

WISH YOU WEREN'T HERE

A Theatre Centre and
Sheffield Theatres
co-production

By
Katie Redford



**SHEFF!ELD
THEATRES**

**THEATRE
CENTRE**

WELCOME

We are thrilled to be touring our latest production, **Wish You Weren't Here**, written by award-winning writer **Katie Redford**. This is our third co-production with **Sheffield Theatres**, following the critically acclaimed **Birds and Bees** by **Charlie Josephine** and **Human Nurture** by **Ryan Calais Cameron**.

Our commitment to creating work for young people and the adults in their lives remains unwavering. This production will be touring to theatres and schools across the UK, where for some young people this will be the first time they have seen live theatre.

Katie has spent the past year collaborating with hundreds of young people, teachers, and artists from across the UK to develop her play. As a writer, she describes “it has been one of the most collaborative experiences I’ve ever had as a writer and I’m so looking forward to sharing our work.”

Putting the voice of young people at the heart of the work is a key part of what we do at **Theatre Centre**. We’ve been doing this since we were founded in 1953 and we’re currently celebrating our 70th birthday – 70 years of continually evolving, staying fresh and relevant and making sure that theatre is at the centre of young people’s lives.

Thank you for coming to see **Wish You Weren’t Here**, enjoy the show, and we hope you have some great conversation afterwards!

Rob Watt & Emma Rees

**Artistic Director & Executive Director,
Theatre Centre**

✕ @TCLive

📷 @theatrecentre

www.theatrecentre.co.uk

First performed at the Tanya Moiseiwitsch Playhouse, Sheffield on Wednesday 24 January, 2024.

**THEATRE
CENTRE**

CAST

Lorna

Eleanor Henderson

Mila

Olivia Pentelow

Nan

Helena Lymbery

Voice of Courtney

Eleanor May Blackburn

PRODUCTION TEAM

Writer

Katie Redford

Director

Rob Watt

Lighting Designer

Jess Brigham

Sound Designer

Tom Sharkett

Designer

Bethany Wells

Movement Director

Kiren Virdee

Production Manager

Brent Tan

Company Stage Manager

Laura Whittle

Sound Associate

Jim Cooper

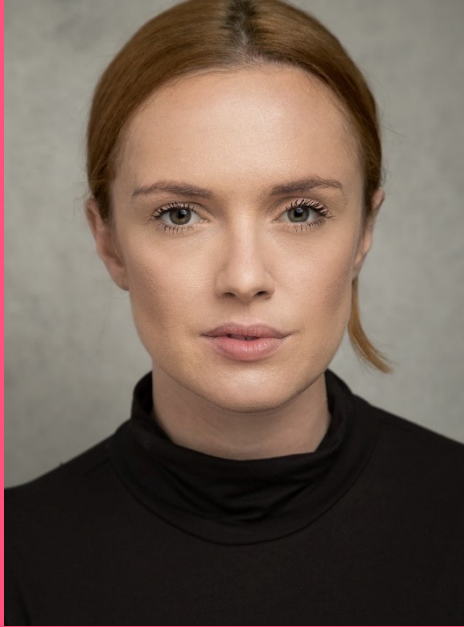
Voice Coach

Anita Gilbert

Video Designer

Rob Watt

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



ELEANOR HENDERSON

Lorna

Eleanor trained at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

Eleanor is Artistic Director of Kestrel Theatre Company, who make original work with people with experience of the criminal justice system.

Theatre credits include: *Henry V* (Shakespeare's Globe and Headlong); *Little Scratch* (Hampstead Theatre and New Diorama); *Blood Wedding* (Salisbury Playhouse), *Gave her the eye* (Soho Theatre); *I Know You Died* (Theatre 503); *Gate* (Cockpit Theatre); *Albee Vector The Sound Collector* (UK tour); *Coriolanus*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (Bard in The Botanics); *The Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It* (Shakespeare's Globe/RCS); *Fagin's Last Night Alive* (West Yorkshire Playhouse); *As You Like It* (RADA Festival); *Pass It On* (Hammersmith Lyric).

Television and film credits include: *Where The Mountains Grow* (Black Apron Entertainment); *All Is Not Lost* (Affixius Films); *Seven Deadly Sins* (Discovery Channel).



OLIVIA PENTELow

Mila

Olivia trained at the Northern School of Creative Industries, where she took on the roles of Susan in *Miracle of Bradford*, and Elisabeth Proctor in *The Crucible*.

Television credits include: *Ridley* (ITV); *The Gallows Pole* (BBC).

Wish You Weren't Here will be Olivia's professional stage debut.

CREATIVE BIOGRAPHIES

KATIE REDFORD

Writer

Katie is an award-winning writer and actress. She's a BAFTA Rocliffe TV Comedy Winner and was on the BBC Comedy Writersroom and Soho Theatre Writers Lab. She is currently listed on the BBC New Talent Hot List.

Her short film *Ghosted* which she co-wrote, produced and performed in, received the BFI Network award in association with Film Hub Midlands and went into commissioned development for TV.

Her debut audio drama *Yellow Lips* aired on BBC Radio 4 in 2021, in which she plays the lead, was nominated for The Imison Award.

Her debut stage play *Tapped* went into production at Theatre503 in 2022 and went on a UK regional tour in 2023. It was published by Nick Hern books and Katie received an Offie nomination for Most Promising New Playwright.

Katie is currently a writer in residence with Theatre Centre and has projects for TV, stage and radio in commissioned development.

As an actress, television credits include: *Alma's Not Normal*, *Still Open All Hours*, *Young Hyacinth* (BBC1); *Outlander* (Amazon); *Mount Pleasant* (Sky).

After winning the BBC Norman Fellowship, she now works regularly in radio drama including shows such as *The Archers*, *Teatime* and *All Those Women*.

ROB WATT

Director

Rob is a critically acclaimed director, dramaturg and facilitator. He is currently the Artistic Director for Theatre Centre, regularly teaches at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama and works with the Institute of the Arts Barcelona.

For Sheffield Theatres, credits include: *Human Nurture; Birds and Bees.*

Other theatre credits include: *C+NTO* (Apples and Snakes); *Birds and Bees (film)* (Theatre Centre / Soho Theatre); *Acts of Resistance* (Headlong Theatre / Bristol Old Vic); *13* (Institute of Arts, Barcelona); *The Exorcism, Rallying Cry* (Battersea Arts Centre); *Dying For It* (ALRA); *How to Survive a Post Truth Apocalypse* (Soho Theatre / Roundhouse / UK Tour); *SEXY* (Roundhouse / Bristol Old Vic / UK Tour); *Love and Information* (Institute of the Arts, Barcelona); *Earthquakes in London* (Institute of the Arts Barcelona); *Party Trap* (Shoreditch Town Hall); *Goosebumps* (The Vaults); *The Joy of Normal* (Orange Tree Theatre); *Standby For Tape Back-Up* (Summer Hall / Soho Theatre / Shoreditch Town Hall / UK tour).

JESS BRIGHAM

Lighting Designer

Jess trained at Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts. She was selected to be a member of the SLX Lighting Programme and The Godber Theatre Foundation during this time.

Recent credits include: *Identities* (UK Tour); *Innit: Musical* (I4YPC, The Quays - The Lowry); *Burning Down The Horse* (Fishing 4 Chips, Pleasance Beneath - Edinburgh Fringe); *Mumsy* (Hull Truck Theatre); *Katzenmusik* (London Youth Theatre / Seven Dials Playhouse); *A Sudden Violent Burst of Rain* (The Gate Theatre); *The True Adventures of Marian and Robin Hood* (Barn Theatre); *End Without Days* (Edinburgh Fringe); *Much Ado About Nothing* (Manchester Hope Mill) and *Patricia Gets Ready (for a date with the man that used to hit her)* (UK Tour). As Associate Lighting Designer: *Greatest Days* (UK Tour). As Assistant Lighting Designer: *Lemons Lemons Lemons* (Harold Pinter Theatre / UK Tour).

TOM SHARKETT

Sound Designer

Tom is a producer, composer and sound designer from Manchester. Having co-founded synth-pop band W. H. Lung, with whom he has released two albums and toured the UK, USA and Europe, he has released his own productions on dance music label Optimo Music as well as remixes for other artists.

Tom began working as a sound designer in theatre in 2022 and has most recently worked with the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, Extant Theatre and Angel Exit.

Tom is also currently working as an audio artist on a project exploring the connections between sound and mental health and wellbeing.

BETHANY WELLS

Designer

Bethany is an award-winning performance designer working across dance, theatre and installation, with particular interest in site-specific and devised performance.

Work in development includes: *Baby, He Loves You* (Middle Child); *Wayfarers* (Claire Cunningham Projects)

Recent credits include: *All That Lives* (Grief Series, Leeds 2023); *The People's Palace of Possibility* (The Bare Project); *You Heard Me* (Cambridge Junction / UK tour); *Choreography of Care Symposium* (Tanzhaus nrw, Düsseldorf); *Written In The Body* (Brighton Festival); *This Endless Sea* (Chlöe Smith); *Extreme Unction Vol. 2* (Nwando Ebizie); *War Of The Worlds* (New Diorama Theatre / Pleasance Forth / UK Tour); *Thank You Very Much* (Manchester International Festival / National Theatre of Scotland / European Tour).

KIREN VIRDEE

Movement Director

Kiren is a Movement Director, Choreographer, and Performing Artist. Kiren trained in Movement Direction and Teaching with The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (CSSD).

Prior to this, she trained at Trinity Laban conservatoire of Music and Dance, gaining the Audrey Wethered Award and Choreography Prize. Kiren also studied English Literature, BA, at the University of Bristol. She has worked as Movement Director, Choreographer, Artist, and Facilitator in various professional, educational, and community settings. This has included work with organisations such as The Place, Siobhan Davies, CSSD, Zoo Co. Youth Co., Fourth Monkey and the London School of Dramatic Art.

Movement Direction credits include: As Movement Director and Choreographer: *Seize the Cheese* (New Wimbledon Theatre). As Movement Director, *Kolaja* (Feature Film). As Movement Director and Intimacy: *Grey Area, Vaults* (Kings Head Theatre). As Movement Associate: *2 Billion Beats* (Orange Tree Theatre).

BRENT TAN

Production Manager

Brent trained at LAMDA, majoring in production management. Brent is from Singapore and has an interest in immersive theatre and touring.

Theatre credits include: *50 Days* (BYMT); *Prague Quadrennial* (Secretive Thing); *Home X* (Kakilang Arts); *Richard the Second* (Tangle Theatre); *Bunker of Zion* (UK tour); *Wilderness, Against, The Welkin, King Charles III, Miss Julie, Queens of Sheba, Desert Boy* (LAMDA); *WeRNotVirus2* (Moongate Theatre); *Amaterasu: Out of the Cave* (Papergang Theatre); *Fat Kids Are Harder To Kidnap, StoryFest, Ghost Train* (Singapore).

LAURA WHITTLE

Company Stage Manager

Laura is a freelance Stage Manager, specialising in small/mid-scale theatre and events.

Theatre credits include: *The Light Princess* (The Albany); *Haringey Feast* (Alexandra Palace); Edinburgh Fringe (Pleasance / Underbelly); *Pride In London*, VAULT Festival, *La Clique* (Underbelly, London); *Tapped* (Theatre 503); Platinum Jubilee Pageant, *Bangers* (Soho Theatre); and *Headcase* (Pleasance).

JIM COOPER

Sound Associate

Jim is a Sheffield-based sound designer, producer and musician. He has worked primarily in live sound engineering for many years but has recently found an unexpected but strong connection with theatre and installation, including with the Bare Project and Ellie Harrison's Grief Series.

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Production Manager	Brent Tan
Company Stage Manager	Laura Whittle
Producers for Theatre Centre	Rowan Prescott, Emma Rees
Casting Consultant	Becky Paris
Schools Tour Booking and Co-ordination for Theatre Centre	Becky Ide
Marketing for Theatre Centre	Rachel Bellman
Marketing Consultants for Theatre Centre	Jane Morgan Associates
Public Relations	Chloe Nelkin Consulting, Jo Allan PR
Artwork	Guy J Sanders
Captioner	Cara Lawless
Audio Describer	Jill Mason
BSL Interpreter	Rebekah Mills

THANKS

Theatre Centre would like to thank the following people:

Lewisham and Sheffield Future Makers, Lewisham Youth Theatre, National Youth Theatre, Addy and Stanhope School, Newfield School, Parkside Community School and young people from across the UK who helped develop Wish You Weren't Here.

Tom Bird and Rob Hastie of Sheffield Theatres.

Backstage Trust for their support of our Sheffield Future Makers Hub and the Garrick Trust for their support of our Resident Writers, both of which were crucial in the development of Wish You Weren't Here.

The Cockayne Foundation for their generous support which has enabled the run at Soho Theatre.

Our Chair Rebecca Major and Trustees Aleksa Asme, Titilola Dawudu, Frazer Flintham and David Luff.

ABOUT THEATRE CENTRE

Founded in 1953 by Brian Way and Margaret Faulks, **Theatre Centre** have been a vital catalyst for youth leadership and creativity for 70 years.

In this time, we've commissioned 108 writers and produced 237 plays. We have played to audiences of over 1 million in schools and theatres and we have worked with over 250,000 young people through a vast range of projects. Some of those young people are now working in the arts, running companies of their own, or in education teaching drama to the next generations.

We commission new writing from trailblazing writers, touring directly into schools and theatres UK-wide, as well as running our year-round **Future Makers** activities to bring young people, artists, and teachers together as creative collaborators. Future Makers makes space for young people to have agency as they nurture their talent and interests on their terms.

We see access, equality, and representation as foundations of a fair society and work to dismantle exclusion and systemic injustice. We prioritise areas that are systemically underserved and excluded, removing economic and social barriers, and working where young people can benefit most. We celebrate the true creative diversity only the widest access can bring.

Wish You Weren't Here is our third co-production with Sheffield Theatres following **Human Nurture** by Ryan Calais Cameron in 2022 and **Birds and Birds** by Charlie Josephine in 2023.

www.theatre-centre.co.uk

THEATRE CENTRE TEAM

Marketing Manager

Rachel Bellman

Finance Manager

David Lewis

Programme and Admin
Coordinator

Becky Ide

Community Partnership
Producer

Moni Onojeruo

Future Makers Producer

Ben Di Meo

Executive Director and CEO

Emma Rees

Artistic Director

Rob Watt

COULD YOU SUPPORT US?

We're really excited to be part of **The Big Give Arts for Impact** week 19th – 26th March 2024. During this week, The Big Give will match fund any donations we receive up to £2,500. All donations will go towards Theatre Centre's year-round programme of creative activities for young people.

We need the support of passionate and committed individuals who understand that their donations are a practical vote of confidence and belief in young people. If this is you, then all you need to do is:

- Scan the QR code to go through to our Pledge page.
- Give us your name, email address and the amount you would like to pledge.
- We'll send you a reminder a week before, and the link to donate on 19th March.



Your donation will help us to put more high-quality, relevant theatre and creativity directly into the lives of young people.

“...such an unforgettable experience that has truly changed my life. Every session I would be so excited to expand my mind and learn.” **Young Future Maker**

“For many students this will be their only opportunity to experience live theatre. It is critically important that they do. Thanks to everyone involved another excellent visit from Theatre Centre.” **Drama Teacher**