

New one-man show is a funny and moving tale about family, sexuality and the internet

Touring the North East of England from

Wednesday 30 November to Thursday 8 December 2022

Wednesday 8 to Saturday 18 February 2023 as part of LGBT+ History Month

The Devil Danced in Our Eyes

A funny and moving tale about family, sexuality and the internet told with original live music

Co-written by Jonluke McKie & Allison Davies

Performed by Jonluke McKie

Directed by Amy Golding

Live animation by Simon Cole

This Winter audiences across the North East of England are being invited to see *The Devil Danced in Our Eyes* a funny and moving tale about family, sexuality and the internet co-written and performed by Jonluke McKie.

Featuring original live music audiences will be able to meet 15-year-old Jamie whose mum stopped coming out of her room when his Granda Frankie died. Left to his own devices Jamie's been spending more and more time online - scrolling through the digital realm of pixels, kilobytes and the occasional adult chat room. But when he meets 'Windsor_56' everything changes.

The show, which has been co-written with Allison Davies and directed by Amy Golding, will open at Alnwick Playhouse on Wednesday 30 November and Thursday 1 December before touring to The Exchange in North Shields on Friday 2 December, Queen's Hall Arts, Hexham on Saturday 3 December, Central Bar in Gateshead on Wednesday 7 of December and Gosforth Civic Theatre on Thursday 8 December. In February 2023 as part of LGBT+ History Month, the production will return to the stage heading to Gala, Durham on Saturday 11 February, Blyth Library on Wednesday 15 February and Cramlington Library on Thursday 16 February before ending at Newcastle's Live Theatre on Friday 17 and Saturday 18 February.

Equipped with his guitar and loop pedal *The Devil Danced in Our Eyes* features the soulful vocals of Jonluke McKie alongside beautiful animations created and projected live each night by Simon Cole. As Jonluke explains:

"I'm a queer artist who grew up in a Benefit class home in Sheffield. The show is semi-autobiographical; I wanted to tell the story of a young person like me, growing up on the margins of society, exploring his sexuality on the internet, which is both liberating and ultimately unsafe. The

end result is half gig, half play, and I'm delighted to be bringing it to theatre, music and community venues all over the region."

Recent research shows that 50% of LGBTQAI+ people have experienced depression and three in five have experienced anxiety (Stonewall) and that children and adults living in households in the lowest 20% income bracket in Great Britain are two to three times more likely to develop mental health problems than those in the highest (instituteofhealthequity.org). Arts Council England's Let's Create strategy acknowledges that taking part in cultural activity can 'support mental health and wellbeing'. *The Devil Danced in Our Eyes* has been created with these factors in mind. To coincide with the production the team have been working with a group of 15 sixteen to twenty-five-year-olds giving them the opportunity to take part in high-quality creative workshops including animation, songwriting, theatre-making and performance which are all key elements of the show. This activity has been supported by Live Theatre.

Jonluke added:

"The show is based on my experiences growing up in the early noughties but is set today, so we wanted to involve young people in the making process, to help us explore what it means to be a young queer person today. More than this, we wanted to offer an opportunity for young people, many of them LGBTQIA+ and/or working class to create a supportive network of peers; to enable and empower them to explore and express their identity."

Tickets for *The Devil Danced in Our Eyes* at theatres and music venues are £14 to £7 and £3 at libraries. The performance is suitable for people aged 16+ and includes descriptions of depression in a family, sexual content and sexual and homophobic violence towards a minor. To find out more visit www.jonlukemckie.com/devildanced.

The Devil Danced in Our Eyes has been made possible with funding from the National Lottery through Arts Council England and with kind support from Live Theatre, Curious Arts, CaroleW Productions, Gosforth Civic Theatre and Alphabetti Theatre.

Notes to Editors:

To book review tickets for this show please contact Claire Cockroft at claire@alsocreative.co.uk

Listings:

The Devil Danced in Our Eyes

A funny and moving tale about family, sexuality and the internet told with original live music

Co-written by Jonluke McKie & Allison Davies

Performed by Jonluke McKie

Directed by Amy Golding

Live animation by Simon Cole

"This wee'un reminds me of you at his age, Sharron; he's got the Devil dancing in his eyes!"

Jamie was 15 when his Granda Frankie died, and his mum stopped coming out of her room. Left to his own devices he's been spending more and more time online - scrolling through the digital realm of pixels, kilobytes and the occasional adult chatroom. But when he meets 'Windsor_56' everything changes.

Combining theatre, original live music and animation *The Devil Danced in Our Eyes* is a funny and moving one-person show that explores sexuality and the effects of mental illness on a family.

"*This is a multi-layered show that will sing, speak and loop itself into your consciousness.*"
Audience Feedback

Tour Venues & Dates

November/December 2022

- Wednesday 30 November, 7.45pm - Alnwick Playhouse
- Thursday 1 December, 2.30 & 7.45pm - Alnwick Playhouse
- Friday 2 December, 8pm - The Exchange in North Shields
- Saturday 3 December, 7.30pm - Queen's Hall Arts, Hexham
- Weds 7 December, 8pm - Central Bar Gateshead
- Thursday 8 December, 7.30pm - Gosforth Civic Theatre

February 2023 - LBGT+ History Month

- Wednesday 8 February, 7.30pm - Middlesbrough Town Hall
- Saturday 11 February, 8pm - Gala, Durham
- Wednesday 15 February, 6.30pm - Blyth Library
- Thursday 16 February, 6.30pm - Cramlington Library
- Friday 17 February, 7.30pm - Live Theatre, Newcastle
- Saturday 18 February, 7.30pm - Live Theatre, Newcastle

The Creative Team:

Co-writer & Performer - Jonluke Mckie

Jonluke McKie is a director and theatre maker based in the North East of England, and a recent graduate of the National Theatre's Step Change Programme. Directing credits include *A Way Home* by Christina Castling, *Fat Chance*, by Rachel Stockdale, *10 Things to do in a Small Cumbrian Town*, *Hannah Sowerby*, *Into Thin Air* co-created with Alison Davies and *Precious Cargo* Theatre, *The Last Drop* and *When She Went* by Beth Coverdale and *One Small Case* by Paddy Campbell for Holocaust Memorial Day with Curious Monkey Theatre.

As a theatre maker, Jonluke recently performed his first solo show *The Devil Danced in Our Eyes* co-written by Jonluke and Allison Davies. Jonluke also works as a freelance drama facilitator, specialising in work with children and young people, collaborating with various organisations including Northumbria University, Live Theatre, Seven Stories, The National Centre for Children's Books, St Oswald's Children's Hospice and Northern Stage.

Co-writer - Allison Davies

Allison Davies is a writer for film and theatre, with an interest in multi-cultural stories and in exploring connections between us. Her first play, *Weather to Fly* was produced in 2013. Since then, her work has toured to theatres including Camden People's Theatre, CAST, ARC Stockton, Live Theatre, Northern Stage, Waterford Arts Centre Manchester, Queen Ann's Hall Hexham and Prague Fringe. In 2017 Allison worked with Director Andy Berriman and *Candle and Bell* to make a

trailer for Swimming Lessons as part of Channel 4's Shorted. She is an alumni of North, Northern Stage, 2021 BAFTA Crew, has been awarded the BFI Early Development Award and BBC Northern Voices. Current projects include Tiny Fragments of Beautiful Light (writer) supported by Live Theatre and Mandela Street, supported by BFI. She co-wrote the previous version of the show with Jonluke, and will now work with him on any re-writes and edits required, to bring the show up to date.

Director - Amy Golding

Amy Golding is a Newcastle-based theatre director, and artistic director of award-winning theatre company Curious Monkey Theatre (Standard Bank Ovation Award for Innovation and Excellence, National Arts Festival of South Africa, Best Performance Journal Culture Awards). She was also Northern Rock Foundation Fellow (2007/08) on the Clore Leadership Programme. She has a strong passion and commitment to creating thought-provoking theatre that brings to life stories that deserve to be told. She graduated with a BA(Hons) in Drama at Northumbria University where she now works as an associate lecturer in performance and applied theatre. Her directing credits include This World Here... Nomhlaba Le, Leaving (Northern Stage and national tour 2018), Beats North (Winner of Title Pending award), Mamela (Ovation award winner) Bunker Blues and Here (co-commissioned by Northern Stage and Derby Theatre 2022) for Curious Monkey. Live Witness (Live Theatre), Untitled (Nabokov), Geronimo (Company TSU), Rattle and Roll (Open Clasp). She will direct The Devil Danced in Our Eyes, having undertaken this role for the successful Arts Council England funded Research & Development of the project that was completed to preview stage.

Animation, Lighting & AV - Simon Cole

Simon is an animator and AV specialist based in and from the Tees Valley. His practice is collaborative, participatory and narrative driven, using projection mapping with live responsive software and techniques. He has worked with companies such as Live Theatre, Newcastle and OddManOut in Darlington and is an associate artist of Curious Monkey Theatre and a creative associate of Eden Arts. Recent credits include 10 Things To Do in a Small Cumbrian Town (Hannah Sowerby, Alphabetti Theatre 2021), Here (Curious Monkey, Northern Stage 2022). He will create bespoke animation for the show, and also tour with Jonluke to run all the technical elements for performances.

Musical Direction - Roma Yagnik

Roma Yagnik is an award-winning UK based composer working in film (feature and short form), animation, advertising, television and theatre. Her diverse client list includes BBC, Sky/ SATV, EMI, Universal Music, Unicef, PLAN International, Tottenham Hotspur, Tate Britain and the British Library as well as some of the brightest independent film talent around. She will act as Musical Director for the piece, ensuring there is a cohesive musical soundtrack and composing bespoke soundscapes.

Media Contact:

Claire Cockroft
Marketing Director, Also Creative
E: claire@alsocreative.co.uk
T: 07970322783