

BIG AUNTY



24 APR - 6 MAY 2023

MEMO

A darkly comic family drama

DEvised & DIRECTED BY
COREY CAMPBELL



Subscribed using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND



REHEARSALS



BIG AUNTY

REVISED

BIG AUNTY

24 APR - 6 MAY 2023



Big Aunty's dead. Her funeral's back in Jamaica, where she returned some years ago. The children she brought up together long ago, but have lost touch and gone their separate ways, are now forced to come together again, all these years later.

Big Aunty was the matriarch – a Mum to some, a 'second' Mum to others. She took in waifs and strays from reckless parents when they had nowhere else to go, and she gave them a home. But now she's gone and there's a Big Aunty-shaped hole in everyone's world. Now they'll need to confront, not just each other, but their difficult pasts, and uncertain futures.

Can they finally lay their differences to rest along with Big Aunty? This darkly comic family drama is alive with ideas and emotions that connect us all; offering a welcome opportunity to gather and reflect on challenging times, and how we can find a path to resolution.

Devised and directed by the Belgrade's Creative Director, Corey Campbell (*Fighting Irish, SeaView, Freeman*) **Big Aunty** mark's the Belgrade's first home-produced show of the Spring Season.

CAST

Corey Campbell.....**Director & Marcus Taylor**
Alexia McIntosh.....**Naomi Blackwood**
Keiren Hamilton-Amos.....**Shaun Taylor**
Pip Barclay.....**Interviewer & Ensemble**

CREATIVES

Claire Winfield.....**Set & Costume Designer**
Joe Hornsby.....**Lighting Designer**
Adam Warren....**Associate Lighting Designer & Programmer**
Auden Allen.....**Sound Designer & Composition**
Jason Sylvester.....**Sound Programmer & Engineer**
Sarah Githugu.....**Assistant Director**
Joelle Ikwa.....**Community Producer & Choir Leader**
Oliver Howard.....**Video Designer**
Gladstone Wilson.....**Vocal Coach & Choir Composition**
Thomas Vernal.....**Dialect Coach**
Rudi Okasili-Henry.....**Animator**
Anne Baxter.....**Stage Manager**
Nikita Halligan.....**Assistant Stage Manager**
Amie Davies.....**Assistant Stage Manager**
Emma Barber.....**Casting Director**

COMMUNITY CHOIR

Joelle Ikwa Sophie Wood Elaine Barrett Valmy Luwawu
Corah Fowles Tayla Senior Sarah Githugu
Simone Herbert.....**Chaperone**



Corey Campbell is the Creative Director of the Belgrade Theatre, having previously been the Theatre's Co-Artistic Director for 2021.

Corey is also the Artistic Director of *Strictly Arts Theatre Company*, formerly supported by the Belgrade's Springboard talent development programme. Through productions such as **Green Leaves Fall** and the critically acclaimed, Edinburgh sell-out show **Freeman**, Corey has used a collaborative, devising process to bring stories from real people to the stage, building long-lasting relationships with audiences through targeted workshops and outreach programmes, with a particular focus on African and Caribbean communities.

In December 2019, Corey devised and performed in **Club 2B**, an immersive experience which saw the Belgrade's B2 auditorium transformed into a cabaret lounge and featured live music, theatrical performances, and interactive gaming tables.

Corey's flagship production for the Belgrade in his tenure as Co-Artistic Director has been **SeaView**, a new digital television series created, produced, and filmed in the West Midlands using a unique *Writers Room* project which involved local emerging writers from the region. **SeaView** was created using theatrical devising techniques, from an original, pre-pandemic idea by Corey. It celebrates a Black working-class aspirational family and all the things they come up against on their journey to achieve great things. **SeaView** premiered at the Belgrade in 2021.

In 2022 Corey directed the new drama, **Fighting Irish**, which was a sell-out success and marked Corey's final project for the Belgrade as Co-Artistic Director for UK City of Culture 2021, before he moved forward to commence projects as Creative Director.

"Belgrade is my home and it 's an honour to grow with its community. Let's do this!"

BIG AUNTY

24 APR - 6 MAY 2023



ALEXIA MCINTOSH
NAOMI BLACKWOOD

Olivier nominated and WhatsonStage winner, Alexia McIntosh is back representing her West Midland roots after a fantastic four year West End run 'playing and originating the role of 'Cleves' in the worldwide smash hit, **Six The Musical**. Following on from the success of the show, Alexia has just finished filming the movie.

From the sisterhood a girl group was formed and **SVN** sold out *02 Islington* last Summer.

Alexia had the pleasure of playing 'Candy Floss' in *Birmingham Hippodrome's* panto, **Goldilocks and the Three Bears** last year and is very excited to be back at the Belgrade where her career started.

She is a proud mother who feels so blessed to be able to raise her son and still live her dreams.



**KEIREN HAMILTON-AMOS
SHAUN TAYLOR**



Keiren was born and raised in the inner city and studied at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

Since graduating Keiren has been a part of varying National and International tours for many prestigious theatres and he is a long term member of Strictly Arts Theatre Company.

Keiren most recently played GRIMEBOY in **Grimeboy** at the *Birmingham Rep*, Edgar in of **Tom's Midnight Garden** with *Theatre by the Lake* and TV debut in upcoming BBC/Netflix **CHAMPION**.

BIG AUNTY

24 APR - 6 MAY 2023



PIP BARCLAY
INTERVIEWER + ENSEMBLE

Pip is excited to be back at the Belgrade. He was part of the team that devised and performed **Freeman** and **Green Leaves Fall** (*Strictly Arts/Belgrade Theatre*).

Other theatre credits include: **Much Ado About Nothing** (*Tread the Boards*), **Miss Sherlock Holmes** (*Lantern Light Theatre*).

Screen credits include: **The Man Who Knew Infinity** (*Ed Pressman Films*) and **BRICKS!** (*BBC*).

He trained at Birmingham School of Acting.

BIG AUNTY

24 APR - 6 MAY 2023

CLAIRE WINFIELD Set & Costume Designer

Claire Winfield has been at the Belgrade for seven years, first as deputy, and currently as Head of Paintshop for Belgrade Production Services. This is her first design on stage at the Belgrade Theatre.

She has previously worked as the resident designer and painter for *Harrow School*, and a scenic artist for *Hornchurch* and *Nottingham Playhouse*.

JOE HORNSBY Lighting Designer

Joe is a lighting designer of theatre, dance & immersive events.

Recent collaborations include *Polka Theatre*, *Studio Wayne McGregor*, *Theatre Rites*, *20-Stories High*, *Deafinitely Theatre*, *Birmingham Conservatoire*, *James Cousins Company*, *Strictly Arts Theatre Company*, *Marc Brew Company*, *Pell Ensemble* and associate designer on the West End transfer of hit musical **Caroline, Or Change**.

Joe is passionate about creating unique and unexpected designs, artistically crafting light to expose the stories within.

AUDEN ALLEN Sound Designer & Composition

Auden Allen is a creative practitioner with a sole purpose in contributing to the protection, evolution and growth of young people. Auden is a producer contributing his eccentric style to many genres including Grime, Hip Hop and soulful hybrids. He makes music for artists, theatre productions and composition for adverts and movies.

This is a man of many talents including spoken word, lyricism and performance.

As well as being an active artist he teaches his skills in a variety of creative organisations. He has performed and produced work for *BBC 1xtra*, *Echo Eternal*, *The Birmingham Music Conservatoire*, *Symphony Hall*, *Tinker Tailor* and many more. He has been teaching music production and performance at *Aston Manor Academy* working to use creativity to build confidence and creative practice in the young people he works with.

Mr Auden Allen continues to develop and evolve his practice on the journey to being a multifaceted master of creativity.

SARAH GITHUGU

Assistant Director

Sarah Githugu is a writer and emerging theatre director.

Following her directorial debut of **The High Life** (*Barons Court Theatre*) and **Nucleus** (*Universal Scratch, Omnibus Theatre*), she is passionate about challenging societal norms and uplifting marginalised peoples, especially Black women. She has written for *Refinery29, Black Ballad* and *STORY STORY*.

JOELLE IKWA

Community Producer & Choir Leader

Joelle Ikwa is a director and facilitator who is passionate about telling stories from groups that are underrepresented which gives voice to the 'other' to empower and make a difference. With experience working on outreach and community groups, her work aims to highlight important subjects such as knife crime amongst the youth and mental health (*Transcend & Fresh Home*).

Her journey began in Coventry at the Belgrade Theatre over 10 years ago, where she went from a youth company member, workshop facilitator, assistant director to Director. Most recently Joelle completed a three-month placement with *RTYDS* working as a Trainee Director at *Paines Plough*. She assisted on three plays simultaneously for their 2022 Roundabout season which opened in Kingston then went on to tour at, *Edinburgh Fringe Festival*, Burton, Ramsgate, Illfracombe and Manchester.

Acting credits include: **The Tempest** (*Belgrade Theatre*), **Coventry Moves**, (*City of Culture*).

Assistant Director credits include: **This Little Relic**, (*BBC*), **Nothello**, (*Belgrade Theatre*), **The Ultimate Pickle**, **Half- Empty Glasses**, and **A Sudden Violent burst of Rain** (*Paines Plough Roundabout*).

Director Credits include: **Transcend** (*Bramall Music Hall*), **Fresh Home** (*short film*).

BIG AUNTY

24 APR - 6 MAY 2023

OLIVER HOWARD

Video Designer/Senior Technician

Credits include: **Like There's no Tomorrow** (2020), **Jabala and the Jinn** (2021), **Fighting Irish** (2022) (*Belgrade Theatre*).

Various other productions as a Belgrade Technician.

GLADSTONE WILSON

Vocal Coach & Choir Composition

A highly accomplished vocalist and musician in his own right, Gladstone boasts a career glittered with many prominent highlights across many fields of the music industry, having produced musical arrangements for *ITV's X-Factor*, supported well-known artistes such as *Bobby Womack*, *Tracy Chapman* and *Eternal* as a session musician and worked within *Master Mix Studio* where he recorded and edited music for esteemed record labels in the UK and Europe.

As a Musical Director, Gladstone has directed and produced a wide range of high-quality shows for various theatre and musical groups, including the *Young Rep Theatre* and *Youth Rep Choir*. This experience has seen him develop the confidence, vocal technique, stage craft and transferable life skills of many students, enabling them to take part in full productions led by Gladstone himself.

Passing his own first-rate musical education at *Royal Birmingham Conservatoire*, Gladstone stepped seamlessly into the role of tutor, passing on his extensive knowledge through self-led vocal and music classes and piano/keyboard workshops at schools and as Head Lecturer of the Applied Performance Theatre Course at *Royal Birmingham Conservatoire*.

With a gift for all areas of singing and music and a passion for helping others reach a high standard in musicianship and performance, Gladstone is a world class vocal coach who is comfortable teaching students of all ages, from beginner right through to professional working artists.

RUDI OKASILI-HENRY

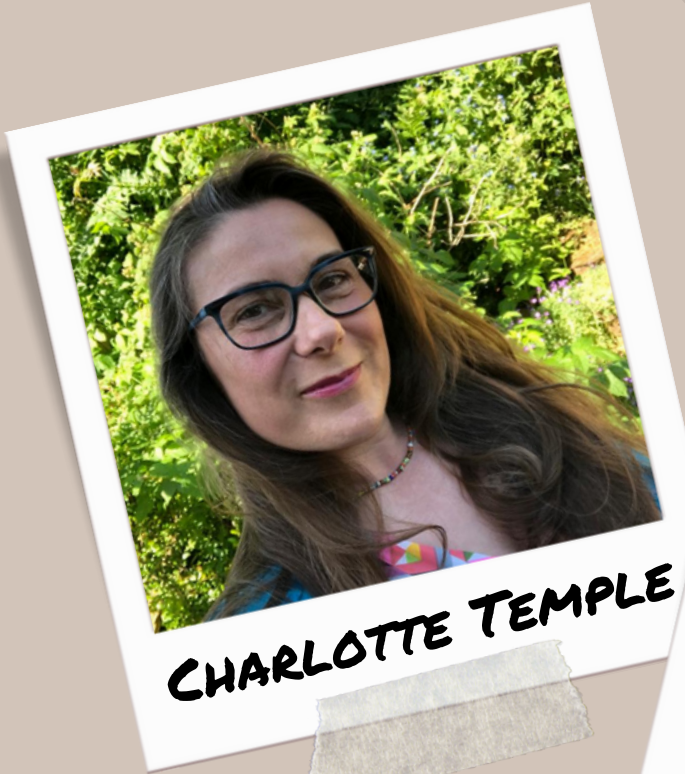
Animator

Rudi Okasili-Henry is an animator, concept artist, and comic artist, whose passion lies in narrative storytelling. His work aims to explore emotional storytelling, with the goal of becoming an artist his younger self would look up to.

Credits include: **Raina Chapter One-Pink Morning** (self-published), Animated intro for **SeaView** (*Belgrade Theatre*)

BIG AUNTY

24 APR - 6 MAY 2023



THE GRIEF CAFÉ

Following each performance, Charlotte Temple and Lisa Sant from the **Compassionate Communities team at University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust** will be hosting a Grief Café in the foyer.

This is a space for anyone wanting to connect with others around experiences of grief and bereavement after the show, or to engage creatively in celebrating of the lives of lost loved ones. Charlotte and Lisa will be supported by a committed team of volunteers.

Charlotte has a background in hospital nursing, and really believes in the enriching power of “memento mori” – thinking about death. Lisa is a qualified bereavement counsellor with a special passion for children’s work, and has a talent for helping people find their way through the tangle of grief.

BIG AUNTY

24 APR - 6 MAY 2023



WITH SPECIAL



THANKS TO...

Our dear friend **Amahra Spence**

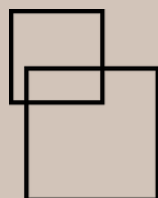
Colin from the Coventry Caribbean Centre

Darren Abel from the Royal & Derngate

Jonathan Ashton from JE Hackett & Sons

Geof Elvyhart

Charlotte, Lisa & the team from Compassionate Communities at
University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Trust



**BELGRADE
THEATRE**
COVENTRY