



Box Office 0161 833 9833  
royalexchange.co.uk  
19–22 October 2016

# BIRTH

A photograph of a baby hanging upside down by its hands, which are clasped together to form the letter 'I' in the word "BIRTH". The baby's body is positioned between the 'I' and the 'R', and its legs are spread out to the sides.

A Global Festival of Theatre and Debate

Seven countries.  
Seven female playwrights.  
One global controversy.  
A world of debate.



# B!RTH

A Global Festival of Theatre and Debate

19–22 OCTOBER 2016

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B!RTH is an international theatre festival developed by the Royal Exchange Theatre and The Oglesby Charitable Trust to provoke debate on a global scale and question one of the key issues of our time: the vast inequality in healthcare across the world.

The B!RTH festival will take over the Royal Exchange building with a rich programme of new writing, installations, workshops and debates.

At the heart of the festival are 7 plays by 7 female international playwrights from Brazil, China, India, Kenya, Syria, UK and USA. These writers have been commissioned to question their country's approach to birth practice and the cultural pressures that surround it.

Each day of the festival will conclude with a debate session with experts from the worlds of healthcare, science and politics including human rights campaigner Shami Chakrabarti and Professor Jacqueline Dunkley Bent, Head of Maternity at NHS England. The final debate on Saturday night will be live streamed in partnership with Guardian Live.

Throughout the festival you will also have the chance to learn how birth practice has developed over the years, about the challenges currently faced by NHS maternity services and how you can get involved with both local and international volunteering opportunities.

We'll also be joined by some of the UK's most dynamic theatre companies, Clean Break, Mighty Heart, Take Back Theatre and Abooo Theatre who will be sharing work in progress around the theme of birth. And you'll get the chance to see how 7 young female artists from the Royal Exchange have creatively responded to 7 extremely diverse birth stories in 7 Manchester Mothers.

Everyone is welcome! There will be a dedicated area for babies and toddlers and many of the events welcome babes in arms too.

It has been an honour to work with such passionate and dedicated people to create this festival. Now we're looking forward to sharing it all with you.

B!RTH Creative Director *Emma Callander*

# 7 PLAYS FROM 7 COUNTRIES

## A SON SOON

by Xu Nuo

(translated by Jeremy Tiang)

China



**Two women visit a shaman to ask for guidance, one has the money to buy her way out of the government's two child policy, the other doesn't.** Xu Nuo, one of China's most promising playwrights, explores how governmental population control laws affect different women and how gender supremacy still dominates modern China in this smart, quirky play.

## OUROBOROS

by Swati Simha

India



**Mass sterilisation is common practice in poor rural areas of India.** Women are often given incentives and doctors have targets to reach in unsanitary conditions. Ferocious young writer Swati Simha evokes a rich mystical world in this story of a doctor haunted by her role in India's population control effort.

### BIRTH DEBATE: CONTROL

*1 in 3 women in India have been sterilised & 91% of pregnant teens in China have abortions. Is the enforced control of population a necessary tactic or a tool of oppression? A panel of experts will lead this debate including human rights campaigner Shami Chakrabarti.*

## Q&Q

by Liwaa Yazji

(translated by Clem Naylor)

Syria



### **Why would a Syrian refugee want to bring a child into this world?**

Leading Syrian filmmaker and playwright Liwaa Yazji digs under the skin of 3 Syrian women, from very different homes, to discover how they overcome the deeply disturbing effects of conflict, displacement and the cruelty of war.

## ORCHID

by Mūmbi Kaigwa

Kenya



### **There are so many reasons why a woman may suffer from fistula, a hole in the wall of the birth canal, but there is no good reason why that woman can't be treated.**

Award winning writer, performer and producer Mūmbi Kaigwa shares real voices of Fistula sufferers through this deeply moving piece of verbatim theatre.

#### **BIRTH DEBATE: RESPONSIBILITY**

*Approximately 10% percent of all women in Kenya are living with Fistula & the UN estimates that half a million displaced Syrian women are pregnant. What responsibility do we have as a global community for the health and wellbeing of women? A panel of experts will lead this debate including Mukesh Kapila CBE, Professor of Global Health and Humanitarian Affairs at University of Manchester and Minna Salami creator of the multi-award-winning blog MsAfropolitan.*

## CHOICES

by Stacey Gregg

UK



**We are spoilt for choice in the UK. The choice to have a child and the choice not to.**

Award winning Irish playwright Stacey Gregg guides us through two deeply intimate stories about two women faced with the complex challenges that choice can provoke.

## SO FAR AS A CENTURY'S REACH

by Kirsten Greenidge

USA



**It costs more to give birth in the USA than anywhere else on the planet, so why do they have the highest maternal mortality rate in the developed world?** Obie award winning playwright Kirsten Greenidge takes us back across 100 years of childbirth in the USA and asks 'has anything changed'?

## THE BIRTH MACHINE

by Marcia Zanelatto

(translated by Mateus Ciucci)

Brazil

**What is behind Brazil's Caesarean epidemic?**

Prolific screen and theatre writer Marcia Zanelatto scours her own family history of birth to tackle this question on a backdrop of the country's turbulent political landscape.



### BIRTH DEBATE: CHOICE

*The number of women giving birth over the age of 40 has doubled in the UK over the last 10 years. Midwives are still illegal in many states of the USA. 85% of births in Brazil's private hospitals are by caesarean.*

*What effect has global capitalism had on birth practice in the developed world?*

*Panel includes Professor Daniel Brison – Scientific Director at the Department of Reproductive Medicine, Central Manchester University Hospitals.*

In collaboration with

**theguardian** live

## B!RTH DEBATE: THE FINALE ACTION

*There are 2.9 million newborn deaths and 2.5 million stillborn babies each year. What is causing this massive global health inequality and how can we make changes?*

*The B!RTH Festival culminates with a final high-profile event that will focus on the key issues raised across the festival:*

*The panel will discuss the reason why childbirth and maternal health are so hard to improve, and why they are the Sustainable Development Goals which have shown the least impact or improvement. Why is this area such a marker for inequality in the 21st Century, and what are the big ideas that could change everything? Is there anything we can do personally to help improve global health inequality?*

*The discussion will be chaired by **Rowena Burns, Chief Executive of Manchester Science Partnerships.***

*Panellists include **Professor Lesley Regan, President of the Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists, Professor Nynke Van Den Broek, Head of the Centre for Maternal & Newborn Health at Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and Professor Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent, Head of Maternity at NHS England.***

The panel discussion will also be live-streamed through the website [birthdebate.com](http://birthdebate.com)

# FESTIVAL ACTIVITY

## **MEET THE PLAYWRIGHTS**

### *Panel Discussion*

A chance to meet the seven international playwrights and hear the stories behind their plays, how they researched the topic and what the process of writing for B!RTH has been. Chaired by Dr. Rachel Clements, lecturer in Drama, Theatre and Performance at the University of Manchester.

## **ROYAL EXCHANGE THEATRE YOUNG ARTISTS: 7 MANCHESTER MOTHERS**

### *Installation*

7 young female artists from the Royal Exchange tell the stories of 7 Manchester women who have become mothers in the most varied situations, from prison to a private birth centre. Facilitated by B!RTH Participation Director Natalie Diddams.

## **CLEAN BREAK: THESE FOUR WALLS**

### *A rehearsed reading of a play by Laura Lomas*

The story of Becky and Danni, two women sharing a prison cell. One is pregnant, one is desperate to know about the children she has given up for adoption. The play examines what it's like for mothers who are in prison, and deals with their experiences of separation, loss and loneliness with sensitivity and humour. It will be followed by a panel discussion featuring Mahala McGuffie, Governor of HM Prison Styal, and chaired by Clean Break Artistic Director Roisin McBrinn.

## **MIGHTY HEART THEATRE: MIGHTY BIRTH**

### *A sharing*

An invitation to spend an afternoon chatting, sharing and eating cake while Mighty Heart share verbatim stories exploring the realities of parenthood, miscarriage and loss. And to stick two fingers up to the expectations placed on us all by the media. Babies and children welcome.

## **TAKE BACK THEATRE: UNDER CANVAS**

### *Installation*

Thousands of babies are being born in refugee camps across the world, many have no official papers and therefore no national identity or rights to protection. This installation will give you the chance to hear recorded stories of women's experiences gathered from refugee camps in Calais and beyond.

## **MANCHESTER MEDICAL SCHOOL: GOING OFF THE BIRTH PLAN**

### *Workshop*

Clinical colleagues from the Central Manchester NHS Trust and medical students representing the Global Health Society and Obstetrics and Gynaecology Society of the University of Manchester, present a practical interactive workshop, using mannequins and simulators, to look at issues surrounding the process of child birth and birth injuries.

## **LIVERPOOL SCHOOL OF TROPICAL MEDICINE: VOLUNTEERING OVERSEAS**

### *Workshop*

Staff from the Centre for Maternal and Newborn Health at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine share their experiences of working with governments to reduce the childbirth mortality rate. Participants can learn how to deliver a baby in a low-resource setting and how to work in a team of volunteers.

## **DE PARTU HISTORY OF MIDWIFERY GROUP**

### *Talk*

Hear the incredible history of childbirth practice from the 1902 Midwifery Act; through the rise of surgical interventions and the movement of childbirth from home to hospital, to the issues faced by women today.

## **CLAIRE CURRIE: Daddy time baby massage**

### *Massage class for dads and babies*

Baby massage gives dads the opportunity to be truly 'hands-on' and strengthen the bond established at the birth. A great opportunity for dads to have positive interaction, communicate and develop a deeper understanding of their babies cues.

## **JANE BROUGHTON: Baby yoga**

### *Yoga session (suitable after your 6/8 week check up, to 9 - 10 months old)*

Strengthen & tone muscle, encourage you & baby to relax, improves sleep, and uses the breath to increase calm and confidence.

## **ABOOO THEATRE: YOUR BIRTH STORIES**

Abooo performers, accompanied by their own children, will give voice to stories of birth collected through the [birthdebate.com](http://birthdebate.com) website.

For more information on these events  
please go to [birthdebate.com](http://birthdebate.com)

## THE THEATRE

Wed 19 <sup>th</sup> October	Thurs 20 <sup>th</sup> October	Fri 21 <sup>st</sup> October	Sat 22 <sup>nd</sup> October
<p>7.00pm  <b>A SON SOON</b>  <i>by Xu Nuo</i>                      (translated by Jeremy Tiang)                      (Age Guidance 14+)                      China</p> <p><b>OUROBOROS</b>  <i>by Swati Simha</i>                      (Age Guidance 14+)                      India</p> <p><b>BIRTH Debate: CONTROL</b>                      Tickets - £12 / £10</p>	<p>7.00pm  <b>Q&amp;Q</b>  <i>by Liwaa Yazji</i>                      (translated by Clem Naylor)                      (Age Guidance 14+)                      Syria</p> <p><b>ORCHID</b>  <i>by Mūmbi Kaigwa</i>                      (Age Guidance 14+)                      Kenya</p> <p><b>BIRTH Debate: RESPONSIBILITY</b>                      Tickets - £12 / £10</p>	<p>7.00pm  <b>CHOICES</b>  <i>by Stacey Gregg</i>                      (Age Guidance 14+)                      UK</p> <p><b>THE BIRTH MACHINE</b>  <i>by Marcia Zanelatto</i>                      (translated by Mateus Ciucci)                      (Age Guidance 14+)                      Brazil</p> <p><b>SO FAR AS A CENTURY'S REACH</b>  <i>by Kirsten Greenidge</i>                      (Age Guidance 14+)                      USA</p> <p><b>BIRTH Debate: CHOICE</b>                      Tickets - £12 / £10</p>	<p>Age guidance 14+, but babes in arms are welcome in the theatre on Saturday</p> <p>10.30am  <b>A SON SOON</b>  <i>by Xu Nuo</i>                      (translated by Jeremy Tiang)                      China Tickets - £5</p> <p>11.30am  <b>Q&amp;Q</b>  <i>by Liwaa Yazji</i>                      (translated by Clem Naylor)                      Syria Tickets - £5</p> <p>12.45pm  <b>SO FAR AS A CENTURY'S REACH</b>  <i>by Kirsten Greenidge</i>                      USA Tickets - £5</p> <p>2.45pm  <b>THE BIRTH MACHINE</b>  <i>by Marcia Zanelatto</i>                      (translated by Mateus Ciucci)                      Brazil Tickets - £5</p> <p>3.45pm  <b>OUROBOROS</b>  <i>by Swati Simha</i>                      India Tickets - £5</p> <p>5.00pm  <b>CHOICES</b>  <i>by Stacey Gregg</i>                      UK Tickets - £5</p> <p>6.00pm  <b>ORCHID</b>  <i>by Mūmbi Kaigwa</i>                      Kenya Tickets - £5</p> <p>7.30pm  <b>FINALE BIRTH DEBATE</b>                      (in collaboration with Guardian Live)                      Tickets £7.50</p>

# TIMETABLE OF EVENTS

A Global Festival of Theatre and Debate

## THE STUDIO

Wed 19 <sup>th</sup> October	Thurs 20 <sup>th</sup> October	Fri 21 <sup>st</sup> October	Sat 22 <sup>nd</sup> October
<p>1.30pm MEET THE PLAYWRIGHTS Panel Discussion Free</p> <p>2.30pm TAKE BACK THEATRE: UNDER CANVAS Installation in foyer Free</p>	<p>4.00pm CLEAN BREAK: THESE FOUR WALLS Rehearsed reading of a play by Laura Lomas Tickets - £3.50</p> <p>All Day TAKE BACK THEATRE: UNDER CANVAS Installation in foyer Free</p>	<p>4.00pm MIGHTY HEART THEATRE: MIGHTY BIRTH Interactive sharing (children welcome) Tickets - £3.50</p> <p>All Day TAKE BACK THEATRE: UNDER CANVAS Installation in foyer Free</p>	<p>11.30am MANCHESTER MEDICAL SCHOOL: GOING OFF THE BIRTH PLAN Workshop (Free, ticketed)</p> <p>1.30pm LIVERPOOL SCHOOL OF TROPICAL MEDICINE: VOLUNTEERING OVERSEAS (Free, ticketed)</p> <p>3.30pm DE PARTU HISTORY OF MIDWIFERY GROUP Talk</p> <p><b>THE FRONT ROOM</b></p> <p>1pm CLAIRE CURRIE: DADDY- TIME BABY MASSAGE Massage class for dads and babies</p> <p>3.30pm JANE BROUGHTON : BABY YOGA Yoga session (suitable after your 6/8 week check up to 9 - 10 months old)</p>

## EDUCATION LOUNGE

<p>All Day ROYAL EXCHANGE THEATRE YOUNG ARTISTS: 7 MANCHESTER MOTHERS Installation Free</p>			
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## THE GREAT HALL

<p>All Day Information stands from a range of charities who raise awareness of global health inequalities.</p>	<p>All Day Information stands from a range of charities who raise awareness of global health inequalities.</p>	<p>All Day Information stands from a range of charities who raise awareness of global health inequalities.</p>	<p>All Day Information stands from a range of charities who raise awareness of global health inequalities.</p> <p>Various Times ABOO THEATRE: YOUR STORIES Pop Up Performance</p>
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# TICKETS & BOOKING

## THE THEATRE

### Wednesday 19 October 7pm

**A SON SOON** by Xia Nua / **OUROBOROS** by Swati Simba  
(followed by B!RTH DEBATE)

Tickets £12/£10

### Thursday 20 October 7pm

**Q&Q** by Liwaa Yazji translated by Clem Naylor (Syria) /  
**ORCHID** by Mũmbi Kaigwa (Kenya)  
(followed by B!RTH DEBATE)

Tickets £12/£10

### Clean Break: THESE FOUR WALLS 4pm

(followed by discussion)

Tickets £3.50

### Friday 21 October 7pm

**CHOICE** by Stacey Gregg (UK)  
**THE BIRTH MACHINE** by Marcia Zanelatto, translated by Mateus Ciucci  
(Brazil) (followed by B!RTH DEBATE)  
**SO FAR AS A CENTURY'S REACH** by Kirsten Greenidge (USA)

Tickets £12/£10

### Mighty Heart Theatre: MIGHTY BIRTH 4pm

Tickets £3.50

3 Day Festival Pass £25 (Valid for all performances Weds – Fri)

## Saturday 22 October

On Saturday we'll have a dedicated space for babies and toddlers to play in, and babes in arms are welcome inside the theatre for the individual plays (please note, age guidance for all plays and the final debate is 14+).

### THE THEATRE

10.30am

#### A SON SOON

by Xu Nuo

(translated by Jeremy Tiang)

China

Tickets - £5

11.30am

#### Q&Q

by Liwaa Yazji

(translated by Clem Naylor)

Syria

Tickets - £5

12.45pm

#### SO FAR AS A CENTURY'S REACH

by Kirsten Greenidge

USA

Tickets - £5

2.45pm

#### THE BIRTH MACHINE

by Marcia Zanelatto

(translated by Mateus Ciucci)

Brazil

Tickets - £5

3.45pm

#### OUROBOROS

by Swati Simha

India

Tickets - £5

5.00pm

#### CHOICES

by Stacey Gregg

UK

Tickets - £5

6.00pm

#### ORCHID

by Mūmbi Kaigwa

Kenya

Tickets - £5

7.30pm

#### FINALE BIRTH DEBATE

(in collaboration with

Guardian Live)

Tickets £7.50

All Day Festival Pass £25 (access to all events)

Box Office 0161 833 9833  
royalexchange.co.uk

# HOW TO FIND US

## ROYAL EXCHANGE THEATRE

St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7DH

### **ACCESS** We offer:

Wheelchair spaces in the Theatre and Studio  
Lift access from St Ann's Square to the Great Hall  
Infra-red assisted hearing facilities  
A warm welcome to assistance dogs

### **Metrolink**

Nearest Metrolink stops are Exchange Square, Market Street and St Peter's Square. For up to date information please check [metrolink.co.uk](http://metrolink.co.uk)

### **Bus**

Many bus stops are within a 5 minute walk. Some free city centre Metroshuttles stop on Deansgate, a 5 minute walk from the theatre. Please check [tfgm.com/buses](http://tfgm.com/buses)

### **Train**

We are a 10 minute walk from Victoria Station and a 15 minute walk from Oxford Road and Piccadilly Stations

### **Parking**

There are over 3000 car parking spaces within a 10 minute walk of the Theatre. If you park in the Market Place NCP (by Renaissance Hotel) you can validate your ticket at our Box Office and receive five hours parking for just £6

# BIRTH

A Global Festival of Theatre and Debate

# B ! R T H

## A Global Festival of Theatre and Debate

### BOX OFFICE

0161 833 9833

[birthdebate.com](http://birthdebate.com)

[royalexchange.co.uk/birth](http://royalexchange.co.uk/birth)

@birthdebate

[facebook.com/birthdebate](https://facebook.com/birthdebate)

The Granada  
Foundation

theguardianlive



MANCHESTER  
The University of Manchester

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