



PRESS RELEASE

Shakespeare's Globe announces three new writers-in-residence

23 September 2019

Shakespeare's Globe is delighted to announce **three new writers-in-residence: Sami Ibrahim, Laura Lomas and Sabrina Mahfouz**. The writers are taking part in the Globe's inaugural **'Scriptorium'**, a new twelve-month residency for three playwrights which will see them create bespoke work for the outdoor Globe Theatre and indoor candlelit Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, culminating in a co-written production for the Globe Theatre to be staged in summer 2020.

Defined as 'a space devoted to writing' the Scriptorium will work on their new production alongside the Globe's resident Ensemble, and will be mentored by established playwrights who have written plays for the Globe stage. They will also receive support from the Globe's research faculty, and will be invited to attend rehearsals, workshops and performances throughout the year.

When their time at the Globe draws to a close, the writers will individually write and present a treatment and a selection of scenes for the Globe stage with a view to a potential commission.

Michelle Terry, Artistic Director, Shakespeare's Globe, commented:

"For the first time in 400 years, The Globe has resident writers once again. With us for a year Laura, Sabrina and Sami, three most incredible and unique of voices, will be writing work bespoke not only to the architecture of our playhouses, but bespoke to the players who will perform the work. It's such an important time for theatre and The Globe is proud to be one of many organisations that continues to recognise the vital role that writers play as we not only look to our past to tell us who we were but also at our present to tell us who we could become. Historic, mythic, necessary and hugely exciting."

Sami Ibrahim commented:

"I can't quite express how excited I am to be working with Sabrina and Laura as well as everyone at the Globe over the next year. It's a brilliant, challenging space to write for - with an amazing history to it - and I just can't wait to get started."

Laura Lomas commented:

"I'm incredibly honoured to be taking up the role of joint writer-in-residence with Sabrina and Sami. The Globe has always been a place for radical and transformative work, that by the very nature of the architecture, was designed to be accessible to all. I'm humbled and excited to be here."

Sabrina Mahfouz commented:

"Being one of the inaugural writers for Scriptoria at Shakespeare's Globe is a total dream for any night or day of the year! Writing new work by the river, at the centre of my favourite city in the world, in the theatre dedicated to the writer who was my first page to stage hero, is pretty epic. Fellow writers Laura and Sami plus Michelle, Sean, Jess and the whole Globe team have already made the year ahead feel like one of infinite theatrical possibility - I am so honoured to be here."

Biographies

Sami Ibrahim

Sami is a young writer from London. His first full-length play, *Wind Bit Bitter, Bit Bit Bit Her*, had a run at VAULT Festival 2018 – after it was shortlisted for Soho Theatre's Tony Craze Award, longlisted for the Bruntwood Prize, and published by Nick Hern Books as part of their collection of best plays of the festival. His short play *The Palestinian in the Basement is on Fire* was performed at Pint Sized's October Fest at The Bunker Theatre, and his piece *Iron Dome Fog Dome* was staged at The Yard during their last First Drafts season. In 2019 he was announced as the winner of Theatre Uncut's Political Playwriting Prize for *Two Palestinians Go Dogging*, which will premiere in 2020 at the Royal Court, to be directed by Omar Elerian. He has written a play for Oxford Drama School, and is currently under commission to the Yard.

Sami is currently a member of Tamasha Writers Group, the Oxford Playhouse Playmaker scheme and has been a writer-in-residence at Theatr Clwyd and on attachment at the National Theatre Studio. He is currently developing a feature film, *Off Land*, with the BFI Early Development Fund, and he was recently shortlisted for the Royal Court/ Kudos Fellowship.

Laura Lomas

Laura is from Derby. Plays include *Chaos* (National Theatre Connections); *The Blue Road* (A co-commission for the youth companies at Dundee Rep, Derby Theatre, Royal & Derngate and Theatre Royal Plymouth); *Joanne* (Clean Break/ Soho Theatre); *Bird* (Derby Live/ Nottingham Playhouse/ UK tour); *Blister* (Paines Plough/ RWCMD/ Gate Theatre); *Open Heart Surgery* (Theatre Uncut/ Southwark Playhouse/ Traverse Theatre/ Soho Theatre); *The Island* (Nottingham Playhouse/ Det Norske Oslo); *Wasteland* (New Perspectives Theatre/ Derby Live).

Radio includes *Fragments* (Afternoon Drama, BBC Radio 4) *My Boy* (Somethin' Else Productions/ BBC Radio 4 - winner of Best Drama Bronze, Sony Radio Academy Awards 2013); *Lucy Island* (BBC Radio 3, The Wire).

In 2011 Laura wrote *Rough Skin* for Coming UP (Channel 4/ Touchpaper), which was nominated for Best British Short at the BIFAs, and Best UK Short at Raindance Film Festival. She also wrote two episodes of Jack Thorne's series *Glue* which was broadcast on E4 in 2014. She has written an episode for HANNA series 2. Laura is currently writing a feature film for Film4 and The Bureau and is under commission to The Royal Court Theatre, Nottingham Playhouse and Headlong. She is writing the libretto for an original opera with director Katie Mitchell and composer Laura Bowler.

Laura was a Macdowell Colony Fellow 2013, and a Yaddo fellow 2014, and a member of Edinburgh International Film Festival Talent Lab 2018.

Sabrina Mahfouz

Sabrina is currently writing and performing in her cross-medium show *A History of Water in the Middle East* at the Royal Court Theatre. She has edited two new anthologies published this October - *Smashing It: Working Class Artists on Life, Art and Making It Happen* (Westbourne Press) and *Poems for a Green and Blue Planet* (Hachette Children's).

Sabrina has recently been called '[one of] our most interesting playwrights' by Lyn Gardner in the Guardian and 'theatrical dynamite' by the Independent. Her theatre work includes *Chef*, which won a Fringe First Award; *Dry Ice*, for which she was nominated as Best Solo Performer in The Stage Awards for Acting Excellence. *Clean*, which won a Herald Angel Award and transferred from Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh to Off-Broadway in 2015; *With a Little Bit of Luck*, a gig theatre piece for Paines Plough with a live UK Garage score which has been performed across the UK, including at the National Theatre and the Roundhouse and was adapted for BBC 1Xtra radio, where it won the 2019 BBC Music & Radio Award for Best Drama.

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EDITOR'S NOTES

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SHAKESPEARE'S GLOBE

Our Cause

We celebrate Shakespeare's transformative impact on the world by conducting a radical theatrical experiment. Inspired and informed by the unique historic playing conditions of two beautiful iconic theatres, our diverse programme of work harnesses the power of performance, cultivates intellectual curiosity and excites learning to make Shakespeare accessible for all.

'And let us ...on your imaginary forces work' Henry V, Prologue

Performance and education take place throughout the year inspired and informed by the Globe Theatre and Sam Wanamaker Playhouse. In addition, there are guided tours, as well as retail, catering and events spaces. A registered charity (No. 266916), the Shakespeare's Globe Trust does not receive regular public subsidy. Three quarters of income comes from over one million visitors annually who buy tickets to performances, events, exhibition and tours, and educational activities. Revenue is also generated by on-site retail and catering. Vital support comes from the Globe's family of Friends and Patrons. These include a range of Members' schemes at varying levels, corporate supporters, trusts, individual gifts and legacies.

GLOBE THEATRE

Following an absence of 400 years, the present Globe Theatre stands a few hundred metres from the original site. The rebuilding of the iconic building was led by the pioneering actor and director Sam Wanamaker who spent 23 years fundraising, advancing research into the appearance of the original Globe and planning the reconstruction with architect Theo Crosby. Sam Wanamaker died in 1993, three and a half years before the theatre was completed.

Performances, tours, and educational work take place all year with the theatre season running from April to October. The theatre is an important space for research led by in-house scholars, and is central to undergraduate and post graduate programmes, as well as activities for school students of all ages. Each year in early spring, *Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank*, a Shakespeare production created for young people and families, gives 20,000 free tickets to state secondary schools in London and Birmingham.

SAM WANAMAKER PLAYHOUSE

The Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, opened in January 2014. The intimate, 340-seat candle-lit space is a beautiful archetype of the indoor playhouses of Jacobean London. Also open all year, the Playhouse's principal theatre season runs from October to April. In addition, it hosts panel discussions, lectures, and musical events. It is also an essential space for original research, rehearsed readings, family storytelling and workshops for school students and teachers.

BANKSIDE AND BEYOND

Overlooking the river on Bankside, Shakespeare's Globe is proud to be in Southwark and has a range of community projects: Globe Elders Company, Southwark Youth Theatre, *A Concert for Winter*, *Our Theatre* schools performance project and a work experience programme for 14-18 year olds. Shakespeare's Globe has a rich tradition of touring nationally and internationally with award-winning productions transferring to both the West End and Broadway. *Globe on Screen* also takes highlights from the theatre season to cinemas worldwide and *Globe Player* makes Shakespeare's Globe productions available to all.

For more information, images for press, details about what's on and how to book: www.shakespearesglobe.com.