



THE WAR OF THE WORLDS



BY ISLEY LYNN AND RHUM + CLAY

A NEW STORY ABOUT THE STORIES WE CHOOSE TO BELIEVE.

WHEN A PODCAST PRODUCER SETS OUT TO INVESTIGATE THE
INFAMOUS 1938 RADIO BROADCAST OF THE WAR OF THE
WORLDS THAT SPARKED MASS PANIC, SHE UNCOVERS MORE
THAN JUST THE MYTH.

AS INTERVIEWS UNRAVEL AND PERSONAL HISTORIES BLUR
WITH PUBLIC TRUTHS, THE WAR OF THE WORLDS BECOMES A
GRIPPING JOURNEY THROUGH MEMORY, MANIPULATION,
AND THE NEED TO BE HEARD.

THIS REIMAGINING OF H.G. WELLS' CLASSIC ASKS: WHAT
HAPPENS WHEN THE LINE BETWEEN TRUTH AND FICTION
ISN'T JUST BLURRED—BUT WEAPONISED?



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NOTE FROM JAY ZORENTI-NAKHID, THE BELGRADE'S ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

THE BELGRADE ENSEMBLE BEGAN AS WE SAW A GAP FOR EARLY-CAREER PERFORMERS AROUND COVENTRY TO DEVELOP THEIR CRAFT. WE NOTICED THAT WHILE THERE WAS NO SHORTAGE OF TALENT, THERE WAS A NEED FOR A STRUCTURED, SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT WHERE THESE PERFORMERS COULD TRULY DEVELOP THEIR CRAFT IN A WORKING PRODUCING THEATRE.

IN 2023, WE LAUNCHED THE FIRST COHORT OF THE BELGRADE ENSEMBLE, AN EIGHT-MONTH FREE TRAINING PROGRAMME DESIGNED TO PROVIDE EARLY-CAREER PERFORMANCE ARTISTS WITH THE TOOLS, MENTORSHIP, AND OPPORTUNITIES THEY NEEDED TO GROW. THIS INITIATIVE WAS ROOTED IN OUR COMMITMENT TO CO-CREATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, ALIGNING WITH THE BELGRADE THEATRE'S VISION OF BEING A PLACE WHERE DIVERSITY POWERS STORYTELLING.

AFTER ATTENDING THE FOR WITH BY FESTIVAL IN MADRID, THE INAUGURAL ENSEMBLE CULMINATED IN 'ROOFTOP,' A DEVISED THEATRE PIECE THAT SHOWCASED THE GROWTH AND CREATIVITY OF OUR PARTICIPANTS. BUILDING ON THIS, THE 2024/25 ENSEMBLE EXPANDED TO AN ELEVEN-MONTH PROGRAMME, OFFERING PARTICIPANTS THE CHANCE TO PERFORM IN OUR PRODUCTION OF 'ROMEO AND JULIET' AND TO PERFORM IN THIS PRODUCTION OF THE WAR OF THE WORLDS IN OUR B2 SPACE, FURTHER EMBEDDING THEM IN THE PROFESSIONAL THEATRE-MAKING PROCESS.

OUR BELIEF IS SIMPLE: LOCAL TALENT DESERVES LOCAL INVESTMENT. BY PROVIDING EARLY-CAREER PERFORMERS WITH CONSISTENT SUPPORT, WE AIM TO NURTURE NOT JUST THEIR SKILLS, BUT THEIR CONFIDENCE AND SENSE OF BELONGING WITHIN THE THEATRE COMMUNITY. THE ENSEMBLE IS A SPACE WHERE PERFORMERS CAN FIND THEIR VOICE, CONNECT WITH PEERS, AND ENVISION A FUTURE IN THE ARTS.

SEEING THE ENSEMBLE MEMBERS GROW, TAKE RISKS, AND CONTRIBUTE MEANINGFULLY TO OUR PRODUCTIONS REAFFIRMS OUR COMMITMENT TO THIS INITIATIVE. IT'S A TESTAMENT TO WHAT CAN HAPPEN WHEN WE BELIEVE IN OUR LOCAL TALENT AND PROVIDE THEM WITH THE OPPORTUNITIES THEY NEED TO THRIVE.



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CAST

ALEX SHINNICK	KAITLYN ELWARD
AMY YOUNG	MUHIBB NAZIR
CONNOR MCKERVEY	RHIANNA MORRIS
JAMES HUNTER	THOMAS MORAN

THE BELGRADE ENSEMBLE 2024/25 COHORT ALSO INCLUDES: AMY MAIREAD-NEWHEY,
HEMMA DEVI CHOPRA, MIA MOHAČ, MOLLIE DIBB.

CREATIVE TEAM

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR , BELGRADE THEATRE - COREY CAMPBELL
DIRECTOR - JAY ZORENTI-NAKHID
PRODUCER - CHARLOTTE TITCOMBE
SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER - KRITIKA AGARWAL
SOUND DESIGNER - JASRAJ SAHOTA
LIGHTING DESIGNER - ROB COATES
STAGE MANAGER - JESS KENDALL
SOUND TECHNICIAN - JASON SYLVESTER

FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS

THE BELGRADE ENSEMBLE IS GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY THE PAUL HAMLYN FOUNDATION.



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RHUM + CLAY

RHUM + CLAY IS LED BY ARTISTIC DIRECTORS JULIAN SPOONER AND MATTHEW WELLS, AND WAS FORMED IN 2010 AT ECOLE JACQUES LECOQ. OUR WORK IS CREATED THROUGH A COLLABORATIVE DEVISED PROCESS, AND ALWAYS WITH A DIFFERENT CREATIVE ENSEMBLE. TO DATE, THE COMPANY HAS CREATED TEN NEW PRODUCTIONS, ALL OF WHICH HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED BY ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND, AND HAVE TOURED THE UK AND ACROSS THE GLOBE EXTENSIVELY. RHUM + CLAY'S MOST NOTABLE PREVIOUS PRODUCTIONS ARE: THE DARKLY COMIC SATIRE OF POLITICAL POPULISM IN **PROJECT DICTATOR**, THE CRITICAL SMASH HIT **THE WAR OF THE WORLDS**, WHICH USED ORSON WELLES INFAMOUS 1938 RADIO BROADCAST TO TALK ABOUT FAKE NEWS AND DISINFORMATION. THE GROUND-BREAKING **TESTOSTERONE** WHICH EXPLORED MASCULINITY THROUGH THE EYES OF A TRANS MAN IN A MEN'S CHANGING ROOM, SOLO-SHOW **MISTERO BUFFO** WHICH ADDRESSED THE PLIGHT OF THE GIG ECONOMY WORKER AND WON THE PRESTIGIOUS STAGE AWARD FOR ACTING EXCELLENCE, AND **EVERYTHING HAS CHANGED** COMMISSIONED IN THE HEIGHT OF COVID TO RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGES FACED BY YOUNG PEOPLE, THE SHOW WAS CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED AND LATER TRANSFERRED TO THE SOUTHBANK CENTRE. THEIR NEXT MIDSCALE PRODUCTION, **TECHNICOLOR**, WILL PREMIERE AND TOUR THE UK IN AUTUMN 2026.



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ISLEY LYNN

ISLEY LYNN IS AN OLIVIER NOMINATED PLAYWRIGHT, AND MOST RECENT WINNER OF THE 'CHARLES WINTOUR MOST PROMISING PLAYWRIGHT AWARD' AT THE EVENING STANDARD THEATRE AWARDS FOR THEIR PLAY THE SWELL. MOST RECENTLY, THEIR AUDIO DRAMA TETHER (BBC RADIO 4) RECEIVED THE 2025 IMISON AWARD. ISLEY WAS A FINALIST FOR THE 2021-22 WOMEN'S PRIZE FOR PLAYWRITING WITH **FURIES**, AND THEIR PLAY **SKIN A CAT** WAS AWARDED PICK OF THE YEAR AT VAULT FESTIVAL 2016 AND NOMINATED FOR FOUR OFF WEST END AWARDS (MOST PROMISING NEW PLAYWRIGHT - SHORTLIST, BEST NEW PLAY, BEST LEAD FEMALE, BEST DIRECTOR). THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO 15 HEROINES (THE DESERT: CANACE - A GOOD STORY) EARNED CRITICAL ACCLAIM.





APPLICATIONS TO JOIN THE 25/ 26 COHORT OF THE BELGRADE ENSEMBLE ARE NOW OPEN!

A FREE, YEAR-LONG CREATIVE PROGRAMME FOR EARLY-CAREER PERFORMERS AGED 18–25 FROM COVENTRY AND THE SURROUNDING REGION, THE ENSEMBLE WILL WORK WITH PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS TO CREATE AND PERFORM AN ORIGINAL PRODUCTION.

TO FIND OUT MORE AND TO APPLY, VISIT:

WWW.BELGRADE.CO.UK/PROJECTS/BELGRADE-ENSEMBLE-2025/



PHOTO OF THE BELGRADE ENSEMBLE 24/25 COHORT