



## PRESS RELEASE

### FUEL ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL PROJECTS IN ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

- **TEN YEARS FROM THEN - GARETH FRY'S AUDIO PROJECT IS RE-LAUNCHED TEN YEARS ON FROM ITS ORIGINAL CREATION**
- **THE PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED *THERE'S A BEAR ON MY CHAIR* ADDS EXTRA PERFORMANCES AT SOUTHBANK CENTRE AND CONFIRMS DATES AT THE EGG, THEATRE ROYAL BATH**
- **A TWO WEEK TAKEOVER OF THE PIT AT THE BARBICAN - FUELFEST WILL FEATURE NEW WORK IN DEVELOPMENT FROM RACHEAL OFORI, WILL ADAMSDALE, JAY BERNARD AND MELANIE WILSON**
- **GLORIA PATRICK'S AUDIO PIECE *OSOYEBON* RAISES AWARENESS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY**
- **IMAGES CAN BE DOWNLOADED [HERE](#)**

Artistic Director & CEO of Fuel, Kate McGrath has today announced more details of the company's 20th anniversary season programme.

A project that began with the company's 10th anniversary - *Ten Years From Then* - comes full circle. **Gareth Fry's** sound installation which asked a group of school children for their hopes and dreams for the world in ten years time is revisited at the end of those ten years, to assess what has come to pass and look forward to another decade.

**Toby Olié's** stage adaptation of **Ross Collins'** children's book favourite *There's a Bear on My Chair* has added further performances to its run in the Queen Elizabeth Hall as part of the Southbank Centre's Imagine Festival and also confirms a week of performances at The Egg, Theatre Royal Bath.

Fuel will partner with the **Barbican, London**, on a two week takeover festival in The Pit. **FuelFest** will see four artists share new works in progress. **Racheal Ofori** presents ***Beauty is the Beast***, a brand new satire exploring the cost of beauty. **Will Adamsdale** presents ***AI, AI, Oh... (or how I wrote a hit sitcom with ChatGPT but we're not talking now)*** - a sharp and witty look at how AI is becoming ever more present in everyday life. Award-winning poet **Jay Bernard** presents a new live show ***Joint*** which examines the controversy that surrounds the law of Joint Enterprise in particular regarding racial discrimination. And finally **Melanie Wilson** presents ***Oracle Song***, a performance with a score developed in collaboration with AI that takes an intricate look at humans' relationship with the natural world.

**Gloria Patrick** is the pseudonym of a woman who survived human trafficking and sexual slavery. ***Osoyegbon*** is a powerful audio piece performed by Akiya Henry that will be available to listen to on the Fuel Engage platform. Designed to raise awareness the piece is an educational tool aimed at young people and comes accompanied by learning resources for teachers and adults.

Fuel also continues to upskill the sector through expert-run training programmes, with this autumn's **Global Majority Puppetry Intensive** (in association with Little Angel Theatre) well underway. Led by Fred Davis, the course also includes masterclasses with Nick Barnes, Haruka Kuroda, Mervyn Millar, Aya Nakamura, Rachael Nanyonjo, Toby Olié, Little Angel Theatre and Tobi Poster-Su.

*Kate McGrath said: "Fuel's programme always seeks to engage with the times we're living in. We believe children and young people deserve the very best experiences the arts can offer from a young age and are delighted to be producing the premiere of Ross Collins' There's a Bear on My Chair with the brilliantly talented Toby Olié, for 2-7 year olds and their grown-ups, at the iconic Imagine Festival. We're also offering up the chance for you to listen in to children's voices imagining the future we're now living in, with Gareth Fry's beautiful Ten Years From Then. There's also a chance to hear an extraordinary story of survival, in Gloria Patrick's autobiographical Osoyegbon, revealing the untold reality of human trafficking and modern day slavery right here in the UK. And looking to the future, we're thrilled to be taking over the Pit at the Barbican with FuelFest, inviting audiences to experience work in progress performances of brand new work by Racheal Ofori, Will Adamsdale, Jay Bernard and Melanie Wilson. From the beauty industry to the climate crisis via racial discrimination and AI, these artists bring poetry, music, comedy and movement to the big questions of our times. Here's to the future!"*

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**Contd.**

**Ten Years From Then**  
A digital project  
Lead Artist: Gareth Fry  
Designer: Lizzie Watt  
Associate Sound Designer: Pete Malkin  
Production Manager: Rachel Bowen  
Participation Manager: Tom Espiner

A digital project available from November on Fuel Digital, Spotify & Apple Podcasts.  
<https://digital.fueltheatre.com/events/ten-years-from-then/>

*“What will the world be like ten years from now?”*

In 2014, Gareth Fry set off in an ice-cream van turned recording studio and travelled to school playgrounds and public spaces in Corby and Kettering, inviting 10-year-olds and grown-ups to imagine the world ten years into the future.

Their responses were woven together, creating a series of unique soundscapes.

Ten years on, Fuel is releasing this audio version to mark its 20th birthday - this time in a fresh remix.

*Ten Years From Then* invites you to join us in reflecting on those hopes and dreams from ten years ago, and how the world has twisted, turned, and transformed.

The project was piloted in summer 2014 as part of Fuel’s 10th Birthday Season. The audio installation was launched in August at Corby Cube as part of the Made in Corby programme. Two schools were involved in the project: Rockingham Primary (Corby) and Greenfields Primary (Kettering).

**Fuel presents**  
**There’s a Bear on My Chair**  
by Ross Collins  
adapted for the stage and directed by Toby Olié  
Ages 2-7 and their grown-ups

**Southbank Centre**  
18 – 23 February 2025  
Tue 2pm  
Wed – Fri & Sun 11am & 2pm  
Sat 10.30am, 1pm, 3.30pm  
BSL: Thu 20 Feb at 11am, Sat 22 Feb at 1pm  
Audio Description + Touch Tour: Sun 23 Feb at 2pm  
Captions: all performances  
From £14  
[southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/theres-a-bear-on-my-chair/](https://southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/theres-a-bear-on-my-chair/)

**The Egg, Theatre Royal Bath**  
Thurs 27th Feb – Sun 2nd March  
Thur – Fri 10am & 1pm  
Sat – Sun 11.30am & 3pm  
BSL: Sat 1 Mar at 11.30am  
Captions: all performances  
£10 - £12.50  
Schools: (Thursday & Friday only) £8.50 each plus one free teacher per 10 tickets booked (11th ticket free)  
[www.theatroyal.org.uk/events/theres-a-bear-on-my-chair/](https://www.theatroyal.org.uk/events/theres-a-bear-on-my-chair/)

Poor Mouse! A Bear has settled in his favourite chair and it just isn’t big enough to share.

Mouse tries all kinds of tactics to move the pesky Bear but nothing seems to work. However, it isn't long until the tables are turned and Bear finds himself with an unwelcome guest – the cheeky Mouse won't leave his house!

In this first ever stage adaptation of Ross Collins' much-loved books, Toby Olié (*Spirited Away, Animal Farm, War Horse*) brings Bear and Mouse to life through loveable, life-sized puppets. Enter the mischievous world of Bear and Mouse for a show packed with laughs and surprises. The world premiere production will be presented as part of the Southbank Centre's flagship *Imagine Festival*, the UK's leading arts festival for children aged 0-11 and their grown-ups.

Based on *There's a Bear on My Chair* and *There's a Mouse in My House*  
by Ross Collins, © Ross Collins, 2015  
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*There's a Bear on My Chair* is commissioned and produced by Fuel and supported by Arts Council England, the Garrick Charitable Trust, the Royal Victoria Hall Foundation and the Golsoncott Foundation.

### **FuelFest at the Barbican**

**Dates: 10th – 22nd March 2025**

**The Pit, Barbican**

**Box Office information: tickets available to buy from the Barbican website from the 20th November, 1pm**

[barbican.org.uk/whats-on/event/fueelfest-0](http://barbican.org.uk/whats-on/event/fueelfest-0)

FuelFest is a celebration of 20 years of fresh work for adventurous people by inspiring artists.

FuelFest will comprise four new and ambitious works in progress from Racheal Ofori, Will Adamsdale, Jay Bernard and Melanie Wilson. Spanning multiple artforms, each piece grapples with a big question of our time.

Following two decades of Fuel collaborating with artists and producing imaginative, trailblazing work that has travelled around the globe, FuelFest will create space for artists to experiment and audiences to experience new ideas.

### **Beauty is the Beast**

**A work in progress**

**Written and performed by Racheal Ofori**

**Dates: 10th – 12th March 2025**

**Times: 7:45pm**

**Prices: Pay What You Can**

A first look at a brand-new satire by Racheal Ofori (*Portrait, So Many Reasons, FLIP!*) that explores the cost of beauty – from scalp-burning perms to injectables, from skinny tea to fat jabs.

Yvonne is losing her mind. She walks into Boots looking for a shampoo and has a breakdown, paralysed by the abundance of oppressing plastic bottles.

Mina has always kept a trim figure. Her mother's ever present set of scales in their family home used to do the trick. Since her mother's death, she's finding it harder to keep the weight off. So she's ordered some fat jabs online.

*"I want to be wafer thin. So thin that at some point I practically disappear. Isn't that the point? The literal erasure of women?"*

Co-commissioned by Fuel and Women in Theatre Lab and produced by Fuel.

### **AI, AI, Oh... (or how I wrote a hit sitcom with ChatGPT but we're not talking now)**

**A work in progress**

**Written and performed by Will Adamsdale**

**Dates: 13th – 15th March 2025**

**Times: 7:45pm**

**Prices: Pay What You Can**

Perrier Comedy and Fringe First winner Will Adamsdale presents a new autobiographical show about escape, creativity and technology.

Once upon a time a washed up London writer and technophobe went off-grid in a confused lockdown relocation... only to find that the grass ain't always greener.

The blank page stretched out like the endless fields. His only hope? His greatest enemy – technology!

A story of bots, writer's block and getting away from it all.

Produced by Fuel and Will Adamsdale.

## **Joint**

**A work in progress**

**Written by Jay Bernard**

**Directed by Jo Tyabji**

**Dates: 17th – 19th March 2025**

**Times: 7:45pm**

**Prices: Pay What You Can**

*“I didn't know that by sitting in the kitchen I'd be hunted down, arrested, convicted, on the same charges as him. And you'd be too.”*

Joint Enterprise is a controversial common law doctrine where an individual can be jointly convicted of the crime of another, if it can be proven that they foresaw the crime taking place.

Increasingly challenged, it is part of a history of collective punishment that systematically targets racialised and working class people, that can be traced from colonialism through to today. But how does it work? And how can it be defeated?

Written by one of Britain's most exciting poets, Jay Bernard (Ted Hughes Award, Sunday Times Young Writer of the Year) and directed by Jo Tyabji (*Bleak House*, Audible), *Joint* presents a powerful, multi-media account of Joint Enterprise that weaves together personal experience, social history and real life cases.

Commissioned and produced by Fuel, and funded by Arts Council England.

## **Oracle Song**

**A work in progress**

**Written and composed by Melanie Wilson**

**Dates: 20th – 22nd March 2025**

**Times: 7:45pm**

**Prices: Pay What You Can**

Award-winning artist Melanie Wilson collaborates with an AI machine learning tool to explore the conflicted terrain of human and animal relationships through sound.

This poetic, intricate listening experience weaves together language, multi-part vocal composition, field recording and electronic sound to map the fragmentary experience of the biodiversity crisis with kaleidoscopic force.

Created using endangered animal voices from the UK and beyond, the score was developed through a five-year research process into machine learning for composition, supported by PRISM at RNCM.

*Oracle Song* seeks to take the audience from a place of climate anxiety and grief into a shared landscape of listening and connection.

Commissioned and produced by Fuel and funded by Arts Council England, Sound and Music, The RNCM Centre for Practice & Research in Science & Music (PRISM), Hosking Houses Trust.

**Osoyegbon**  
**A digital project**  
**Lead Artist: Gloria Patrick**  
**Script adapter: Abi Dare`**  
**Voiceover artist: Akiya Henry**  
**Illustrations from: ARC Studio**  
**Engagement development partner: Solace Women Aid**

**Available from April 2025 on Fuel Engage, Spotify & Apple Podcasts**

*Osoyegbon* is the Nigerian name of a woman who wants to be known as Gloria Patrick. It fittingly translates in English as “I am not a slave”.

Gloria, lead artist, was trafficked to the UK from Nigeria with the promise of a better life; being instead trapped into sexual exploitation, physical, emotional, and psychological abuse before finding sanctuary in a safe house, as well as the beginning of the kind of support that she needed.

Starting from Gloria’s lived experience, *Osoyegbon* is an audio engagement project to inform about sexual abuse, modern slavery and mental health, especially among young people and the adults in their life.

Gloria has previously shared her story using the medium of theatre and storytelling. This included a series of nine letters spoken directly to Oprah Winfrey, which highlighted some of the dark as well as joyful episodes in her life. This solo performance was performed as a work in progress at Edinburgh International Festival.

Commissioned and produced by Fuel.

Images can be downloaded [here](#)  
Biographies can be downloaded [here](#)

### **About Fuel**

Fuel leads the field in independent producing in the UK’s live performance sector, working with brilliant artists to explore urgent questions, to shine light on how we relate to each other and the world around us, and to tell untold stories by under-represented voices. From theatres to car parks, from schools to public spaces, Fuel produces high quality new theatre that reaches diverse audiences across the UK and internationally. Fuel collaborates with outstanding theatre makers with fresh perspectives and approaches who produce shows, performances or experiences which have direct and playful relationships with their audiences.

Fuel is celebrated for its pioneering producing model that develops innovative ideas through attentive collaboration, a spirit of curiosity, and an emphasis on trust. Fuel has developed a reputation for spirited and surprising new theatre, deep relationships with a wide range of artists, and passionate commitment to inclusion and care for young and diverse audiences.

Fuel was founded in 2004 and is led by Kate McGrath. Since its story began, Fuel has produced shows, festivals, films, installations, podcasts, apps and books. In doing so, Fuel has supported the artistic development of over 120 lead artists or companies and reached more than 1.5 million people, live and digitally, hosted over a hundred internships and been recognised with awards for its work. Fuel is currently working with artists and companies including Will Adamsdale, Common Wealth, Inua Ellams, Alan Lane, Hannah Lavery, Racheal Ofori, Toby Olié, Keisha Thompson, Uninvited Guests and Melanie Wilson. Fuel is supported by Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation, the Leche Trust, the Garrick Trust, the Backstage Trust, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, and the John Ellerman Foundation.

[Fueltheatre.com](http://Fueltheatre.com)  
Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn: [@fueltheatre](#)