



ThickSkin

Pigeon

15th Aug 2025, 7pm

16th Aug 2025, 2pm & 7pm

Written by Joseph Walsh

Directed by Neil Bettles

royalexchange.co.uk

All tickets are Pay What You Can

Local Exchange Festival
Fred Longworth High School
Printshop Lane,
M29 8JN

A play about community,
family folklore and what
it means to fly away and
never return.

Artwork Design: Rowdah Charbak

GMCA GREATER
MANCHESTER
COMBINED
AUTHORITY



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Pigeon

by Joseph Walsh

Commissioned and Produced by Royal Exchange Theatre in association with ThickSkin

Have you ever seen a baby pigeon?

About the production

Debs is convinced she saw a man turn into a pigeon outside The Bridge Inn in 1987. 20 years later she is still telling the tale to anyone who will listen. The pub now stands abandoned, set to be demolished to make way for a new housing estate, and Debs is on a mission to save it! But something strange is slowly happening. What starts as a twinge in her back, becomes something more bizarre than she could possibly imagine.

Pigeon was commissioned by the Royal Exchange Theatre, following conversations with our Ambassadors about what they wanted for the Local Exchange Festival programme. Fed up with the same stories about the area that focused on ‘coal, cotton and canals’, they asked for a play about folklore, local stories and community. Then once writer, Joseph Walsh, met with the Ambassadors and gathered their stories, Pigeon was born.

About the Royal Exchange Theatre

Manchester’s Royal Exchange Theatre Company transforms the way people see theatre, each other and the world around them. Our historic building was taken over by artists in 1976 and today it is an award-winning cultural charity that produces new theatre in-the-round, in communities, on the road and online. The 50th anniversary programme announcement will take place on 15 September 2025.

About Local Exchange

Local Exchange is the Royal Exchange Theatre’s innovative Community Engagement programme that takes us across Greater Manchester, working with local people to create exciting and joyful arts projects in their area. Including plays, workshops, training and a community-made arts festival in The Den!

About ThickSkin

Wigan’s very own award-winning theatre company. ThickSkin creates bold, boundary-pushing productions—live, digital, and multi-format—for audiences across the UK and beyond.

Creative Team

Writer.....Joseph Walsh
Director.....Neil Bettles
Jerwood Associate Artist.....Anna Berentzen
Designer.....Eleanor Ferguson
Sound Designer.....Neil Bettles
Casting Director.....Olivia Barr
RET's Associate Director (Interim).....Andy Barry

Den Producer.....Hester Cox
Local Exchange Coordinator.....Esme Moszynska
ThickSkin Associate Producer.....Abi Beaven

Stage Manager.....Ella Kirk
Technical Manager.....Matt Lever
Sound Operator.....Max Schule
Lighting Operator.....Tom Sutcliffe

Cast

Debs.....Polly Lister
Liam.....Tarek Slater
Hollie.....Lauren Sturgess

The Locals

Fiona Allison	Alesha Mutimukulu
Lauren Allister	Jean Naylor
Tasha Banks	Andrea Peters
Christopher Johnson	Stewart Racle
Harry Keefe	Richard Toole
Val Matthews	

Thank you

A huge thank you to the Ambassadors who shared their stories for the development of the play, to all the people who attended the community auditions and everyone who helped to share the opportunity.

As part of our aim to become a more greener and sustainable organisation, we want to minimise our paper printing.

Thank you for helping us with this mission by accessing this programme online. If you do require a printed version for further accessibility, please speak to a member of the team.

Stay in touch

@rxtheatre    

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