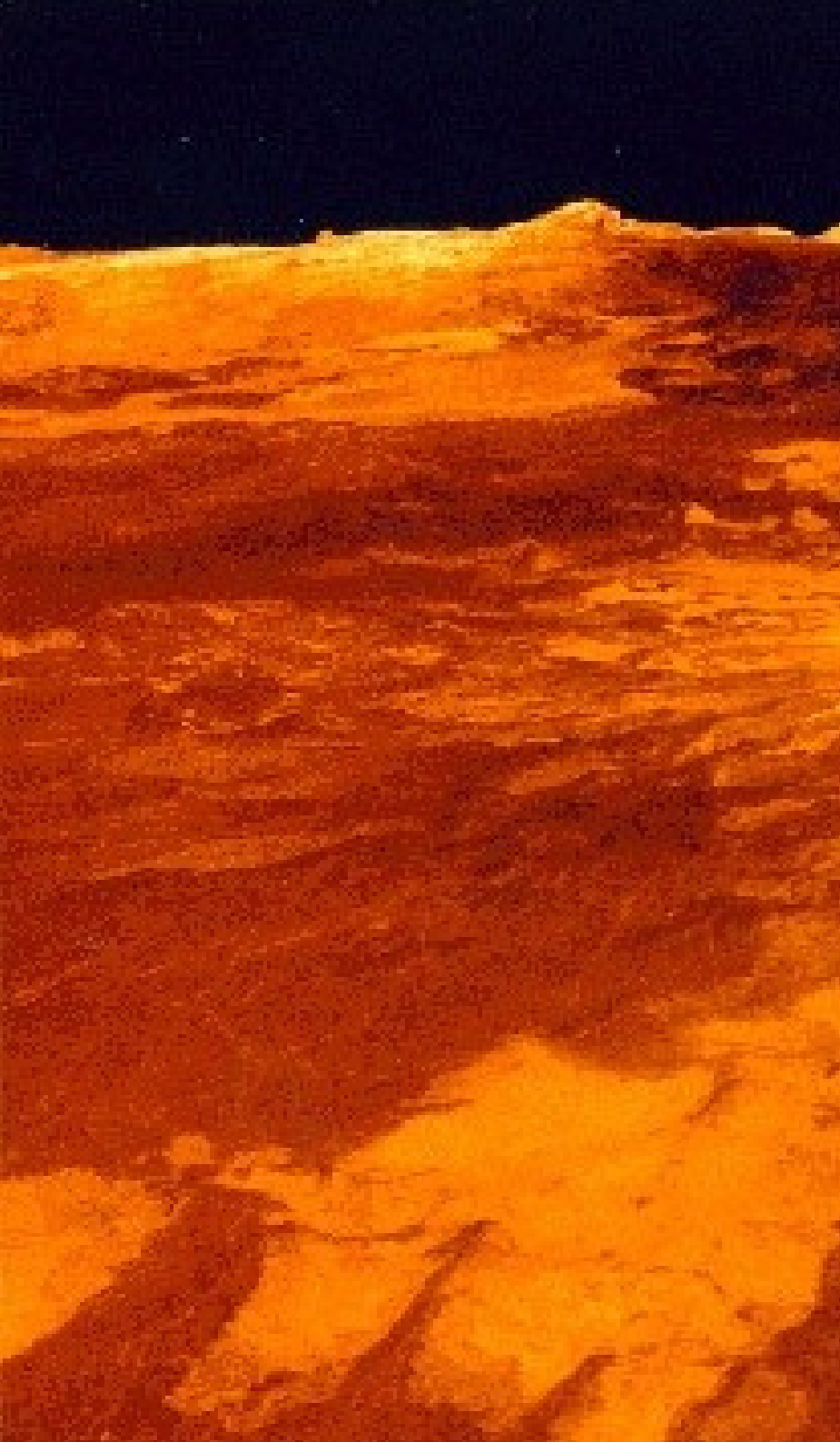
During the Covid crisis of 2020 the company was the ward lead for Holbeck and Beeston for social care referrals with responsibility for 7500 homes.

We believe that culture can change our world for the better.

We are uncompromising in our beliefs

slung
low





FURTHER INFORMATION

Touring Spring 2022

www.fueltheatre.com

www.slunglow.org

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"Fuel always starts with the artist and the artist's idea... It's helped both artists and audiences to be more fearless."

Lyn Gardner