

A HALF MOON AND APPLES AND SNAKES CO-PRODUCTION

CROWDED

HOW DO YOU SORT YOUR HEAD OUT
WHEN IT GETS TOO CROWDED IN THERE?

It's the beginning of summer and the community festival is in full swing in the local park. Everyone is there. Crowds queue, but among the smiles and excitement lies something that could spoil this party...

Developed in direct response to the growing number of teenagers in the UK struggling with their mental health, *Crowded* tells the story of ordinary young people whose anxiety, depression and desire leads to harmful and destructive behaviours.

Giving voice to emotions that are often unspoken due to social stigma, *Crowded* is a powerful, funny and uncompromising story presented in a striking spoken word show by three exciting young poet-performers: Desree, Laura Rae and Slam the Poet, with additional text by Rosemary Harris.

For audiences aged 13 years and over. This production contains themes that some people may find distressing.

POET PERFORMERS

DIRECTOR
DRAMATURGE/SCRIPT MENTOR
COMPOSER
PRODUCTION DESIGNER AND MANAGER
TECHNICAL STAGE MANAGER
CREATIVE PRODUCER (Apples and Snakes)
SCENIC ARTIST

Desree
Laura Rae
Slam the Poet

Chris Elwell
Rosemary Harris
Guy Connelly
Faith Austin
Pip Snow
Nicky Crabb
Lawrence Crane

DESREE

Desree is a spoken word artist, writer and facilitator based in London/Slough. Currently Artist in Residence for poetry collective EMPOWORD, Desree was first runner up in 2018's Hammer and Tongue national final. She has delivered a TEDx talk at Bath University and has featured at events in the UK and internationally.

LAURA RAE

Laura is a poet and creative practitioner from Hull. She is a regular performer with Rhymes with Orange (VAULTS, Edinburgh Festival, Standon Calling and the South Downs Poetry Festival). Laura has taught creative writing in various settings, including theatres, schools, day care centres, colleges and prisons.

SLAM THE POET

Slam the Poet is fascinated with the sensuality of words – their sights, sounds and textures. This interest has seen him perform as a poet within the cultures of hip hop, jazz and ambient. His thirst for experimentation is deeply rooted in a joy for collaborative projects.

THANKS TO: the young people across London who were consulted on the development of this project, Androulla Constantinou and Elysia Wells for voice work on the soundtrack, the library staff from the 17 London boroughs which were part of SPINE Festival, and the staff at Half Moon and Apples and Snakes.



Photography by Stephen Beeny

CONTEXT FOR CROWDED

At the end of 2018 Action for Children reported that 1 in 3 young people have mental health troubles.

Half Moon and Apples and Snakes believe drama can be a really helpful way of bringing difficult issues to a wide range of audiences. It can help to raise awareness, start important conversations and encourage people to seek help.

If you have been impacted by any of the issues raised by *Crowded*, some people find it easier to talk to someone outside their family, someone who is not directly connected with their life, or even to talk to someone anonymously. There are some useful organisations below that you can contact confidentially, some of which have helplines.

We would also encourage you to speak out if you're worried about a friend who may have been affected by the show. Talking and offering help won't make the person feel worse, it's okay to ask if they're okay. It may be a relief for them to know that someone has spotted they may be having a difficult time and that someone is there to support them.

Crowded is a Half Moon and Apples and Snakes co-production: an exciting collaboration by the UK's leading small-scale young people's venue and touring company (2018 finalist and 2017 Off West End Award winner for Best Production for Young People Aged 13+) and England's leading spoken word poetry organisation.

USEFUL LINKS

YOUNG MINDS | youngminds.org.uk

A charity committed to improving young people's wellbeing and mental health.

STEM4 | stem4.org.uk

A teenage mental health charity.

THE SAMARITANS | samaritans.org

☎ 116123 📧 jo@samaritans.org
A charity aimed at providing emotional support to anyone in emotional distress, struggling to cope, or at risk of suicide.

MIND | mind.org.uk

Advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem.

CALM | thecalmzone.net

☎ 0800 58 58 58
The Campaign Against Living Miserably. A movement against suicide, the single biggest killer of men under the age of 45 in the UK.

RETHINK | rethink.org

☎ 0300 5000 927 (9.30am-4pm, Mon-Fri)
Helping millions of people affected by mental illness by challenging attitudes and changing lives.

NHS DIRECT | nhs.uk/Livewell/mentalhealth/Pages/Mentalhealthhome.aspx

Whatever you need to know about coping with stress, anxiety or depression, or just the normal emotional ups and downs of life, the NHS Choices Moodzone is there to help.

MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION | mentalhealth.org.uk

Dedicated to finding and addressing the sources of mental health problems.

TIME TO CHANGE | time-to-change.org.uk

A growing movement of people changing how we all think and act about mental health problems.



ABOUT HALF MOON

Half Moon is the UK's leading small-scale young people's venue and touring company. They are a local organisation with a national remit, committed to supporting artists and young people at every stage of their creative development. Working from their base in East London, they specialise in new writing and artform development, acting as a gateway organisation that provides pathways for progression and experimentation.

Half Moon's wide-ranging programme reaches around 50,000 annually and engages those who are often excluded from arts activity. Their activity includes a season of professional plays for young audiences, national touring productions and an extensive creative learning programme, including seven youth theatres. They are a National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England and receive funding from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

Half Moon's digital archive is available at stagesofhalfmoon.org.uk

ABOUT APPLES AND SNAKES

Apples and Snakes is England's leading spoken word poetry organisation. It exists to support and champion poets and poetry in performance, amplify unheard voices and challenge expectations of what poetry is and can be. By bringing together important voices in interesting ways, they create inspiring experiences for audiences across the country.

Apples and Snakes collaborate with a wide range of organisations and venues to produce work, including libraries, prisons and housing associations. Through their Book a Poet scheme, they can help find the best visiting artists for your workshops and events. They are a National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England.



Photography by Stephen Beery

Originally commissioned in association with Spine Festival, London 2019.

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