

MICHELLE BARNETTE PRESENTS

BRUTAL CESSATION

BY MILLY THOMAS

Brutal Cessation

Assembly George Square (The Box), George Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9JZ

Thursday 3rd – Monday 28th August 2017 (not 14th), 16:20

Brutal Cessation is a savage new play by Milly Thomas (*Clique* BBC3, *A First World Problem* and *Clickbait*, Theatre503) exploring violence in relationships, our expectations of gender and what happens when we're no longer in love but refuse to let go. Following the story of a rotting relationship and the purgatory that follows, the show asks: Is having no reason to stay a reason to leave?

Thomas's production is about the absence of love, that gnawing feeling that is left behind after a relationship. When you're too proud to admit you were wrong, what lengths will you go to in order to emerge unscathed? Laced with dark humour, *Brutal Cessation* is a unique exploration of traditional power play as the actors swap roles throughout the sixty minute show, offering a refreshing perspective into both men and women's experience of victimhood as their reality becomes emotionally and physically unsafe.

The current statistics show that roughly 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men are suffering violence within their relationships. There is a lot of work to be done in creating an environment where people are able to come forward and share their experiences. In 2015, Thomas herself took someone to court over sexual assault on public transport and was astonished at how she was made to feel. She may have won the case but, because of the lack of respect for 'victims', it didn't feel like a victory and she saw how other people may be discouraged to report abuse due to the lack of support given. *Brutal Cessation* explores how violence, suggested or actualised, can so easily pervade our everyday lives, sometimes without us even realising it.

Offie-nominated Lydia Larson (*Skin A Cat*, VAULT Festival and The Bunker; *A Super Happy Story*, Fruit; *Travesty*, Assembly Rooms) and Alan Mahon (*If We Got Some More Cocaine I Could Show You How I Love You*, Old Red Lion; *Hamlet*, Tobacco Factory; *King Lear*, Dublin Fringe) bring *Brutal Cessation* to life.

Milly Thomas comments, *I'm utterly fascinated by what happens when we know we should leave a relationship but we don't. At what point the fear eclipses the love and which way round. Although this piece isn't autobiographical, it began as a short play when I was in a relationship that wasn't right for me. I was astonished by the games my own mind came up with to avoid what was bothering me. I wanted to explore the difficulty around frank conversations, especially when the issues at hand have moved into harmful territory.*

Notes to Editors

Title	<i>Brutal Cessation</i>
Performance Dates	Thursday 3 rd – Monday 28 th August (not 14 th), 16:20
Running time	60 minutes
Location	Assembly George Square (The Box), George Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9JZ
Box Office	Tickets are available from www.assemblyfestival.com Previews: £7 Weekday: £9 (£8) Weekend: £11 (£10)
Twitter	@BrutalCessation, #BrutalCessation, @AssemblyFest
Notes	Ages 16+ (parental guidance)
Writer	Milly Thomas
Director	Bethany Pitts
Producer	Michelle Barnette
Lighting designer	Jack Weir
Sound designer	Jon McLeod
Cast	Lydia Larson and Alan Mahon

Milly Thomas

Milly Thomas is an actor and writer, living in London. She began writing when she graduated in 2014 from the BA Acting at The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. Milly's first full-length play *A First World Problem* opened at Theatre503 in July 2014 to critical acclaim. She was

then commissioned by The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama to write *Piggies* in 2015 . Her play *Clickbait* opened the 2016 spring season at Theatre503 and played to sold-out audiences and an extended run. *Clickbait* is published by Oberon. Her play *Brutal Cessation* will also be running alongside *Dust* during the Edinburgh Fringe 2017. She is a member of both the Young Writers' Lab 2015 and Writer's Lab Alumni 2017 at Soho Theatre. She has taken part in The Royal Court Writers' Group 2016 led, by playwright Stef Smith, and of 'Headstart' – a group

comprising of ten playwrights assembled by Headlong Theatre Company and Blacklisted Films. Milly has taken part in writers' rooms for Pure Grass Films, Balloon Entertainment and Brown Eyed Boy and has recently completed the 2016 Channel 4 Screenwriting Course. She has written episodes of *River City* for BBC Scotland and *Clique* for BBC3.

Bethany Pitts

Bethany Pitts is a theatre director specialising in new work, both scripted and devised. She was Assistant Director at Theatre Royal Plymouth from 2012–2013, working under Artistic Director Simon Stokes, and prior to that worked as Resident Assistant Director at Theatre 503.

Directing credits include *Spine* (Soho Theatre/UK Tour – Fringe First Winner 2014), *Tether* (Underbelly Edinburgh), *Much Further Out Than You Thought* (IdeasTap/Underbelly Award Winner, Edinburgh & UK Tour), *FreeFall* (Pleasance Islington – Nominated for Off West End Best Director), *DESERT* (UK Tour/Latitude Festival). Assistant/Associate directing includes *Dark Vanilla Jungle* by Philip Ridley (Soho/Pleasance - Fringe First winner 2013), *Theatre Uncut* (Traverse Theatre Fringe First Winner 2012 / Young Vic 2013).

All enquiries, high res images and further information:

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