**PRESS RELEASE 29 September 2022**

**Arts Council England grant supports a ‘Platform’ for**

**new emerging artists at Bloomsbury Festival 2022**

The Bloomsbury Festival 2022 (14-23 October 2022) has been awarded a grant of £23,360 by Arts Council England (ACE) to support ‘Platform’ - a new strand of events presenting creative work from emerging artists, musicians and writers of colour.

‘Platform’ will feature a series of high impact, thought provoking and unique events by some of today’s most ground-breaking artistic talent.

Co-curated by local Bloomsbury communities and supported by local young people, ‘Platform’ events will respond to global cultures, environmental concerns and our collective wellbeing under this years’ festival theme – *Breathe*. The events build on Bloomsbury Festival’s strong relationships with diverse local populations, particularly from south and east Asia, and Writers of Colour of global origin.

The funding will also enable new digital and broadcast programmes to share the creative work more widely. Key festival strands featuring new theatre makers, artists and musicians supported by ACE include\*:

* **A Writers of Colour Hub** – a weekend of performance, plays, music, workshops, and a book launch by emerging Writers of Colour
* **‘NEW WAVE’** **Theatre Shows by emerging writers** – featuring 5 productions supported by Bloomsbury Festival’s successful 2021/22 theatre writing and dramaturgy bursary scheme
* **Live Poetry Performances** – featuring acclaimed poets and new talent
* **New radio plays, broadcasting and podcasts** – the 2022 festival features the recording and broadcast of two new radio plays and offers opportunities to new radio writers for 2023
* **Discovery Hub *Breathe*** – a web stream for schools live from the festival’s three-day science and arts exhibition hub
* **Web streams and online coverage of ‘New Wave’ concerts and theatre events**

The Bloomsbury Festival celebrates contemporary Bloomsbury, a hotbed of creativity and pioneering development with one of the youngest and most diverse populations in the country. For hundreds of years Bloomsbury has been a catalyst of ideas that have impacted the world, and today is home to hundreds of scientists, emerging artists and progressive thinkers in a cultural quarter that comes alive each October.

The full programme for Bloomsbury Festival 2022: *Breathe* features over 100 shows, exhibitions, events, concerts, walks and talks curated to encourage audiences to think about the air, our environment, freedom of expression while being inspired through culture, art, communities, heritage and science. [www.bloomsburyfestival.org.uk](http://www.bloomsburyfestival.org.uk)

**Rosemary Richards, Festival Director, said:** “The festival occupies a unique space culturally and geographically and this grant enables us to offer new opportunities to contemporary talent in the area. We are very excited to present a new and exciting body of work and to formalise the development of emerging talent within the festival.”

**Tamera Heron, Writer and Festival Programmer, said:** “Bloomsbury Festival is an engaging and creative way to unite the various ages, experiences, heritages and practices existing within the community. Thanks to Arts Council England funding we are able to offer some truly captivating events at this year's festival from innovative, creative organisations such as award-winning, Black-owned indie magazine Onyx, Immersive Change Agency Words of Colour and spoken word trailblazers Apples and Snakes. Join them and many others on our final weekend, 21-23 October.”

**Ends**

**For more information and festival team / artist interview requests**

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**Notes to editor**

**Bloomsbury Festival:** For hundreds of years Bloomsbury has been a catalyst for ideas that have impacted across the world. The Festival celebrates contemporary Bloomsbury; a hotbed of creativity and pioneering development with one of the youngest and most diverse populations in the country. Each October for 10 days, the streets, parks, museums, laboratories and public and private buildings of this vibrant historic area host up to 130 events which attract audiences from across London and beyond

**‘Platform’: ‘**Platform’ represents an Arts Council England funded strand of high impact events produced by writers of colour, emerging artists and innovative theatre makers as part of Bloomsbury Festival 2022. Events will be co-curated by festival partners and Bloomsbury communities supported by local young people. The programme – featuring festival, digital and broadcast content – reflects their diverse cultural heritage while being inspired by global challenges to our environment and wellbeing.

**\*For ACE supported events at Bloomsbury Festival 2022 see APPENDIX I**

**\*APPENDIX I**

For full details see <https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/2022-festival-events/>:

**WRITERS OF COLOUR HUB – Conway Hall, 21 and 22 October**

[**Beyond the Rebel Nazrul Islam**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/beyond-the-rebel-nazrul-islam/) **- Tamarind Theatre Co**

A 50-minute show for families and young people featuring music, storytelling and song exploring the life of Nazrul Islam (Kazi Nuzrul Islam). Born 24th May 1899 in Asansol, India, Nazrul Islam was a prolific writer, poet and musician (often referred to as The Rebel) whose collection of 4,000 songs, poetries and writings form what is considered the embodiment of Bengali culture and a historical pathway bringing Bengali literature to the modern era. *21 October, 11am, Conway Hall*

[**Daytimers Mehfil**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/an-evening-of-south-asian-poetry/)**: A evening of South Asian poetry**

An evening celebrating all that is new in South Asian poetry and spoken word. Daytimers, the collective at the heart of the re-emerging Asian Underground, host a line up featuring performances from the likes of Azan Ahmed, Jay Mitra & Rupinder Kaur Waraich with a live musical interlude from Carnatic brother flute duo 2 Flutes. Followed by a DJ set from Balamii & Voices Radio resident Sway of The Verses. *21 October, 7pm, Conway Hall*

[**Introducing Unbound Firsts**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/introducing-unbound-firsts/)**: In Conversation**

A book launch, inaugural reading and panel discussion from crowdfunding publisher Unbound Firsts (launching two debut books by talented writers of colour every year) led by authors David Gould and Solange Burell. *22 October, 2pm, Conway Hall*

[**Resisting Through Rest**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/resisting-through-rest/)**: Black Indies and The Pandemic**

A panel discussion led by two independent Black publications - [*Onyx Magazine*](https://www.onyxmagazine.co.uk/about), a Black award-winning indie magazine and *sweet-thang* zine – exploring Black creative organisations’ survival after the 2020 BLM Protests and the impact of burnout and the pandemic. Both Onyx and *sweet-thang* survived while printing companies sank, paper prices rose and bookstores closed. Discussion includes incorporating rest into organisational structures and the concept of a Fallow Year. *22 October, 5pm, Conway Hall.*

[**Death of an Orange**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/death-of-an-orange/)

A new bi-lingual play based on Ekjon Komolalebu (To be an Orange), by award winning Bengali author Shahaduz Zaman, directed by Mukul Ahmed (Mukel and Ghetto Tigers). Death of an Orange tells the story of the life and work of the revered modern Bengali poet, Jibanananda Das who is little known to the outside world, illuminating the global need for compassion through art. *22 October, 6pm, Conway Hall.*

**Workshops**

The Writers of Colour Hub at Conway Hall also includes:

* [**Activate Your Creativity**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/activate-your-creativity/) - a wellbeing workshop exploring the relationship to creativity & self-expression through breath-work, visualisation, meditation, free writing , reading and guided discussion. Led by Joy Francis, executive director of immersive change agency Words of Colour and creative wellbeing practitioner and writing coach Patsy Isles. *22 October, 10.30am, Conway Hall*
* [**From Thoughts to Paper**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/from-thoughts-to-paper/) - a writing workshop, led by Ola Awonubi, in which burgeoning new writers can benefit from experienced professionals. *22 October, 1pm, Conway Hall*

**‘NEW WAVE’ THEATRE BY EMERGING THEATRE WRITERS**

# [**The Hippie Shakes**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/new-wave-the-hippie-shakes/) **– Frankie Regalia & Sweaty Palms Productions**

Based on a true story, this exciting new piece of gig theatre tells a distinctly female tale of motherhood, survival and intergenerational abuse. Set in the turbulent 60s and 70s this one-woman show combines intimate storytelling, dark humour and live music to follow Chickie on her incredible journey from frustrated housewife to hippie chick. *13-16 October, 9pm, Dr Williams Library* *and broadcast online*

# [**Choking Game**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/new-wave-choking-game/) **– Yifan Wu**

Set in an East Asian imaginary world this new play questions the western-centric presentation of climate change, performative tokenism in marine wildlife conservation, and the impact of capitalism on indigenous live and local ecology. *13-16 October, 6.30pm and 8pm, Dr Williams’s Library and broadcast online*

# [**Umbrella**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/umbrella-katherine-edwards/) **– Katherine Edwards**

‘Umbrella’ sees the world through the eyes of Gran who is experiencing dementia. ‘We mourn them before they die’ and ‘what if dementia could talk’ are themes explores by Katharine Edwards, whose play - selected for development as part of the Bloomsbury Festival 2021 New Wave theatre writing programme – was inspired by her own lived experience of her grandmothers’ illness. *21 October, 2.30pm live preview, Dr Williams’s Library & and 7pm radio play broadcast, Bloomsbury Radio*

[**4.48 Digestion**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/448-digestion/) **– Tommaso Giacomin**

This highly physical piece of theatre presents a multi-layered journey into the biological and emotional life of five female perfomers who serve as mirrors for each other, used to face the pure essence of themselves in relation to the world they inhabit. Created by Tommaso Giacomin and starring Anita Pomario, Araminta Wraith, Claudia Gambino, Grace Church and Miriam Elwell-Sutton. *14 October, 8pm, RADA Studio Theatre & 19-20 October, Dr Williams’s Library*

[**Past Life**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/past-life-by-alice-corrigan/) **- Alice Corrigan & Extant**

A gendre-bending, multi-sensory and creatively accessible exploration into the normalisation of sexual assault in relationships. Past Life follows Kiera (and Betty the Brain) as they navigate through their new life, full of art classes, boxing rings, tears, fights and coming to terms with trauma. This ground-breaking performance uses creative captioning, audio descriptive language and soundscapes to evoke a new and dynamic way of making theatre. *16 October, 7pm, RADA Studios*

# [**Branded**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/branded-bomb-factory-theatre-company/) **– India Harrison Peppe & Bomb Factory Company**

A one woman show about intervention, cancel-culture and what it means to market yourself as a feminist exploring what it means to have ‘principled sex’, and what lengths we go to project an ideal image of ourselves. *19-22 October, 7pm, Dr Williams’s Library*

[**Flight Patterns**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/flight-patterns/) **– Company Gabrielle Moleta & Facing North Theatre**

A promenade open air choral performance sees a goose, a raven, a crane and a heron discuss Eliot, Woolf and Mansfield as they alight in a Bloomsbury garden and touching down at Senate House. *21-22 October, 1pm and 4pm, Malet Street Gardens*

[**Paradoxical Gasp**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/paradoxical-gasp/) **– Hidden Keilion**

In the air we couldn’t breathe, we found each other.. An experimental event devised by a collective of six multidisciplinary Hong Kong artists and curators, which addresses socio-political urgency and initiates intercultural conversation dealing with the traumatic legacy of tear gas exposure in social movements around the world. *17-20 November, The Crypt Gallery*

Research for this project was supported by the Wellcome Collection, also hosting panel discussion **The Air We Breathe,** which explores the implications of toxic chemicals in the air from traffic pollution to tear gas. *13 October, 7pm, Wellcome Collection*

**‘NEW WAVE’ MUSIC – LUNCHTIME CONCERTS**

[**Birds in the Forest of Longing**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/eran-sulkin-piano-birds-in-the-forest-of-longing/) **– Eran Sulkin (Piano)**

A piano recital presenting the Romantic music of Robert Schumann next to short pieces inspired by bird song. Featuring The Kriesleriana Op. 16, a piece reflecting the composers unfulfilled love and longing for pianist Clara Weik, and *Waldszenen Op. 82*, in which he finds solace in nature through a vision of a bird flying in the sky. *15 October, 1pm, The Music Room, also online*

[**José Songel**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/jose-songel/) **(Piano)**

Jose performs two iconic piano works: Bach English Suite 2 and Liszt Sonata in B minor.

*16 October, 1pm, The Music Room, also online.*

[**Stories Through Songs**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/immy-churchill/) **– Immy Churchill**

Acoustic singer-songwriter Immy Churchill is joined by Matt Carter for an intimate afternoon of original songs on piano, guitar and vocals inspired by the likes of Joni Mitchell, James Taylor and Nick Drake. Meeting at The Royal Academy of Music they began exploring the acoustic sound world nearly two years ago and have been performing together ever since. *18 October, 1pm, The Music Room, also online*

[**Dancing Chopin**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/dancing-chopin/) **– Zhu Sun (Piano)**

Pianist Zhu Sun performs Chopin’s third sonata in collaboration with contemporary dancers from The Place featuring new choreography by Noé Engelbeen. The project forms part of Zhu’s doctoral research into the relationship between metaphor, dance and music. *19 October, 1pm, Senate House*

[**Lucilla Rose Mariotti**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/lucilla-rose-mariotti/) **(Violin)**

Violinist Lucilla Rose explores the shifting moods and exuberant sunny cheerfulness of two sonatas by Debussy and Beethoven as they contemplate terminal cancer and looming deafness, along with the nocturnal wanderings of the Faust by Wieniawski. *22 October, 1pm, The Music Room, also online*

**LIVE POETRY PERFORMANCES**

[**Apples and Snakes presents Jawdance**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/jawdance-x-bloomsbury-festival/) **x Bloomsbury Festival**

The notorious Jawdance – an institution on the London spoken word scene - comes to Bloomsbury Festival. Featuring some of the biggest names in spoken word alongside up-and-coming poetry and music artists. Hosted by Yomi Sode with DJ Den on the decks. *23 October, 6pm, St Giles Hotel*

Also includes[**Daytimers Mehfil**](https://bloomsburyfestival.org.uk/events/an-evening-of-south-asian-poetry/)**: A evening of South Asian poetry** – see Writers of Colour Hub.