

fuel

PART OF
LOWRY X
EDINBURGH

Inua Ellams and Fuel present

AN EVENING WITH AN IMMIGRANT

Written and performed by Inua Ellams

DIGITAL PROGRAMME



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PROGRAMME

NOTE

It's been ten years since I first performed this show and it is no less relevant now than then. It started by accident; I had a deadline to perform something, anything, and hastily cobbled together old poems, placed them in chronological order and titled the performance 'An Evening with an Immigrant' because I felt 'An Evening with Inua Ellams' was too grandiose. Between the poems, I would share my story of leaving Nigeria aged 12; of living with an uncertain immigration status despite being a celebrated artist, of being invited to Buckingham Palace before the Home Office granted me settled status.

The week before the show opened, the EU referendum happened and migration issues made news headlines, splashed across left and right leaning broadsheets. In the following years the policies around migration, and immigration news itself moved so swiftly, that I committed to updating and localising the show whenever and wherever I perform An Evening with an Immigrant - from Australia, to Italy, the USA, to here in England. Each change affected me personally, and as new hurdles were set for people who move and who want to settle, the script changed.

The reasons why people attend the show vary. In Ipswich, a young person said she'd believed everything she'd read: about immigrants easily entering England, getting social housing and gets lots of money. In Perth, Australia, some audience members came to hear about their ancestral home of England, and found the truth so uncomfortable, they walked out of the show. Members of the Vietnamese community in Oklahoma, USA, came to draw strength to share their own migration stories.



PROGRAMME

NOTE CONT.

What I know for certain is that migration is natural; every year, billions of animals embark on journeys to find new skies and build new homes. We humans are the only animals that criminalise this, and denying one of our most ancient and primal urges not only alienates us from the planet and our past, but makes us incompatible with the climate and our future; we need to move. We always have, and we always will.

I learn more about England and its communities the more I tour the show, who in turn teach me about myself, and how to clarify the message of the show. And after ten years, I think what I'm mostly trying to say is: "No one is illegal. You are welcome here." And in an age of anti-immigration rhetoric, I think this is important to say loudly, and proudly.

Inua Ellams, 2026

Part of the Lowry x Edinburgh programme.

ABOUT THE SHOW

Award-winning poet and playwright Inua Ellams, born to a Muslim father and a Christian mother in what is now considered to be Boko Haram territory, left Nigeria for England in 1996 aged 12.

Littered with poems, stories and anecdotes, Inua tells his ridiculous, fantastic, poignant immigrant-story of escaping fundamentalist Islam, finding friendship in Dublin, performing solo at the National Theatre, and drinking wine with the Queen of England, all the while without a country to belong to or a place to call home.



CREATIVE TEAM



INUA ELLAMS

WRITER AND PERFORMER

Born in Nigeria, Inua Ellams is a poet, playwright and performer, graphic artist and designer. He is a Complete Works poet alumni and facilitates workshops in creative writing where he explores reoccurring themes in his work - Identity, Displacement and Destiny - in accessible, enjoyable ways for participants of all ages and backgrounds.

He founded The Midnight Run (an arts-filled, night-time, urban walking experience.) The Rhythm and Poetry Party (The R.A.P Party) which celebrates poetry and hip hop, and Poetry + Film / Hack (P+F/H) which celebrates Poetry and Film. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

Theatre includes: The 14th Tale (Arcola/National Theatre/UK tour); Black T-Shirt Collection (UK/World tour); The Riddler (Theatre 503); Barber Shop Chronicles (also UK tour), Three Sisters (National Theatre); New Dogs (Soho); The Calm (RSC); The Half-God of Rainfall (Kiln); An Evening with an Immigrant (UK & international tour).

Awards include: Edinburgh Fringe First Award 2009; The Liberty Human Rights Award; The Live Canon International Poetry Prize; The Kent & Sussex Poetry Competition; Magma Poetry Competition; Winchester Poetry Prize; Best Theatre Production for The Half-God of Rainfall, Black British Theatre Awards; The Hay Festival Medal for Poetry.

<https://www.inuaellams.com/>



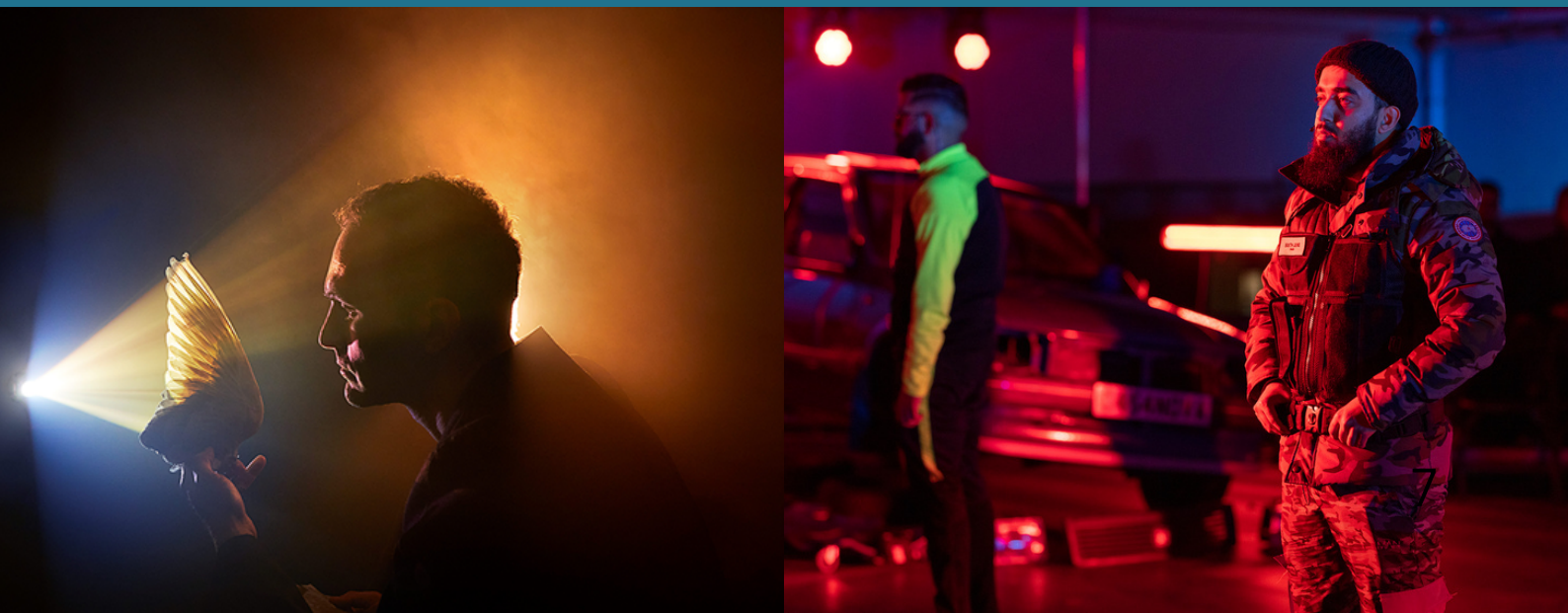
Fuel leads the field in independent producing in the UK's live performance sector, collaborating with curious, insightful and skilled theatre makers to create fresh experiences for adventurous people.

Since 2004, we have evolved a pioneering producing model that develops innovative ideas through attentive collaboration, a spirit of curiosity, and an emphasis on trust. We have developed a reputation for spirited and surprising new theatre, deep relationships with a wide range of artists, and a passionate commitment to inclusion and care for young and diverse audiences.

We have produced shows, festivals, films, installations, podcasts, apps and books. In doing so we have supported the artistic development of over 120 lead artists or companies and reached more than 1.5 million people, live and digitally. We have hosted over a hundred internships and been recognised with awards for our work.

fueltheatre.com

Instagram, Facebook, Bluesky, LinkedIn: @fueltheatre





Shedinburgh is a new Fringe venue with a curated programme of theatre, comedy, and music from iconic acts of the festival, founded by Francesca Moody Productions.

It began as an online festival in 2020, designed to showcase the best of the Fringe during lockdown. That year, 25 performances were live-streamed from two sheds – at the Traverse Theatre and Soho Theatre – to over 5,000 people worldwide.

In 2025, Shedinburgh returned as a live, in-person venue at Edinburgh Fringe Festival. The programme included work from Jack Rooke, Flo & Joan, Jayde Adams, Sh!t Theatre, Complicité and Toby Marlow & Lucy Moss. In total, there were 36 live shows and over 4,000 audience members, as well as a programme of free industry talks, a podcast, a series of Shed Originals and £15,000 awarded to emerging artists through the Shedload-of-Future Fund.

Shedinburgh will return to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2026 with an expanded programme, featuring cult-hit revivals and work-in-progress shows from Fringe legends. All performances are acoustic, stripped-back and reimagined for the Shed. As part of the venue's commitment to making the Fringe fair, all artists are paid and offered accommodation, with Pay What You Can tickets available for every show.

"An extraordinary shedload of visions and re-visions; first chances and second chances; new and old work" - Tim Crouch

[Shedinburgh.com](https://shedinburgh.com)

FUEL TEAM

Angela Bryan-Brown - Assistant Producer

Yingnan Chu – Executive & Fundraising Assistant

Caitlin Gleeson - Senior Producer

Luke Holbrook - Head of Programme

Greg Howe - Production Manager

Todun Iluyomade - Assistant Producer

David Lewis - Head of Finance

Kate McGrath - Artistic Director & CEO

Makeda Newman - Programme Assistant

V Reynolds - Communications Manager

Ine Van Riet - Executive Director (maternity leave)

Caroline Jones – Executive Director (maternity cover)

Marina Sacco – Head of Audience Development

Tanya Stephenson - Production Manager (maternity leave)

Joanne Williams - General Manager

Jemima Unsworth - Senior Development Manager