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TRP Press Contact: Chris Baker, chris.baker@theatreroyal.com

For Immediate Release

Theatre Royal Plymouth and Voodoo Monkeys present *Today I Killed My Very First Bird*

Theatre Royal Plymouth and Voodoo Monkeys present *Today I Killed My Very First Bird* with an early preview this February, before the production is staged at the Edinburgh Fringe.

An unflinchingly brutal and poetic story of crime, addiction, and redemption, the production will be on in The Drum from 17–19 February 2022.

Voodoo Monkeys is a new collaboration between writer and performer Jason Brownlee and director and engagement specialist Lee Hart. *Today I Killed My Very First Bird* is the company's first show and is a theatrical exploration of Jason's lived experience told through poetry, performance & storytelling.

Jason was part of TRP's engagement project Our Space having suffered from long-term depression amongst other things.

Jason said: *"I developed the show with Lee, by piecing together a series of poems that I had written about my lived experiences, exploring childhood memories, trauma, and characters I've met throughout my life. It's part biographical and part fictional."*

The production is a darkly comic and stylish rollercoaster ride through 24 hours in the life of an East London villain. Drugs, violence, and dirty deals are a regular part of life, but when a job goes badly wrong, he is forced to explore the conditioning that turned him from an innocent child into a monster.

Jason performs alongside four other cast members. It is almost entirely seated and utilises his unique voice and visceral storytelling to create a potent, dramatic world.

Theatre Royal Plymouth is co-producing this early preview in The Drum, before the production runs at the Edinburgh Fringe in August 2022.

Ben Lyon-Ross, Talent Development Producer at Theatre Royal Plymouth, said:

"I couldn't be more excited that we are co-producing Today I Killed My Very First Bird with Voodoo Monkeys."

"The show is properly home grown and something that could only have been made here in Plymouth. The opportunity to tell this story to a national audience at the Edinburgh fringe is really important to us."

“The story is raw and original, and Lee and Jason are such incredible artists. I think the show has the potential to make a big impact at the fringe and resonate with everyone who sees it.”

Tickets for *Today I Killed My Very First Bird* are £10, and you can book the show here: theatroyal.com/voodoo-monkeys-2021

ENDS

Notes to editors

The age guidance for *Today I Killed My Very First Bird* is 18+. The show contains instances of strong/racist language, drug references, themes of abuse and sexual violence, and childhood trauma.

For further information please contact the Media and Communications team on public.relations@theatroyal.com / 01752 230439

Theatre Royal Plymouth (TRP) is a registered charity providing art, education and community engagement in Plymouth and across the region. It engages and inspires with the aim of touching lives. Theatre Royal Plymouth presents a year-round programme of world class productions on all scales as the South West’s principal centre for performing arts.

Theatre Royal Plymouth works with partners to understand the challenges people face accessing the arts, especially vulnerable and disadvantaged people. It creates pathways that are genuinely accessible to those who might otherwise never get to engage with the arts. They collaborate to co-create and co-author work that represents the community, creating the space needed for people to tell their story in their own way.

Theatre Royal Plymouth is the UK’s largest regional producing theatre. With a focus on embracing the vitality of new talent and supporting emerging and established artists. It collaborates with a range of partners to provide dynamic cultural leadership for the city of Plymouth.