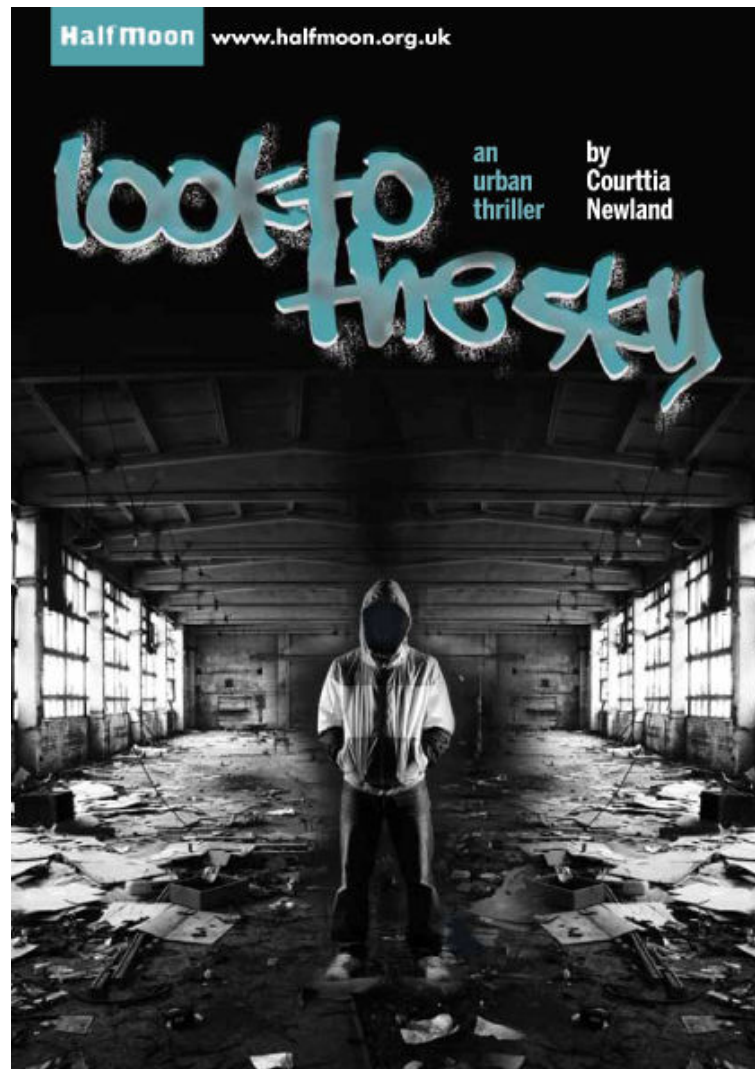


Half Moon

MARKETING AND PRESS PACK



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Marketing & Promotion

Marketing Resources

- A5 flyers – sent July 2011
 - A3 posters – sent July 2011
 - E-flyer available by request
 - Images and copy for brochure and website
 - Education resources available to download from Half Moon's website
 - A free-standing foyer display to accompany the show during its run at your venue
 - A microsite/blog (<http://looktotheskytheatre.blogspot.com/>) that links directly from the QR scanner code on the flyer
 - Production photos - available from October 6th 2011
 - Members of the cast/creative team available for interviews & photo calls
 - Your box office details on our website
 - A Half Moon contact for queries
-

Target Audience

- New writing audiences
 - Young people aged 13+
 - Youth theatre/drama group attendees at your venue
 - Secondary schools
 - Youth groups
 - Teachers and group leaders
 - Attendees of previous Half Moon shows/comparable shows
 - Students studying drama courses, including GCSE and A Level drama
-

Key Selling Points

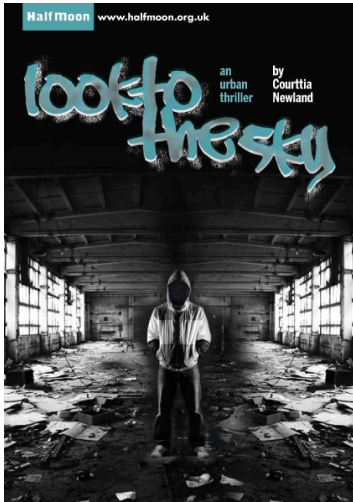
- Half Moon has an excellent reputation for providing high quality theatre for young people
- The play was newly commissioned by Half Moon in 2010
- The play was shortlisted for the 2010 Alfred Fagon Award
- The script has been described by *The Guardian* as one that 'reinvents the genre'
- The play was written by critically acclaimed author and playwright Courttia Newland, who has published a number of works and has been shortlisted for multiple awards, including the Library Award 2007, the Alfred Fagon Award 2010, and longlisted for the Frank O' Conner Award 2011
- The play explores themes that are relevant to young people
- The play's development included a research and development process that enabled the writer to work with young people on the script's development
- Courttia Newland fuses the language of the street with a poetic narrative to create a text that resonates with young audiences
- All audience members will receive a free CD programme featuring the show's newly commissioned soundtrack
- Each performance features a 'text back' session which provides audience members with the opportunity ask members of the cast questions anonymously, by texting their questions, which are read out live on stage

Images

The images below are available for use in brochures, flyers and on websites.

Please visit contact Felix Mussell (felix@halfmoon.org.uk) to request copies of the images below in web and print format.

Production photos will be available at the beginning of October 2011.



Flyer and title jpeg Credit: © Half Moon/Cog Design

The Play

The Characters

Doubt – who becomes Debs in part 2
Obs – who becomes Osman in part 2
Braun – who becomes Brandon in part 2
Inno – who becomes Isaiah in part 2

The Story *(for reference only, please do not reproduce)*

The play follows the lives of three teenagers Doubt, Obs and Braun who enter an abandoned warehouse to search for a lost member of their group, Inno. As the teenagers begin their search of the warehouse, they are forced to confront their past. It soon becomes clear that the very thing that scares them most turns out to be themselves.

In the second half of the play, the characters remain in the same location (an old, disused warehouse) but have moved away from the abstract elements of the first half to a gritty realism. The characters have different names, but they retain the qualities of their previous incarnations from part one. The play skillfully challenges our perceptions and plays with mystery and ambiguity, leading to an unexpected climatic finish.

Key Themes

- A key theme is the teenage psyche. The walls of the warehouse act as both a physical and mental barrier to the outside world, forcing the play's characters to confront their emotions head on
- An exploration of how the shattering effects of knife crime encompass not only the victim and perpetrator but also those who are left behind
- Inner city urban culture
- The blending of realism with elements of science fiction and mystery to help us understand the workings of the teenage mind
- Challenging the debate surrounding youth crime, by focusing not on what we believe young people to be, but on what they believe themselves to be

CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

CAST

Doubt
Obs
Inno
Braun

Kandace Caine
Ashley J
Joe Jacobs
Frank C Keogh

CREATIVE TEAM

Writer
Director
Designer
Composer
Lighting Designer
Stage Manager

Courtia Newland
Angela Michaels
Naomi Dawson
James Grant
Fred Beaufort
Jennifer Hunter

HALF MOON STAFF

Production and Technical Manager
Administrative Director
Director
Participatory Projects Manager
Development & Communications Manager
Associate Director
Front of House Administrator

Fred Beaufort
Jackie Eley
Chris Elwell
Donna Bamford
Felix Mussell
Angela Michaels
Rhiannon Robertson

For general enquiries about the tour, contact us on
020 7709 8901 / admin@halfmoon.org.uk

For Press and Marketing related enquiries, contact Felix on
020 7709 8907 / felix@halfmoon.org.uk

Brochure & Web Copy

Half Moon present

Look to the Sky

An urban thriller by Courttia Newland

Main copy:

A lonely, disused warehouse. Three teenagers, Doubt, Obs and Braun. One lost member of their group, the curious Inno. A search along dark corridors and winding stairs that leads to a discovery, which will change their lives...

In an abandoned building a group of young people are forced to confront the very thing that scares them most. Themselves. The mysterious and complicated culture of inner-city youth is exploded in this gripping new play, which breathes with a raw poetic language and a contemporary soundtrack.

Part street vernacular, part theatrical tradition, at times harrowing and at others searingly true - this is a play about the world of the teenage mind. Novelist and writer Courttia Newland deploys an abstract, poetic narrative style to invigorate this 4-hander, one-act play. Shortlisted for The 2010 Alfred Fagon Award.

Look To The Sky short copy (70 words)

In an abandoned warehouse, a search along dark corridors and winding stairs will lead to a discovery, which will change lives...

A group of young people are forced to confront the very thing that scares them most. Themselves. The mysterious and complicated culture of inner-city youth is exploded in this gripping new play, which breathes with a raw poetic language and a pumping soundtrack. Shortlisted for the 2010 Alfred Fagon Award.

Additional education copy

Look To the Sky is a vibrant piece of new writing which explores different narrative styles and characterisation. The play was created with young people, ensuring it will connect with them and after each performance they can field their questions to the cast at the post show textback session.

There will be resources available to all (including teachers), which will contain extracts from the script. These can be used as audition speeches and monologues. There will also be ideas for follow-up activities for GCSE, A level and interested youth groups. These resources are available to download from Half Moon's website: www.halfmoon.org.uk

Box Office Brief

Company	Half Moon	
Show	Look to the Sky	
Cast	Doubt Obs Braun Inno	Kandace Caine Ashley J Frank C Keogh Joe Jacobs
Production Team	Writer Director Designer Composer Lighting Designer Stage Manager	Courtia Newland Angela Michaels Naomi Dawson James Grant Fred Beaufort Jennifer Hunter
Running Time	60 mins (no interval) + text/chatback session (aprox 20 mins)	
Age Range	13+	
Extras	All audience members will be given a free CD programme featuring music from the production. Text/Chatback sessions after all performances. This is an opportunity for the audience to text in or ask the performers questions about the production.	

Brief Description

In an abandoned warehouse, a search along dark corridors and winding stairs will lead to a discovery, which will change lives...

A group of young people are forced to confront the very thing that scares them most. Themselves. The mysterious and complicated culture of inner-city youth is exploded in this gripping new play, which breathes with a raw poetic language and a pumping soundtrack. Shortlisted for the 2010 Alfred Fagon Award.

Please note that this production contains strong language.

Please visit www.halfmoon.org.uk for more information.

A Word from the Writer – Courttia Newland

When I joined Half Moon's Exchange for Change artist development programme, my first thought as I started mulling over what I might write, was 'I'm not doing a play about violent youth crime'. This wasn't because I looked down on the subject, or even that I hadn't seen interesting work come out of the exploration of urban youth struggles. It was just that the exploration seemed to only reach so far, and as someone who's best known work was deeply associated with this subject, over a decade ago, I wanted to do something different. I'd always said that if I didn't have anything new to say I wouldn't say anything. I watched the plays, films and TV shows, even helped to produce some of my own. For a number of years what I wrote strayed as far from my comfort zone as I could go. I still wanted to talk about road and present that onto the stage, all the time, but I hadn't found the vehicle to do it.

Then I began to work the Half Moon team and an idea began to form. I believe that creativity blossoms best from individuals when you give no limits. And so, when I was informed that I could do anything I wanted subject-wise, I began to think why not? Originally, I had an idea for a sci-fi piece. I had a long-standing project I'd been working on for a while. Then I began to think, what if you mixed genres? What if I took the basic elements of my sci-fi novel and applied it to the world outside my window? What if I created a theatrical reality that focused not on what we believed young people to be, but like our initial Exchange for Change discussions, on what they were, what *they* believed themselves to be. Their potential. Wouldn't that be closer to the truth? And because I had been like that (admittedly a long time ago) in the sense that I talked that way, dressed that way and *felt* that way before, even while I suspected I was different and had more to say myself, I began to ponder how that could be expressed in theatrical terms, how I could take the essence of who they were and present that on stage.

This, for me, is what I wanted to achieve: an exploration of the psyche behind inner city minds. And as each young person is as individual as a snowflake, there's room for limitless interpretations. I work with the young quite a lot, teaching creative writing in schools, prisons, universities, writing retreats and pupil referral units. I ask if they feel they are represented properly by the media, and none of them, no matter their race or background, have ever said yes. And I think that's a crying shame. I think we're doing our young a major disservice, and in order to understand their minds, we have to *listen*. That's what I'm attempting to do with this play. Listen, hear what they have to say, and then try to communicate with some level of truth and understanding.

A Word from the Director - Angela Michaels

Apart from the strength of the story, I was attracted by the writing and the uniqueness of Courttia's - the playwright - voice. His use of rhythm and language bring a tone and richness, which means that the play comes alive in one's imagination, even before the characters are placed on the stage. This play skilfully challenges our perceptions and plays with mystery and ambiguity, leading to an unexpected and climatic finish. It speaks of loss, but there is humour, deals with harsh realities but there is gentleness and introspection.

This piece offers an interesting directorial challenge in the way it is composed of two distinct units. In the second half of the play, we are in the same location, but have moved away from the abstract elements of the first half to a gritty realism. The characters have different names but they retain the qualities of their previous incarnations from part one.

Each of the 'halves' could be performed without the other – so what meaning do they have when placed together. How does one bridge the gap from the first to the second half? What is real and what is imagined? Are we in one of the character's minds, or in two worlds which 'graze' each other, mingling and leaking elements from one to the other? Is it perhaps a cautionary tale from the shadows, from 'ghosts' of young people who have lost out on their lives, on childhood and a future because society has ceased to listen to them? It will mean different things to each audience member and I look forward to the post-show debates.

At the time of writing this, 2 months away from rehearsal, I have just finalised the design with the designer and am still in discussion with the composer for the soundtrack. The actors have been cast and I am forming ideas about the production. This I call the 'gestation' phase. I not only look at the play, but use lots of other stimuli and influences, from going to see plays or dance on related themes (however distantly related), cutting articles out of newspapers, looking at art and film, listening to music. It's a quiet foundation laying process, allowing my creative juices freedom – seeing, hearing, feeling and exploring and questioning.

It will be an ensemble piece, using the actors' physicality to tell the story as much as possible. This is my preferred way of working and the abstracted nature of the first section of the play lends itself to this approach. For the first few days of rehearsal, we will work without the script. This time will be spent finding a physical language between the actors and exploring the themes of the play in discussion and improvisation. We will also look at character, build 'back-stories' and explore and chart each characters emotional journey in detail.

I always start rehearsal with knowledge of the script but not of the outcome. So it's a 'knowing' and 'not knowing'. I'll have soaked up a lot of influences and feel ready to transfer my enthusiasm and understanding of the play to the actors, but I don't have every bit of the play mapped out in my head. Shaping the play happens for me in the rehearsal room. I find the intellectual and creative energy one gets in the rehearsal process invigorating and I want the 'journey' to be interesting for all of us, so my preparation, combined with the work of the ensemble enables us to make discoveries and maybe even create a bit of magic!

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

The logo for Half Moon, featuring the words "Half Moon" in a white, sans-serif font on a black rectangular background.

Half Moon present *Look to the Sky*, an urban thriller
National Tour October – November 2011

Half Moon's gripping new thriller by Corttia Newland is set to tour the UK this autumn after an initial run at Half Moon in London. Shortlisted for the 2010 Alfred Fagon Award and described by *The Guardian* as 'a play that reinvents the genre', *Look to the Sky* is a vibrant piece of new writing that challenges the debate surrounding youth crime by exploring inner-city urban culture from a young person's perspective.

Directed by Angela Michaels whose recent credits include *Locked In* and *Begin/End* the play has been written in consultation with young people and breathes with a raw poetic language, backed by a newly commissioned soundtrack by James Grant and design by Naomi Dawson.

The play follows the lives of three teenagers Doubt (Kandace Caine), Obs (Ashley J) and Braun (Frank C Keogh) who enter an abandoned warehouse to search for a lost member of their group, Inno (Joe Jacobs). As the teenagers begin their search of the warehouse, they are forced to confront their past and the very thing that scares them most: themselves.

Part street vernacular, part theatrical tradition, at times harrowing and at others searingly true - this is a play about the world of the teenage mind. Novelist and writer Courttia Newland deploys an abstract, poetic narrative style to invigorate this 4-hander, one-act play.

Look to the Sky will play at Half Moon's East London venue from 5th October before embarking on a national tour until 10th November 2011.

- Ends -

Notes for Editors

For further information about Half Moon please contact Felix Mussell on 020 7709 8907 or by email: felix@halfmoon.org.uk

About Half Moon Young People's Theatre

Half Moon is a specialist young people's theatre in Tower Hamlets which has a national remit with funding from Arts Council England, in addition to funding from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The company gives young people aged 0 to 18 an opportunity to experience the best in young people's theatre, both as a participant and as an audience member. The company presents professional plays for young audiences from the best companies in the UK and offers many opportunities for young people to take part in drama activities.

Press Quotes

Look to the Sky

"Newland reinvents the genre simply through his use of language. He offers us a haunting poetic landscape, a Beckettian world in which the cast quote Euripides and offer philosophical reflections on death. One has a sense here of a writer willing to take risks."

The Guardian

Recent Half Moon productions

"David Lane's two-hander maps the girls' relationship with intensity, in writing that is flecked with everyday poetry." **The Guardian** on *Begin/End*

"This very watchable play addresses some difficult issues with commendable sensitivity."

The Stage on *Begin/End*

"This is sensory theatre at its best. There is plenty for young children to see, listen to, touch and feel." **The Stage** on *Rip, Fold, Scrunch*

"An astonishing, enthralling production that successfully blends hip hop and theatre and manages to address ethnic and social issues without being patronizing."

The Stage on *Locked In*

"Angela Michaels' production is steely, and the young cast live and breathe their roles."

The Guardian on *Locked In*

"Fin Kennedy's play luxuriates excitedly in young urban culture"

Time Out on *Locked In*

Half Moon

"Half Moon is a pillar of creativity, uniting young people regardless of race, gender, and ability – go see for yourself" **Time Out**

"A theatre company that has meaningful connections to its local community, and that actively seeks out new playwrights to engage with it." **The Guardian**

"The hottest place in London for young people" **Evening Standard**

"Half Moon lives up to its aim of celebrating differences and diversity and encouraging inclusion" **The Stage**

Sample Groups Booking Letter to accompany leaflet or brochure



[Venue Name]
[date]
[time]
[ticket prices]

Suitable for ages 13+
Performance lasts 60 mins + text/chatback

Dear Teacher,

We are pleased to announce that Half Moon Young People's Theatre will be visiting [venue name] on [date] with their compelling new play *Look to the Sky* for an extremely limited run, so book your tickets now!

In an abandoned warehouse, a search along dark corridors and winding stairs, will lead to a discovery, which will change lives...

A group of young people are forced to confront the very thing that scares them most. Themselves. The mysterious and complicated culture of inner-city youth is exploded in this gripping new play, which breathes with a raw poetic language and a contemporary soundtrack.

Following Half Moon's previous hits – *Locked In* and *Begin/End*, *Look To The Sky* is a vibrant piece of new writing, which has already been shortlisted for an award. The play explores different narrative styles and is brought to life by four brilliant performers.

All audience members get a free CD programme featuring music from the production and there will be an opportunity to talk to the cast after the performance in a text/chatback session.

Please book as soon as possible by calling [enter box office contact]

Half Moon support this production with free teachers resources which can be downloaded from www.halfmoon.org.uk. Please contact [Donna Bamford for more information on 020 7709 8908, donna@halfmoon.org.uk or alternatively your venue contact]

We hope to see you at [enter venue] soon.

Best Wishes

[Enter name]

Biographies

Kandace Caine – Doubt



Kandace trained at The Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts. Theatre credits include: *Here Today Gone Tomorrow* (Arcola), *The Ammunitionist* (Old Vic), *Upper Street* (Kings Head Theatre), *Not Quite Gospel* (Rich Mix) and *The Wrong Path* (Rosemary Branch Theatre). Her film credits include, most recently *The Human Centipede 2* by director Tom Stix, as well as *An American Nobody in London* (Perception Pictures), *Boys and Girls* for Channel 4 and the radio drama *One On One* for BBC Radio 4.

Ashley J - Obs



Ashley J first performed with Half Moon on the national tour of *Locked In* in 2008. Theatre credits include *The Blacks*, *Da Boyz* and *Junior Blaggers* (Theatre Royal Stratford East) *Twelfth Night* (Nottingham Playhouse), *Sugar Snap* (Soho Theatre) and *Fathers and Sons* (The Albany). His television credits include Lenny Henry's *Funny Black Singles* and *Eastenders*. In addition to acting, Ashley J is also a successful dancer/choreographer, and is a four-times solo Street-Dance International champion, as well as a finalist in the UK dance Competition *Bump and Grind* for Trouble TV.

Frank C Keogh- Braun



Frank trained at Birmingham School of Acting. His most recent theatre credits include *Vincent River* at the Old Red Lion Theatre, which has been nominated for the London Best Play Award 2011. Frank has also performed in *Antigone* (Crescent Theatre) *Playboy of the Western World* (Old Joint Stock Theatre, Birmingham) and *Woyzeck* (Crescent Studio). Frank's television and film credits include *Casualty*, *It's Cold Outside* (B3 Media), *Crimson* (EM Media) and *For Love and Coffee* - supported by the UK Film Council.

Joe Jacobs - Inno



Joe Jacobs began his professional career 10 years ago as Jimmy in the ITV1 series *Night and Day*. Since then, he has appeared in a number of other TV shows including *Holby City*, *The Bill*, *Doctors*, *Commander* and *Dr Who*, as well as taking on the role of PC William Jackson in *Holby Blue*. Theatre credits include: *Collision* (Birmingham Stage Company), *All About It* (Big Fish Theatre) and *Palm Wine and Stout* (Eastern Angles). Joe has also worked in radio as an ensemble member in the Radio 4 comedy *Rudy's Rare Records* and he is soon to make his feature film debut in George Lucas's *Red Tails*.

Courtia Newland – Writer

Courtia Newland's first novel, *The Scholar*, was published in 1997. Further critically acclaimed work includes *Society Within* (1999) and *Snakeskin* (2002). He is co-editor of *IC3: The Penguin Book of New Black Writing in Britain* (2000) and has short stories featured in many anthologies. His recent books include a novella, *The Dying Wish* (2006) and a collection of macabre short stories, *Music for the Off-Key* (2006).

His career has encompassed both screen and playwriting. Plays include *B is for Black*, and an adaptation of Euripedes *Women of Troy*. He was shortlisted for the CWA Dagger in the Library Award 2007, the Alfred Fagon Award 2010, and longlisted for the Frank O' Conner Award 2011. His latest anthology, which he co-edited with Monique Roffey, is *Tell Tales 4: The Global Village* (2009). *A Book of Blues*, a new collection of short stories, was published in March 2011.

Angela Michaels – Director

Angela is Half Moon's Associate Director and is a director, facilitator and educator. For Half Moon she has directed *Plum and Pickle*, *Begin/End*, *Locked In* and *We Are Shadows*. Angela is also the co-founder of Tell Tarra, a company dedicated to producing new work by BME writers. She has directed extensively for Tell Tarra, most recently *King of the Castle* (Albany, Rich Mix and Hackney Empire) and is looking forward to directing their new musical *The Next Big Thing* in 2012. Other directing credits include Paul Morris's play *Identity* (winner of the Adopt a Playwright Award), *It Snows* (Unicorn Theatre for National Theatre Shell Connections), *I Love You, Let's Foot It* (co-director for Theatre Centre), *Truth FM* (Soho Theatre), *What Does it Take?* (The Albany) and *Urban Tales* and *Harmony in Harlem* (for Second Wave at The George Wood Theatre).

James Grant – Composer

James studied Recording Arts at SAE Institute gaining a BA Hons. Previous theatrical compositions include: *Chatroom* by Enda Walsh and *Forever* by Mary Cooper (Queens Theatre), *Pirates* by Charles Way (Polka Theatre), *What Ever Next* by Jill Murphy adapted by Juliet Forster (York Theatre Royal), *King Of The Castle* by JB Rose (Tell Tarra), and most recently *Plum And Pickle* (Half Moon). Alongside his theatrical composition James is also part of the award-winning production duo Ill Blu, well known in the UK funky house scene and for their remixes for major labels. Their remix credits include Cheryl Cole, Roll Deep, Hot Chip, Craig David and Sabrina Washington.

Naomi Dawson – Designer

Naomi trained at Wimbledon School of Art and Kunstacademie, Maastricht. Her theatre design work includes: *Belongings* (Hampstead/Trafalgar Studios), *In Praise of Love* (Theatre Royal, Northampton), *Landscape and Monologue* (Ustinov, Bath) *The Typist* (Sky Arts/Riverside Studios), *The Gods Weep* (RSC/Hampstead), *The Glass Menagerie* (Shared Experience/Salisbury Playhouse), *Rutherford and Son* (Northern Stage); *Three More Sleepless Nights* (Lyttelton, National Theatre), *If That's All There Is* (Lyric Hammersmith), *State of Emergency*, *Mariana Pineda* (The Gate), *Stallerhof*, *Richard III*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Summer Begins* (Southwark Playhouse), *Phaedra's Love* (Young Vic/Barbican Pit), *The Container*, *The Pope's Wedding*, *Forest of Thorns* (Young Vic), *Attempts on Her Life*, *Widows*, *Touched* (BAC), *In Blood*, *Venezuela*, *Mud*, *Trash*, *Headstone* (Arcola). Her Film credits include: costume design for short film *Love After a Fashion* and set design for *Fragile* by Idris Khan.

Tour Schedule

As well as the venues listed below, the show is touring to schools and community venues. For more information please contact Half Moon on 020 7709 8900.

Half Moon, London

Wed 5 Oct 1.30pm & 4.30pm
Thu 6 Oct 1.30pm & 4.30pm
Fri 7 Oct 10.30am & 1.30pm
Mon 10 Oct 4.30pm & 7pm
Wed 9 Nov 1.30pm & 4.30pm

The Hawth Studio, Crawley

Tue 11 Oct 7.45pm

The Albany, London

Wed 12 Oct 1.30pm & 7.30pm

the egg, Theatre Royal Bath

Fri 14 Oct 1pm & 7pm

Tara Studio, London

Sat 15 Oct 7.30pm

Harrow Arts Centre

Wed 19 Oct 7.30pm

The Garage, Norwich

Thu 20 Oct 7.30pm

Stamford Arts Centre

Fri 21 Oct 7.30pm

Rich Mix, London

Sat 22 Oct 7.30pm

Riverhead Theatre, Louth

Wed 2 Nov 7.30pm

The Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock

Thu 3 Nov 7.30pm

The Drum Arts Centre, Birmingham

Fri 4 Nov 2pm & 7.30pm, Sat 5 Nov 2pm

Theatr Hafren, Newtown, Powys

Mon 7 Nov 1pm

Half Moon, London

Wed 9 Nov 1.30pm & 4.30pm

the Broadway, Barking

Thu 10 Nov 7pm

About Half Moon

"London's unique theatre for young people" (Time Out)

Half Moon is a local organisation with a national remit. We give young people aged 0 to 18 an opportunity to experience the best in young people's theatre, both as a participant and as an audience member. We place an emphasis on engaging participants who often feel excluded from arts activity.

Half Moon specialises in new writing and artform development. Our expertise is in supporting artists and young people at every stage of their creative development; providing a gateway to engagement, offering pathways for progression and experimentation.

Half Moon is a regularly funded client of Arts Council England and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.