

# THEATRE NATION • N

Creativity • Community • Collaboration

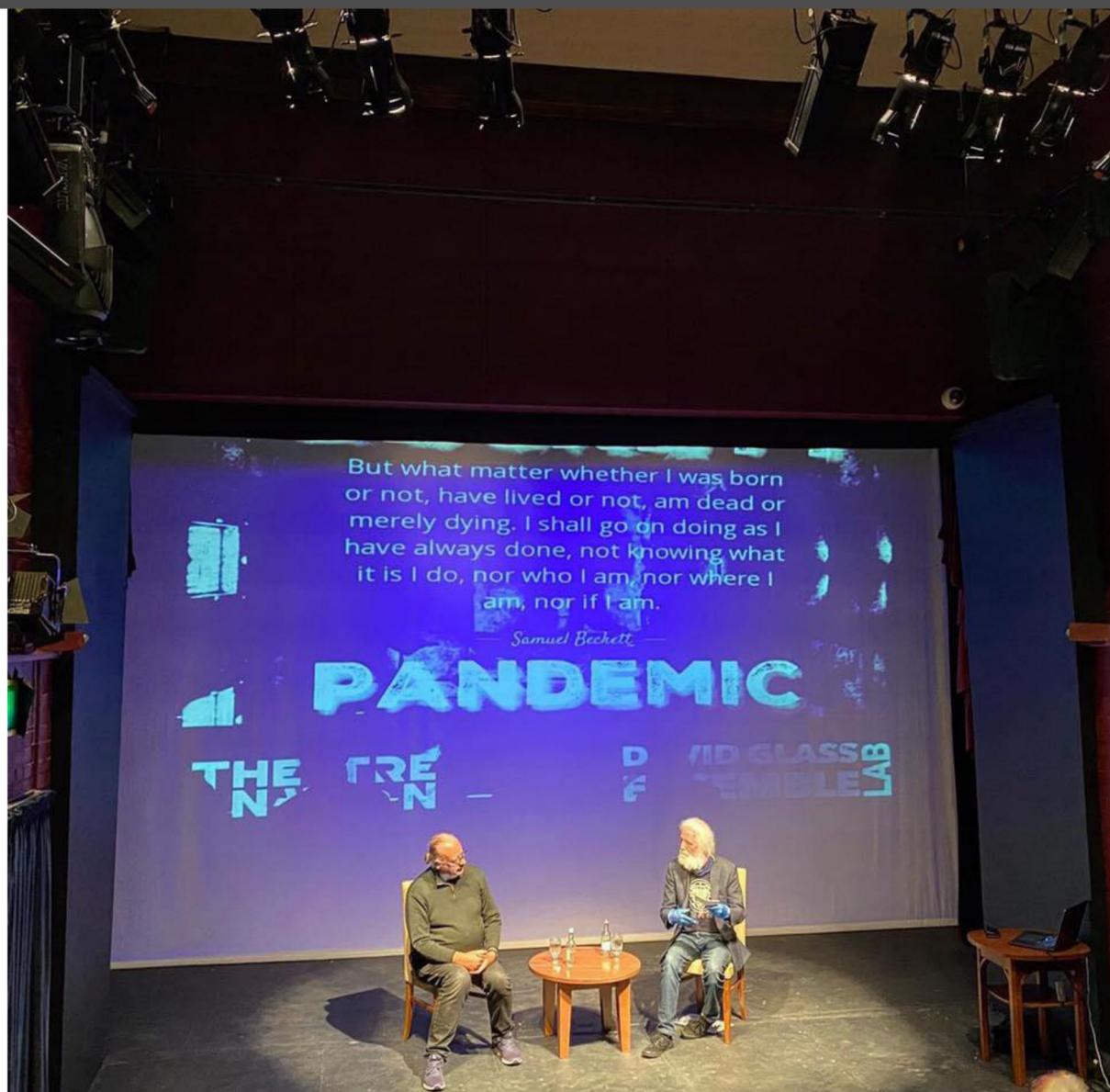
## Theatre Nation in the Time of Pandemic



**Bringing David Glass to Hastings:** Decision made for DG to direct new version of Godot, which became 3 year partnership project "Beckett in the Time of Pandemic". Initial performances in Hastings next spring, with a national tour proposed for Autumn 2021. Start of community engagement with local groups, Theatre Nation and David Glass Ensemble. Socially distanced meeting in garden office!

People  
Reached  
**12**

# An Evening with David Glass



“Hastings is no ordinary town, and David Glass’s approach to the creative process and to theatre is hardly conventional. It became clear that his raw, uncompromising provocative approach felt like something Hastings would lap up. I left the talk chomping at the bit for the workshop and full of excitement and gratitude for the opportunity to experience this in my home town.”

BECCA HORN  
PERFORMER AND WORKSHOP  
PARTICIPANT

“As a writer, I wasn’t sure David’s workshop would be for me, assuming that it would concentrate on performance. But after the Q&A, it was clear that David wants to tell stories. So I signed up, to be inspired by his lucid practical and replicable alchemy for generating stories, both as an individual and in collaboration. Amazing!”

GLYN CARTER  
AWARD-WINNING WRITER,  
PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR

“A mixture of real fearlessness in his approach to his creative work, and an urgent cogent necessary argument for working in the community. Specifically, he came to Hastings to embrace other artists, and to make space for others to find universalities.”

FRANCES VINER  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR,  
HALLUCINATING ANGELS

# Creative Alchemy in the Time of Pandemic

David Glass brought his internationally acclaimed Creative Practice workshop to Hastings. Developed over 20 years, this five-stage process allows people to access, express and craft their creativity. It was held in a socially distanced manner at Stables Theatre in September 2020, with over 20 participants from the community. People from all walks of life, ages and backgrounds attended.



**Brilliant first day of Creative Alchemy with David Glass! Thank you The Stables Theatre and Arts Centre for hosting us. It's going to be quite a week!**



**"Belatedly - apologies - I want to express my appreciation for Theatre Nation making it possible for me to attend the recent David Glass Creative Alchemy workshop.**

**So brilliant to have worked / played / learned with other creative people. Such a wide spectrum of people - I felt that through the practices I was getting to know my fellow artistic souls better and better.**

**An intensive 6 days of togetherness and collectively creating: experiencing, exploring, experimenting and evolving. I felt I was a changed person by the end. I'd evolved. Grown. I found my voice more.**

**When I saw the email for this course, it was one of those 'instant YES!' times - and I have no regrets. I felt part of the group very quickly, felt accepted and safe/secure enough to express myself.**

**It was a roller coaster of a journey really - experiencing a whole spectrum of emotions - and it catalysed the realisation within me that I am a creative, artistic person, as I felt so at home within this environment. Furthermore, the repercussions and reverberations continue to echo within me. Certain phrases that David used - or a memory of an exercise - and simply the core alchemical contagion of creativity!**

**For this I am truly grateful and appreciative.**

**I look forward with happy anticipation to being involved with the Beckett Pandemic project.**

**Many thanks to all involved for the experience. (No-one has paid me anything to write this! :-))"**

**ZELLY RESTORICK**



People Reached  
**25**

## Alchemy Extraordinary

👤 HIP 📅 October 6, 2020 📄 Well-being 💬 No Comment

**Caf Fean shares her experience of spending a week with local artists, actors and writers, exploring and pushing the boundaries of their creativity, under the guidance of David Glass and the wonderful team at Theatre Nation.**

It is a long time since I've done anything creative with other people in a physical space. It's even longer since I used drama to inspire my creativity, though it has always been a passion of mine. I was intrigued by Theatre Nation's description of a Creative Practice workshop to reconnect you with your creativity post-lockdown and during this continuing pandemic. This workshop marks the beginning of Beckett Pandemic, a new three-year community project.

### Socially distanced circle

Samuel Beckett and his contemporaries created incredible work following the fallout of the second world war. The project sets out to explore the new stories we need to be writing now, in the light of this global pandemic. I signed up and was keen to see if I'd recognise some of the other participants, as most of them live in Hastings and St Leonards.

So it was that I found myself describing a dream I'd had the night before joining the workshop, to a group of twenty strangers at The Stables Theatre. The synchronicities between my dream and the work the group had done the previous day were described by David, as the group sagely nodded. The dream was of giant false widow spiders, driving my car when I still haven't got my licence, and getting away with it. David described how a web might represent networks, connections. The spider: fear of death, or change. The car and driver's licence – journeying and learning, and the 'getting away with it' perhaps was a reference to the workshop, rules, structure, the outside world. All I can tell you is that the experience of sharing this dream, and other observations throughout the week and hearing other peoples' had a profound effect on me, like the feeling that you get when you've left an art exhibition and the world looks different – more colourful, perhaps 'sharper' than it did before you went in.

# Hastings Independent

Your local non-profit community newspaper



Hastings Independent Press

The creative process was broken down by David, who has taught many incredible actors and performers, as well as guided corporates and institutions as wide ranging as the United Nations and Google to reconnect with their innate creativity to find strength and fresh perspectives in the work at hand. He told us stories of working with street gangs in New York, groups of villagers in Greece and elsewhere. In one of David's exercises we were taken through guided meditations to imagine worlds where one of the three key elements to creative practice (yourself, other people or the world) is taken away. The images and sensations experienced by the group were interesting in their parallels and differences. Some imagined an 'earthless' world where the people became the buildings, eating one another in some form of renaissance depiction of hell. Others saw friends, family members, and felt great comfort in being close to other people.

I can only speak for myself, when considering a world that carried on without me. The sensation was utterly galling, and incredibly saddening. And yet, all of these scenarios are imaginable – there will be a time without me in it; our earth is being killed by us; and people are continuing to populate, populate, populate. So, though these thought experiments were just a fiction, what you learn to then take out into the real world makes you feel more awake to the beauty and fragility of this life.

I left that particular session feeling a newfound love for the world, in all its fuckedupness. Despite COVID, despite Trump, despite terrible oppression and all that other awful stuff that plagues our minds daily in the form of news, noise, and extreme information overload.

In this little bubble of twenty people, at a workshop that is only permitted because strict social distancing is in place, we were beginning to set ourselves free of the pressures of the outside world, and at the same time freeing ourselves from our own internal prisons – that inner critic. I didn't look at my phone for hours at a time – something I don't think I've done since February this year.

The things that this workshop gave me will continue to emerge, I'm sure, as the weeks and months of 'these strange times' roll on. If I could summarise for you, the message of this 'alchemy' that David and the team created within the four walls of the theatre would be: stay true to who you are, keep on creating, and remember the importance of telling our stories right now – both for yourself, and for those who aren't able to.

If any of this resonates, please get in touch with the folk at Theatre Nation. The workshop was the beginning of something very special: a new project that will involve the community of Hastings and St Leonards. A space in which we can co-create new stories, to tell the tales of our place, its people, and this strange, strange time we find ourselves in.

“Once again, at this extraordinary time of change, artists must lead and speak powerfully to and with the communities they serve. More than ever we need stories and art that transforms the realities of crisis into the moving metaphors of hope and perhaps dark celebration for both young and old. To this end, by celebrating the artists that walked out of the ashes of the Second World War, Beckett Pandemic seeks to inspire and find the new visions of this post-Covid world within the unique literal edginess of Hastings – and the community there.”

• *Patrick Kealey, Artistic Director (Theatre Nation)*  
*David Glass, Artistic Director (David Glass Ensemble)*  
[www.theatrenation.org](http://www.theatrenation.org)

People Reached  
**20**



**‘The play’s premiere saw Patrick Kealey deliver a variously “majestic”, “marvellous”, “moving” and “mesmerising” performance.’**

**HASTINGS INDEPENDENT PRESS**

**Fiction Romance (COVID-safe performance in the gardens of The Beacon)**

This love story is a response to Antonio’s all consuming love and passion for Sebastian, a love left unrequited at the end of Twelfth Night. With a passionate performance by Patrick Kealey an original Sea Shanty by Bob Tipler and a lyrical script by John Knowles.

# The Last Tree in the World



**‘We got the chance to explore and share the natural environment in imaginative and profound ways. I love the fact that the connections we made continue to develop because we’re all local.’**

**KATHY BRISCOE, PARTICIPANT AND ENGLISH TEACHER FOR UN SYRIAN & VULNERABLE FAMILIES RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME**

This R&D project saw Theatre Nation take Leigh Dyer’s Tree Sculpture (which was commissioned for a planned Spring 2020 tour of *Waiting for Godot*) to different community spaces. Its first outing took place in the woods, where Yumino Seki led a Butoh camp weekend.

**“Lucky to have a lovely group and all went well. Hope the experiences stay with them for a long time.”**

**YUMINO SEKI**

**“So pleased to have a day in the trees again. I was just assuming my life up in trees was over. With old trees and moss supporting us. Good to be alive.”**

**VIVIENNE HAMBLIN, PARTICIPANT.**

**“Butoh Camp gave me a unique opportunity to be still, deep and playful. Absorbed by the darkness of the night and struck by the first sun light in the morning, time shifted and we transformed in the tender woods.”**

Theatre Nation worked with Barefoot Opera on their large-scale community opera Bloom Britannia, to bring the tree to their community outdoor space. Barefoot Opera devised a bespoke socially distanced choral group performance around the tree. Patrick Kealey revived his character of Apple Jonny, leading an improvised music hall-inspired act.

**“Nothing brings me more joy than singing with the Bloom choir. It was such a beautiful event, and a real pleasure to be involved in. I felt the collaboration between Bloom Britannia and the Theatre Nation tree was such a great idea! The most fun I’d had since the beginning of lockdown.”**

**ROSIE FREUND**

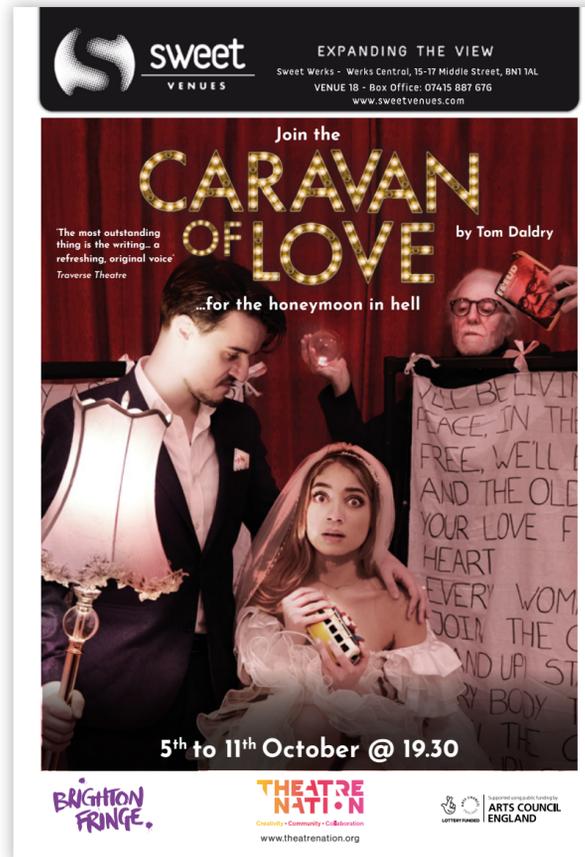


People Reached  
**45**

**“I liked that we get to sing with people again after so long, the tree is amazing and I really enjoyed the solo I got to sing standing underneath it.”**

**POPPY MARTIN, PARTICIPANT AGED 11**

# Caravan of Love



## Caravan of Love at Brighton Fringe:

Hugely successful run of Caravan of Love by Tom Daldry at Sweet Venues during Brighton Fringe. Provisionally scheduled to play at Stables Theatre, Hastings in January 2021



# Caravan of Love

“The Brighton Fringe psychodrama about caravanning in Ireland is a taut first-class play of physical theatre that follows in the tradition of Pinter, Beckett and Berkoff”

MIKE AIKEN,  
BRIGHTON SOURCE



“Thoroughly immersive. A great story and a set of fine performances. And a really imaginative set design!”

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

“I was completely gripped throughout the whole of this play. The acting was superb, with mysterious twists and turns in the story which kept you guessing where fantasy meets reality.”

HEATHER WARD, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR,  
THE DIRECTORS HUB



# The Life & Rhymes of Archy & Mehitabel

## The Life & Rhymes of Archy & Mehitabel at The Stables Theatre, Hastings and Prague Fringe:

First there was Laurel and Hardy,  
then Fred and Ginger and Marks and  
Spencer and now meet ...Archy and  
Mehitabel.

Who you ask? Why Archy of course!  
A free verse poet in a former  
life and unfortunately now re-  
incarnated as a cockroach ("I'm a  
brunette and stand over six feet,  
without any shoes on") and his  
friend and sometimes muse  
Mehitabel the alley cat ("I was  
Cleopatra once"). And all this  
half a century before Shirley  
MacLaine and Hollywood  
discovered their past lives.

**"Kealey flows from  
character to character....  
and passionately delivers  
a serious contemporary  
message for his human  
audience, with humour."**

**ZELLY RESTORICK**

**HASTINGS ONLINE TIMES**

# THEATRE NATION

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'Fab acting. Fab writing. Fab message'  
'Really fantastic. Superb acting'  
'Great show. Amusing yet poignant'  
'Really great. Should be seen'  
'Brilliant performance'  
'Brought this work to life'

Audience Vox Pop quotes  
from Barnstaple Fringe

# THE LIFE & RHYMES OF ARCHY & MEHITABEL



PRAGUE  
**FRINGE**  
28.05. - 05.06.2021  
PROLOGUE

Thu 27 & Fri 28 May @ 7.30pm

The Stables Theatre

The Bourne, Hastings

TN34 3BD

[www.stablestheatre.co.uk](http://www.stablestheatre.co.uk)

**STABLES**  
THEATRE & ARTS CENTRE

People  
Reached:

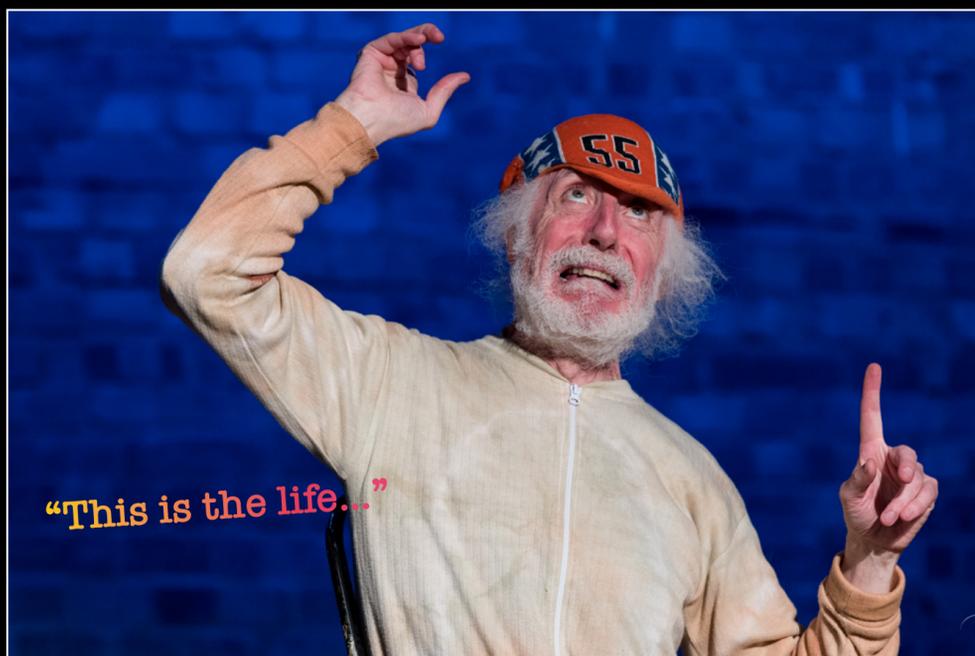
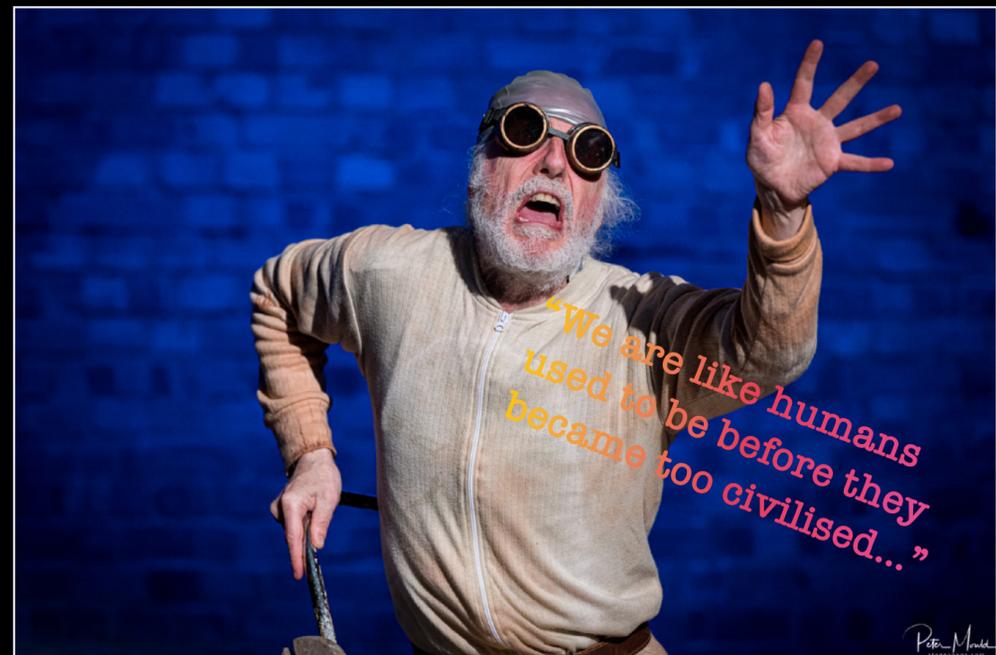
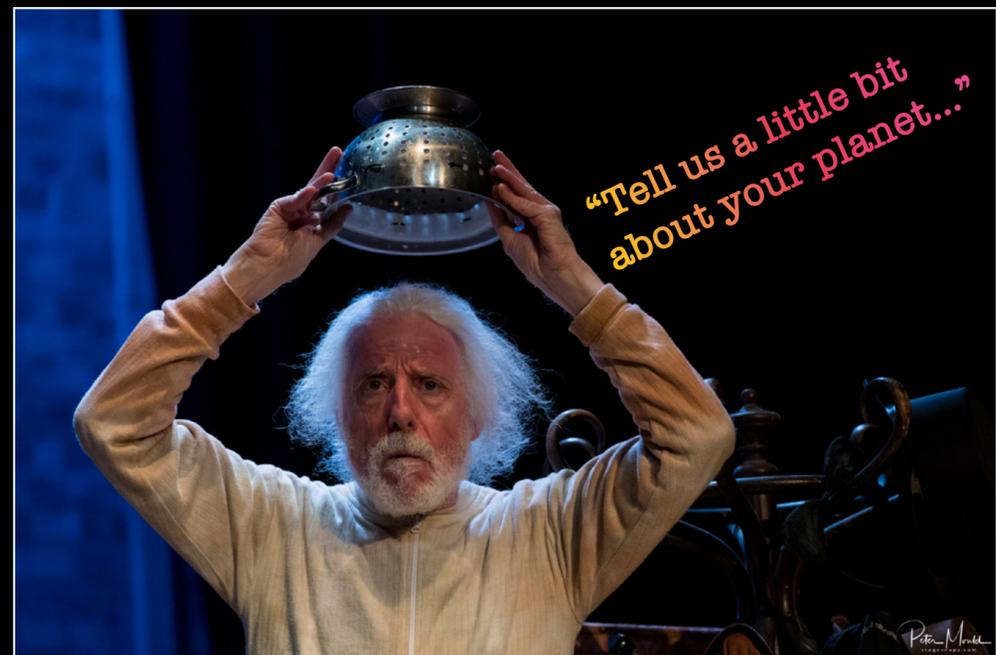
Live  
Audience  
**70**

Prague  
Fringe  
**155**

Now streaming on Czech  
Republic service Dramox  
for European-wide  
audiences



# The Life & Rhymes of Archy & Mehitabel



## Art on Fire

We interviewed and filmed a comedian, a visual artist, a musician, a writer, a creative workshop facilitator, a drag queen, and a theatre director to take the temperature of the times.

What keeps them going right now?

What inspires and infuriates them in our unfolding pandemic world?

What is at the heart of their process?

Part manifesto, part provocation, part public forum.



**THEATRE  
NATION**  
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WHAT NOW FOR THE ARTS?



# ART ON FIRE!

A CREATIVE PROVOCATION

WEDNESDAY JUNE 2<sup>ND</sup>

STABLES THEATRE • HASTINGS @ 7.30

BOOKING: THEATRENATION.ORG • STABLESTHEATRE.CO.UK • 01424 423221

FILM PLUS Q & A OPEN FORUM

“...Riveting. Well done all of you.  
It should be compulsory viewing.”

SUE JONES DAVIES

WELSH ACTOR, SINGER, FORESTER



## Lost Child facilitator training with David Glass Ensemble

We are delighted to be one of 5 organisations partnering with DGE on the 3-year long UK based Lost Child project.

At the centre of David Glass's teaching is the creative workshop on The Child. Developed over twenty years this workshop will take the participant on an extraordinary journey rediscovering the heart of their creativity. Viewing childhood as the safe place through which we learn to survive, and drawing on the work of Jung and Winnicott, David Glass's Child workshop has taken place in over twenty countries by artists and non-artists of all kinds.

Theatre Nation organised a 3-day workshop with DGE attended by 12 local artist practitioners. This is the start of training towards facilitating this world famous workshop.



# Fiction Romance - Brighton Fringe

“Fiction Romance was not just a play, but an emotional rollercoaster that presented a different perspective on love, and left you with a lot of food for thought.”

5-STAR REVIEW, SASCHA COOPER,  
BROADWAYBABY.COM

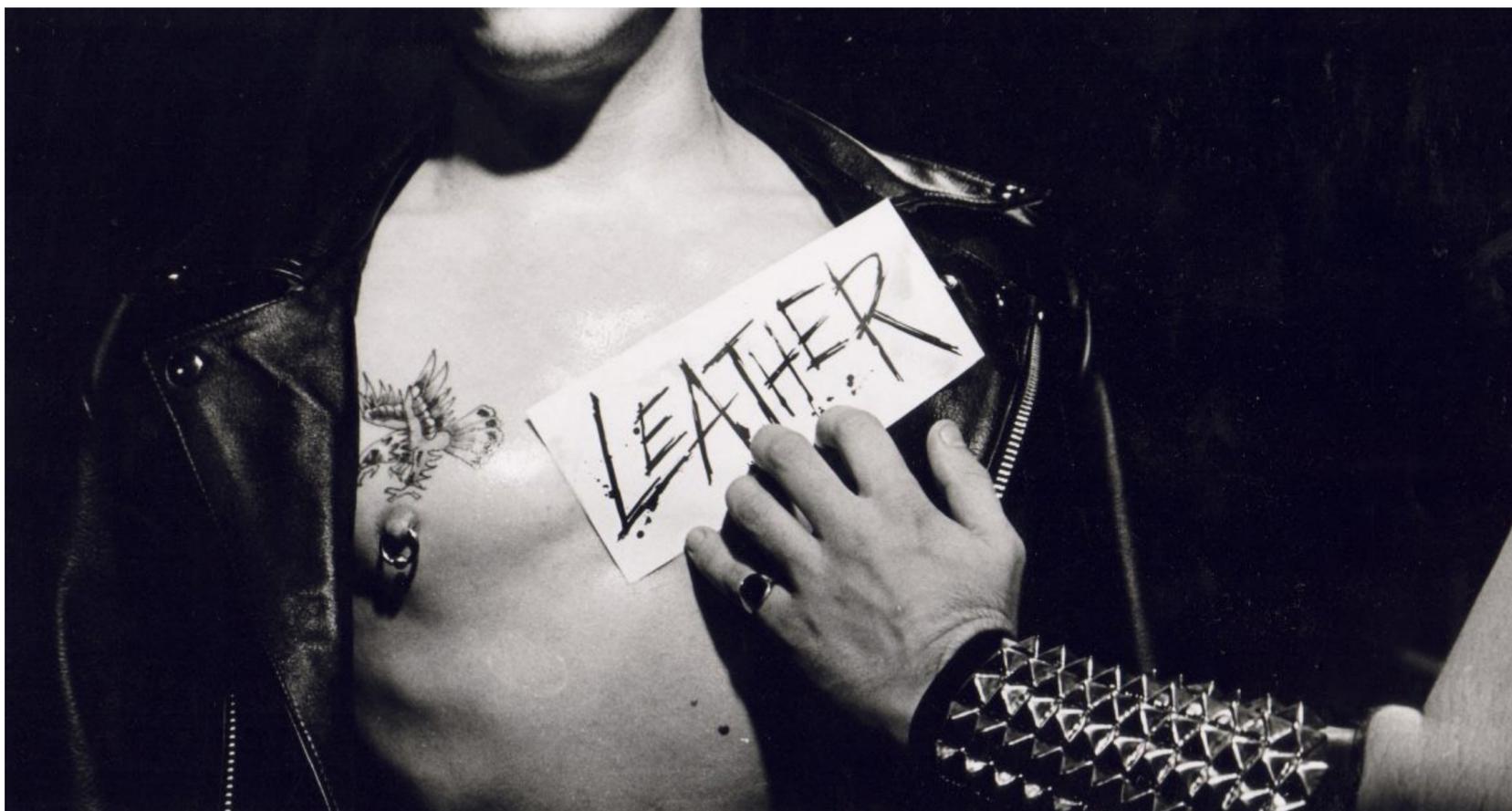
People Reached  
**75**



‘... a beautifully redemptive tale... Kealey’s the ideal interpreter of this deeply-wrought, yet respectful riposte to those occasional loose endings of genius...’

FRINGE REVIEW





**Leather in association with Homo Promos and  
The Finborough Theatre, Earls Court, London.**

**By Peter Scott-Presland & directed  
by Patrick Kealey**

A brave and groundbreaking play about gay domestic abuse, redolent of pain and violence in all its forms, consensual and non-consensual, as physical abuse is paralleled by mental control, and the erosion of any sense of worth.

**'...Kealey generously  
allows each of the actors  
to fully explore and  
fine tune each of their  
characters....'**

**KIEFER WILLIAMS,  
NORTHWESTEND.COM**

**...The denouement is shocking to watch, and even though filmed here with every actor separately in isolation, we get a graphic feel for how it must have been in live performance. This is due to the skilful direction of Patrick Kealey, who despite the filming restrictions brings a visceral immediacy to the performances of his cast...**

**BRIAN BUTLER, GSCENE.COM**

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