



The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Family

Underbelly Cowgate (Big Belly), 56 Cowgate, Edinburgh, EH1 1EG

Thursday 6th – Sunday 30th August 2015 (not 18th), 4.40pm

Everyone's dad exists as a kind of statue, frozen in a certain pose. Mine is wearing his cream and black mac, standing in the rain watching football or cross country...it doesn't matter which: it was muddy, and he was there.

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Family (winner of the 2015 IdeasTap Underbelly Award) is a one-man show about love, loss and motorways. Join writer-performer and UK poetry slam champion Ben Norris as he battles the country's most notorious service stations and the perils of lower-league football in search of his father's story. Hilarious and moving, the show explores the relative merits of Travelodge while asking searching questions about identity.

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Family is about my dad and me, commented Ben Norris, and the laughably little we have in common. We are such different men and the nature of our relationship (or lack thereof) has always fascinated me. So just over three years ago, on a train home from a spoken-word gig, I started writing. I wrote about the few things we do have in common, and the handful of times (at that point, specifically two) I'd felt really connected to him.

Ben's father was born in London, moved to Welwyn Garden City, to Breachwood Green, to Langford, and finally to Nottingham - always moving north and always loosely in line with the M1. Ben's hitchhike began in Nottingham (where his father still lives) and went south, stopping off at every place his dad had ever lived and speaking to everyone he had ever known (perhaps a bit ambitious!).

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Family is a pilgrimage based on shared experience and sound-tracked by Gerry Rafferty. Hitch a ride and discover the wealth of characters and personalities Ben met along the way.

Notes to Editors

Title	<i>The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Family</i>
Performance Dates	Thursday 6 th – Sunday 30 th August, 4.40pm
Running time	65 minutes
Location	Underbelly Cowgate (Big Belly), 56 Cowgate, Edinburgh, EH1 1EG
Box Office	Tickets are available from www.underbellyedinburgh.co.uk Previews (6 th , 7 th Aug): £6 Weekdays: £10 (£9) Weekend: £11 (£10)
Twitter	@bennorris7, @FollowTheCow, #HitchhikersFamily, #IUAward
Website	www.thehitchhikersguidetothefamily.com
Trailer	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kwZywNipgl
Writer/Performer	Ben Norris
Director	Polly Tisdall
Producer	Oscar French
Film/Animation	Paul McHale
Stage Manager	Debs Machin

Ben Norris

Ben is an actor, writer and spoken-word artist. He studied Creative Writing at the University of Birmingham before training at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. He was the 2013 UK All-Stars Poetry Slam Champion, and regularly performs spoken-word at festivals and major venues across the country, recently at the BBC Proms, Latitude Festival, the Royal Festival Hall, Cheltenham Literature Festival, and Ronnie Scott's. He has been commissioned by the Southbank Centre and IdeasTap, and had his work broadcast on BBC Radio 3. His first pamphlet of poems was published by Nasty Little Press in 2014, and his plays have been staged at Leicester Curve, Theatre 503, and the University of Birmingham. Acting credits include work with the National Theatre and Frantic Assembly. *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Family* is his debut one-man show, and was the winner of the 2015 IdeasTap Underbelly Award.

Polly Tisdall

Polly is a director, actor, storyteller, and current Resident Director at Oxford Playhouse and Magdalen College School. She was part of Birmingham Rep's inaugural Foundry Programme, for whom credits include *Hidden Histories* and the *Write Away* new writing programme. Assistant directing credits include *Never Try This At Home* and *Bang the Gong!*. Freelance directing credits include *Lit Fuse*, *Biting Tongues* and *Jorinda and Joringle*. She also directs folk art theatre company, Rambling Heart. Polly was named Young Storyteller of the Year in 2011. Her hour long show *The Man in the Moon and the Journey Thither* was shortlisted for a British Award for Storytelling Excellence in 2013.

All enquiries, high res images and further information:

Chloé Nelkin, Chloé Nelkin Consulting

E: chloe@chloenelkinconsulting.com, M: 07764 273 219

W: www.chloenelkinconsulting.com