



***Disruption*: the future of new theatre Programme announced**

Co-curated by HighTide and Assembly

**Assembly Roxy, 2 Roxburgh Place, Edinburgh, EH8 9SU
Wednesday 31st July – Monday 26th August 2019, various times**

After the success of their 2018 *HighTide: Edinburgh* programme, HighTide have now partnered with Assembly to present ***Disruption***, their programme of contemporary new writing exclusively at Assembly Roxy. The six pieces chosen demonstrate HighTide and Assembly Festival's shared vision for new writing as a space of political, contemporary and provocative work, created by new, diverse artists. HighTide is renowned for the discovery of new playwrights, including Ella Hickson, Nick Payne and Vinay Patel, and the *Disruption* season sees HighTide writers premiere at the world's largest arts festival ahead of performances at HighTide Festival Aldeburgh.

From HighTide's home county, East Anglian writer **Kenny Emson's** *Rust* is the centrepiece of HighTide's programme, following performances at London's Bush Theatre who co-produce the production. Also headlining will be *Collapsible* by Irish writer **Margaret Perry**, *Pops* which sees **Charlotte Josephine** return to Edinburgh with her first piece solely as a writer and a double bill of shows presented with **The Queer House** from writers **Teddy Lamb** and **Mika Johnson**. Finally, demonstrating Assembly's commitment to supporting Scottish new writing, **Kevin P. Gilday's** *Suffering From Scottishness* completes the curated programme.

Disruption references the type of shows in the season, and the approach to producing them through an open call. *Disruption* shows HighTide's continued commitment to supporting exciting theatre makers and providing them with the very best platform to be heard.

Steven Atkinson, Artistic Director of HighTide, comments, *I am thrilled to be concluding my Artistic Directorship of HighTide by championing this outstanding group of six bold new artists;*

Kenny Emson, Kevin P. Gilday, Mika Johnson, Charlotte Josephine, Teddy Lamb and Margaret Perry. We're collaborating with our partners Bush Theatre, Ellie Keel Productions, Live Theatre, Jake Orr Productions, The Queer House and Sonnet Youth to present a unique programme of ambitious new writing at Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2019 as part of Disruption at Assembly Roxy.

Artistic Director Assembly Festival, William Burdett-Coutts adds, *We are delighted to be partnering with HighTide to present this programme of contemporary work during the Festival. Assembly recognises the value of showcasing new work in Edinburgh in August, and we hope that our support will ensure that these contemporary theatre makers are given the best platform to present their work to the world's media, and the hundreds of thousands of people who come here to enjoy the best arts festival in the world.*

In addition to the six productions, *Disruption* will feature a programme of events throughout the month in keeping with the season's commitment to contemporary and provocative work. These additional events will be announced at a later date.

Rust is about pushing the boundaries of trust, love and lust to the limit in this ultra-contemporary, sexy and funny production from **Kenny Emson** (*Plastic*, *Old Red Lion*) and directed by **Eleanor Rhode** (*King John*, Royal Shakespeare Company, *Boudica*, Shakespeare's Globe). Nadia and Daniel have just signed for a flat. Under a pseudonym, naturally. After years of married life, this is their chance to start again. But, as much as they redefine the rules, the outside world is closing in. *Rust* is a love story about two people who didn't expect to fall in love again. It's about the societal pressures that can sometimes trap us, preventing us from chancing something or someone new.

Collapsible (winner of VAULT Festival 2019's Origin Award for Outstanding New Work) is a funny, furious new monologue about holding on in this collapsing world, by award-winning Irish writer **Margaret Perry** (*Porcelain*, *Abbey Theatre*), directed by **Thomas Martin** (*Ross and Rachel*). Following the life of a complex, funny bisexual woman, it looks at the difficulties of finding connections to people when you don't feel connected to yourself. Blending a fearless, psychologically acute female performance with a set intervention that appears to float the performer in the air, we see that the protagonist, despite everyone's protestations, quite literally doesn't have her feet on the ground.

Margaret Perry comments, *This is a story about work, identity and trying to wade out of the dark, inspired by a period in my life when I was unemployed and began to stop feeling like a person. The story of a young queer woman who starts to lose track of where she stops and the world starts, I wrote this play for anyone who's ever felt crumbly.*

Pops from award-winning writer **Charlotte Josephine** (*Bitch Boxer, Blush*), directed by **Ali Pidsley** of Barrel Organ, and co-produced by Live Theatre, follows a father and daughter caught in a cycle of addiction. Despite everything, they're really trying to honestly connect, forgive the unforgivable and love fiercely through a hopeless situation. Asking challenging questions about mental health, *Pops* looks at what is inherited and who is responsible, particularly in this harsh political climate. There are stubborn stigmas around mental health, particularly for the working class, and *Pops* seeks to tell a story that rids people of self-inflicted shame.

Charlotte Josephine comments: *The cruelty of austerity is, of course, that it damages those who need the most support. The tabloids enjoy spreading lies that addiction is a choice, an ignorance, a greedy self-indulgence. It's hard to get well when the national narrative is repeatedly insisting you're bad, not sick. Shame is a killer, and the antidote to shame is empathy. Story telling is empathy making, and there's no better art form for story telling than live theatre. We need it, now more than ever.*

An exciting double bill between HighTide and **The Queer House** sees ***Since U Been Gone*** by **Teddy Lamb** and **Mika Johnson's *Pink Lemonade*** alternate performances every day. Lamb's moving autobiographical account of growing up queer in the East Midlands, finding yourself, and losing a friend is brought to life in *Since U Been Gone* with storytelling and an original pop music score. Johnson's *Pink Lemonade* is a multi-disciplinary solo show, exploring masculinity and lesbianism in Black womxn. Fusing spoken word, bashment, original sound and movement, *Pink Lemonade* deconstructs micro-aggressions and explores the discourse around the fetishism of Black and Brown bodies.

An immersive theatrical experience that confronts the unique absurdity of Scottish identity, ***Suffering From Scottishness*** from award-winning writer and spoken word artist Kevin P. Gilday (*Sonnet Youth*, National Theatre of Scotland, BBC) turns a hilariously caustic eye on notions of nationhood and patriotism. From history to inventions, language to neighbourly relations, the Scottish independence referendum to the toxic mire of present political debate – **Citizen Scotland** invite audiences to take part in a focus group that will define the very future of the nation, for better or worse as they gleefully dissect the dark heart of the country.

The shows by Kenny Emson, Margaret Perry, Charlotte Josephine, Teddy Lamb and Mika Johnson will headline HighTide's festival in Aldeburgh (10th – 15th September).

Notes to Editors

Title *Rust*
Performance Dates Wednesday 31st July – Sunday 25th August (not 13th), 12:40
Running Time 75 minutes
Producer HighTide and Bush Theatre
Writer Kenny Emson
Director Eleanor Rhode
Associate Director Natalie Denton
Designer Max Johns
LX Jess Bernberg
Sound David Gregory
Casting Director Sophie Parrott
Twitter @_hightide_, #RustThePlay, @bushtheatre @elrhode, #DisruptionFest
Notes Ages 14+, contains strong language and sexual references

Title *Collapsible*
Performance Dates Wednesday 31st July – Sunday 25th August (not 14th, 21st), 13:20
Running Time 60 minutes
Producer Ellie Keel Productions and HighTide
Writer Margaret Perry
Director Thomas Martin
Twitter @_hightide_, @CollapsiblePlay, @mapperry, @tjamesmartin, #DisruptionFest

Title *Pops*
Performance Dates Wednesday 31st July – Sunday 25th August (not 12th), 18:35
Running Time 60 minutes
Producer Jake Orr Productions, HighTide and Live Theatre
Writer Charlotte Josephine
Director Ali Pidsley
Sound Designer Kieran Lucas
Movement Jennifer Jackson
Twitter @_hightide_, #PopsPlay, @charlotte_j_b, @JakeOrrProd, #DisruptionFest
Notes Ages 12+

Title *The Queer House: Pink Lemonade*
Performance Dates Thursday 1st – Sunday 25th August (alternate days), 15:45
Running Time 50 minutes
Producer The Queer House and HighTide

Writer/Performer Mika Johnson
Director Emily Aboud
Outside Eye Rachael Young
Lighting Designer Martha Godfrey
Designer Lydia Birgani-Nia
Sound Designer Juga Naut & Xana
Twitter @_hightide_, @thequeerhouse, @MiaAJohnson_ #PinkLemonade ,
 #DisruptionFest
Notes Ages 14+

Title *The Queer House: Since U Been Gone*
Performance Dates Wednesday 31st July – Sunday 25th August (alternate days), 15:45
Running Time 50 minutes
Producer The Queer House and HighTide
Writer/Performer Teddy Lamb
Musician/Performer Nicol Parkinson
Director Billy Barrett
Assistant Director E Howe
Outside Eye Angela Clerkin
Lighting Design Martha Godfrey
Designer Lydia Birgani-Nia
Twitter @_hightide_, @thequeerhouse, @TheTeddyLamb #SinceUBeenGone,
 #DisruptionFest
Notes Ages 14+

Title *Suffering From Scottishness*
Performance Dates Wednesday 31st July – Monday 26th August (not 7th, 13th and 20th), 17:10
Running Time 60 minutes
Producer Sonnet Youth
Writer/Performer Kevin P. Gilday
Co-Director Cat Hepburn
Co-Director Drew Taylor-Wilson
Movement Director Allie Winton Butler
Theatrical Dramaturg Rosie Kellagher
Spoken Word Dramaturg Jenny Lindsay
Twitter @_hightide_, #CitizenScotland, @kevinpgilday, #DisruptionFest
Notes Ages 14+

Tickets for all shows can be purchased from 18th April on www.assemblyfestival.com/ or 0131 623 3030.

Follow @_HighTide_ on Twitter and @hightidetheatre on Instagram and @AssemblyFest on all platforms for the latest news and updates.

HighTide

HighTide is theatre company and charity based in East Anglia that has an unparalleled twelve-year history under Artistic Director Steven Atkinson of successfully launching the careers of emerging British playwrights. Their alumni include: Luke Barnes, Adam Brace, E V Crowe, Elinor Cook, Rob Drummond, Thomas Eccleshare, Theresa Ikoko, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, Anders Lustgarten, Joel Horwood, Ella Hickson, Harry Melling, Nessah Muthy, Vinay Patel, Nick Payne, Phil Porter, Beth Steel, Al Smith, Sam Steiner, Molly Taylor, Jack Thorne and Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig. They have staged productions with the highest quality theatres across the UK, from the Traverse in Edinburgh, to the Royal Exchange in Manchester, Theatre Royal Bath and the National Theatre in London. They discover new talent, provide creative development opportunities for playwrights and other creatives, and stage high quality theatre productions both in their region and nationally through their festivals and touring. They enable new and underrepresented playwrights to express their visions of contemporary politics and society, demonstrate their creative potential and therein showcase the future of theatre. For more information see www.hightide.org.uk

Assembly

Assembly Festival is the longest running multi-venue operator at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The organisation is based in Edinburgh all year round at the Assembly Roxy, where it hosts theatre, music, comedy and events. Every year its diverse, curated programme features exciting emerging talent alongside some of the world's most respected performers and artistic institutions, across all genres of performance.

All enquiries, high res images and further information:

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