

Thursday 26 August 2021

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**For Immediate Release**

## **Recovery Arts Communities Unite for International Overdose Awareness Day**

Theatre Royal Plymouth's Our Space and Project X groups joined up on a national project in July with nine regional recovery arts organisations in seven UK cities to create a short film which will be broadcast via social media on 31st August, Overdose Awareness Day. Over 50 individuals in recovery from addiction to drugs and alcohol came together to create the film which remembers those that have been lost to overdose.

International Overdose Awareness Day is a global event each year that raises awareness of overdose and helps reduce the stigma of drug-related death. It acknowledges the grief felt by families and friends by remembering those who have died or had a permanent injury because of drug overdose. It also aims to spread the message that overdose death is preventable.

Each year around 5000 people die due to drug overdose in the UK, often leaving loved ones with more questions than answers. Started in 2018 in Brighton and lead by participatory theatre company Small Performance Adventures, 'Overdose Awareness Day Live' has grown to include more locations each year. Demonstrating the scale and desire to mark the day around the UK.

Originally conceived as a series of pop-up performances across the country, the project has had to adapt over the last 18 months due to the impact of the coronavirus. Overcoming this adversity, and ensuring that Covid guidance is adhered to, the organisations participating in 'Overdose Awareness Day Live' have created a powerful and moving film that is sure to reach the hearts of anyone tuning in on 31st August.

Victoria Wheelan, Engagement Manager at Theatre Royal Plymouth said: *"There is something powerful when people come together in this way and speak out for those who couldn't find their voice and sadly are no longer with us. Recently a member of the*



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*group was lost this way, so It's very real and raw".*

Our Space Member, Tara Casey said: *"A friend from my school days took his life in adulthood and it's left its mark on our families and our extended friendship group. Overdose Awareness Day is day dedicated to remembering him and all those lost in this way or in danger of it and encourages us to reach out to one another".*

Participating organisations are: small performance adventures, Brighton; Our Space, Theatre Royal Plymouth; Bristol Drugs Project, Bristol; Fallen Angels, Chester; TiPP, Manchester; The Mens Room, Manchester; Geese Theatre, Birmingham; Outside Edge Theatre Co., London; Edit Sweet, Brighton; We Are Not Saints, Brighton.

## ENDS

For further information please contact the Media and Communications team on [public.relations@theatroyal.com](mailto:public.relations@theatroyal.com) / 01752 230439

**Theatre Royal Plymouth's 'Our Space'** is a creative programme that works with adults with multiple complex needs. Members come from all walks of life and may have faced challenges involving homelessness, mental health issues, re-offending, substance misuse, or they may feel isolated for other reasons.

<https://theatroyal.com/take-part/adults-and-communities/>

**small performance adventures** was set up in 2018 to provide creative experiences and employment opportunities for people who have been labelled by society. With twenty-five years of experience in the participatory arts, Artistic Director Kate McCoy brings a deep experience and understanding of how this approach can include, unite and inspire.

[www.smallperformanceadventures.com](http://www.smallperformanceadventures.com)

**Bristol Drugs Project (BDP)** provide support to help adults reduce the harm drugs and alcohol can cause and provide outreach and in-reach support for people to access the full range of support offered. BDP also work in partnership with GP Practices to provide alcohol detoxes and opioid substitute prescriptions and detoxes in the community.

<https://www.bdp.org.uk/>

**Outside Edge Theatre Company** is the UK's only theatre company and participatory arts charity focused on improving the lives of people affected by any form of addiction,



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including their families, carers and champions. For the past twenty years OETC has produced theatre productions about issues related to addiction, from substance misuse to problem gambling, and provided free drama workshops to help people make healthier choices and support their recovery maintenance.

<http://edgetc.org/>

**Edit Sweet** is a recovery-based, socially-minded film & video production company. Dedicated to delivering professional, eye-catching content for organisations - creating impact and raising brand awareness through the art of film.

<https://editsweet.rocks/>

**Fallen Angels Dance Theatre** exists to support people in recovery from addiction to transform their lives and share the recovery journey with the wider public, through dance, performance, and creativity. They provide a structured pathway to enhance recovery through creative activities that are a powerful engagement tool to promote the well-being and social inclusion of people in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction.

<https://fallenangelsdt.org/>

**We Are Not Saints** is the UK's only record label and events company working with musicians in recovery from addiction. We help our artists to re-discover their creativity and find their way to be active in music, without having to face the dangers presented to them in conventional music scenes.

[www.wearenotsaints.co.uk](http://www.wearenotsaints.co.uk)

**Geese Theatre Company** uses theatre as a powerful vehicle for social change. They create effective theatre-based programmes which help people in secure and community settings make positive changes in their lives.

<http://www.geese.co.uk/>

**Men's Room** is an arts & health charity supporting men and trans people who sex work, are homeless or both.

<https://mroom.co.uk>

**TiPP** is a participatory arts organisation based in Manchester. They are committed to the idea that participatory arts have the power to transform people's lives for the better. Their work is concerned with personal and social change in pursuit of a more just and equitable society.

<https://www.tipp.org.uk/>