



WHISPERING HAPPINESS

AN EXCITING AND INNOVATIVE EDUCATION PROJECT EXPLORING PERSONAL CHOICE AND FREEDOM THROUGH KENNETH EMSON'S NEW PLAY *WHISPERING HAPPINESS*

THE FREEDOM OF CHOICE

Running in conjunction with our upcoming production of Kenneth Emson's *Whispering Happiness*, Box of Tricks is offering free education workshops to London schools, colleges and universities. Taking *Whispering Happiness* as a launchpad for this innovative education project, Box of Tricks will be using drama to explore young people's choices and freedoms.

Whispering Happiness is a lyrical and theatrical portrait of urban life, exploring happiness at a time of despair. The story focuses on two teenagers – Simon and Hayley – caught in a world in turmoil, where the cities and countryside have been torn apart. As society becomes increasingly apathetic, the State has seized power and relocated to the country, forcing those left behind to fend for themselves in a desolate wasteland.

Drugs, gangs and violence reign as communities fall apart and tower blocks crumble. The future seems to be beyond Simon and Hayley's control until a shadowy figure appears offering a way out, promising happiness. But nothing is as it seems when Simon finds himself in a police interview room, searching for answers. A political play of personal journeys, *Whispering Happiness* explores the choices we must make when the future lacks hope.

This provocative urban fairytale is a relevant and unflinching examination of the conflicts facing modern society, tackling the big questions facing us today. Through an engaging and human narrative, it asks what happiness can mean when hope is gone, in a world where the police and the State have assumed absolute power, leaving disaffected youth, knife crime and poverty in their wake.

The **Freedom of Choice** workshops complement both the citizenship and drama curriculums. The play offers clear links to the citizenship curriculum through its exploration of choice, government and violence. Moreover, the project offers participants an opportunity to develop hands-on their personal learning and thinking skills, as well as artistic modes of expression. Drama is a fun and challenging way of exploring issues, fuelling debate and empowering young people to express their opinions and emotions.

This project offers participants a unique opportunity to engage with new writing through workshops led by professionals working in the industry and the creative team behind the production.



Supported by
Unity Theatre Trust

BOX OF TRICKS THEATRE

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Box of Tricks Theatre Company

Box of Tricks Theatre is rooted in story-telling. We are committed to developing and producing the best new work around; discovering, nurturing and promoting the next generation of new playwrights. We are drawn to plays that have an immediacy and relevance today: the stories that need to be told, the voices that need to be heard.

Box of Tricks believes in theatre as education. We have an active and complementary education programme delivering workshops that inspire future generations to engage with theatre hands-on, and to use it as a vehicle of self-expression and exploration.

When working with young people, we believe in fostering interest and excitement in drama and in giving them a unique insight into the magic of theatre. We have a dedicated education team that have run various workshops with a wide range of age groups.

One of our main projects over the last two years has been the School Travel Plan workshops in Hounslow, for which we received funding from Transport for London.

All our workshop leaders are CRB-checked and have experience of working with children and young people. This includes Old Vic Education, Bigfoot, Montage Theatre Arts, Mercury Theatre (Colchester).

Professional theatre practitioners and workshop facilitators

Director **Hannah Tyrrell-Pinder** is Artistic Director and co-founder of Box of Tricks Theatre Company. She trained as a director at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts. She is an associate member of Old Vic New Voices, a Young Vic Genesis Director, Montage Arts Youth Theatre director and a workshop leader for Bigfoot Arts. Her credits for Box of Tricks include: *Word:Play 2* (Theatre503), *Rural* and *A Hole in the Fence* (White Bear Theatre), *Word:Play* (Union Theatre).

Playwright **Kenneth Emson** is a graduate of the prestigious Goldsmiths' Writing for Performance MA. Last year, he was selected as one of seven playwrights for Old Vic New Voices' 24 Hour Plays and had work première at the Hotbed Festival (Cambridge) and Hotink Festival (New York). Kenneth was a recent member of the Royal Court's invitation-only Writers' Programme and has worked with Paines Plough and The National Theatre Studio on invitation-only workshops.

Producer **Adam Quayle** is Artistic Director and co-founder of Box of Tricks Theatre Company. He trained as a director at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts. He is an associate member of Old Vic New Voices, an Old Vic Education workshop assistant and a Young Vic Genesis Director. His credits for Box of Tricks include: *Word:Play 2* (Theatre 503), *A Hole in the Fence*, *Streetlights* and *Shadows* and *Beyond Omarska* (White Bear).



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Proposed dates

Performance dates: 9th June – 4th July 2009

Workshop dates: 15th June – 10th July 2009

Discounted tickets of £8 (for groups of 20+) are available for the first two weeks of the production, 9th June to 20th June. These tickets are available directly from Box of Tricks; further information available at time of booking.

Booking

Free workshops will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis. The programme is available to schools, colleges and universities in London for students aged 14-21. All participants need to have seen the production of *Whispering Happiness* prior to the workshop.

To book a free workshop, or to gain further information about the *Whispering Happiness: Freedom of Choice* education programme, please contact Hannah:

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