



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

**Co-curated by HighTide and Assembly**

**Assembly Roxy, 2 Roxburgh Place, Edinburgh, EH8 9SU  
Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> July – Monday 26<sup>th</sup> 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 Festivals Aldeburgh and Walthamstow.

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 **Mia 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, Mia 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 **Mia 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 Mia Johnson will headline HighTide's festivals in Aldeburgh (10<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> September) and Walthamstow (17<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> September) which will go on sale on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

## Notes to Editors

Title *Rust*  
Performance Dates Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> July – Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> August (not 13<sup>th</sup>), 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 31<sup>st</sup> July – Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> August (not 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>), 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 31<sup>st</sup> July – Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> August (not 12<sup>th</sup>), 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 1<sup>st</sup> – Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> August (alternate days), 15:45  
Running Time 50 minutes  
Producer The Queer House and HighTide

Writer/Performer Mia Johnson  
Outside Eye Rachael Young  
Twitter @\_hightide\_, @thequeerhouse, @MiaAJohnson\_ #PinkLemonade , #DisruptionFest  
Notes Ages 14+

Title The Queer House: *Since U Been Gone*  
Performance Dates Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> July – Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> August (alternate days), 15:45  
Running Time 50 minutes  
Producer The Queer House and HighTide  
Writer/Performer Teddy Lamb  
Director Billy Barrett  
Dramaturg Angela Clerkin  
Twitter @\_hightide\_, @thequeerhouse, @TheTeddyLamb #SinceUBeenGone, #DisruptionFest  
Notes Ages 14+

Title *Suffering From Scottishness*  
Performance Dates Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> July – Monday 26<sup>th</sup> August (not 7<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>), 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 18<sup>th</sup> April on [www.assemblyfestival.com/](http://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](http://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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