

# DETENTION DIALOGUES

**ice&fire Actors for Human Rights  
Scottish Detainee Visitors**

The *Refuge* series is supported by  
**British Council, Edinburgh Futures Institute  
at the University of Edinburgh and  
Claire and Mark Urquhart**

Made possible through the  
**PLACE Programme**  
In collaboration with  
**Scottish Refugee Council**

Sunday 21 August 7.30pm

## **THE STUDIO**

The performance lasts approximately  
1 hour 30 minutes with one interval.

Please ensure that all mobile phones  
and electronic devices are switched off  
or put on silent.



# REFUGE

**A celebration of the profound contribution to arts and culture  
given by the movement of people across the globe**

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Artists are often the vanguards of community life and social justice. This is why they play such an important role in illuminating the commonalities and the complexities of humanity, wherever they find themselves rooted or uprooted in the world. Yet they are especially at risk of censorship, harassment, criminalisation and persecution when their work gives voice to ideas, imagination and freedom of expression, and when they inspire others to do so too.

*Refuge* invites and weaves together the perspectives of artists who have taken different journeys. Perspectives and journeys that remind us that people are often carrying more than we can see or know. They are always listening, attuning, questioning and making: these are exceptional minds. This series is a rich tapestry of experiences, stories, poetry, performance, challenges and resistance.

**Soizig Carey**  
**Arts and Cultural Development Officer**  
**Scottish Refugee Council**

Scottish Refugee Council is honoured to collaborate with the Edinburgh International Festival and mark this very special anniversary year. This has been a year of terrible stories. War in Ukraine, unrest in Afghanistan, families stranded and separated by bureaucracy, Rwandan detention centres and people left with no option but to risk their lives on dangerous journeys in a desperate bid to reach a place of safety. In this relentless fight for human rights and freedoms, we must not forget to reflect on hard-won triumphs as well. Had Rudolf Bing not sought and been granted refugee protection here 75 years ago, this world-class festival may not exist. The cultural fabric of Scotland would be very different. We are in awe of his legacy, and of the exceptional artists performing as part of *Refuge*.

**Sabir Zazai**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Scottish Refugee Council**

# SCOTTISH REFUGEE COUNCIL

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Scottish Refugee Council is Scotland's leading independent charity dedicated to supporting people in need of refugee protection. Since 1985, it has supported refugee integration and inclusion through provision of specialist advice and advocacy to people seeking protection in Scotland.

The people it works with have fled horrific situations around the world and come from countries where conflict is rife and human rights abuses common. When people arrive in Scotland, a new journey begins. The UK's asylum system is tough and takes its toll on individuals and families. Settling into a foreign country and a whole new system can be disorientating and challenging.

Through its direct services it provides practical support, advice and a listening ear to help people rebuild their lives in a sustainable and meaningful way. It speaks out against an unjust asylum system and campaigns for changes that make a positive difference to people's lives. To date it has supported more than 25,000 refugees arriving and living in Scotland.

Find out more about its work:  
[www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk](http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk)

# DETENTION DIALOGUES

**ICE&FIRE ACTORS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
SCOTTISH DETAINEE VISITORS**



Cast includes

**Nalini Chetty  
Bruce Fummey  
Michelle Hopewell  
Benjamin Osugo**

The post-show talk will include

**Steven Ritchie  
Pinar Asku  
Kate Alexander**

# CREATOR'S NOTE

*Detention Dialogues* is a series of verbatim scripts featuring the voices of refugees from different countries and continents.

Created as part of ice&fire's Actors For Human Rights project, in collaboration with Scottish Detainee Visitors, this piece of documentary theatre allows people to share their own story, in their own words. The testimonies tell of people's experiences being held in immigration removal facilities across the UK, revealing uncomfortable truths which all too often go unheard.

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*Detention Dialogues* began in 2017 after a public performance of ice&fire's *Asylum Monologues* in Bedford, attended by members of the Yarl's Wood Befrienders group. After speaking to them and hearing of the work they were involved in, I realised I had no idea about what the Scottish equivalent was doing where I lived. I made contact with Scottish Detainee Visitors, got involved as a volunteer in their Life After Detention (LAD) group and the *Detention Dialogues* project began soon after.

As the only Immigration Removal Centre in Scotland, Dungavel sits in what feels like the middle of nowhere. As you drive through the South Lanarkshire countryside there are no landmarks to speak of, just a sign at the side of the road, which you could very easily drive past, directing you through a tree lined road which then clears to reveal an ominous building surrounded by

cameras and wire. When I first visited in 2017 at the start of the project, I didn't really know what happened here. It was less than an hour's drive from my home in the Southside of Glasgow but it felt like another world and one that so many people know very little about.

Every person I spoke to as part of the *Detention Dialogues* project has spent time in Dungavel, often as one stage of being moved around the UK's various immigration detention estates.

This project exists to communicate what that process is like for the people who have been through it, to raise awareness and to foster empathy.

Indefinite detention is a humiliating and deeply isolating process for those who have spent time in immigration removal centres. In sharing their stories, every person I met felt it crucial that

their experience be shared with an audience who might otherwise have no idea that people in their communities are still being subjected to such hostile treatment.

These testimonies are distressing and can be uncomfortable to hear but they are true and, as a result, extremely important in helping us acknowledge a lived experience which has all too often gone unheard. Thank you for listening.

© **Steven Ritchie**

Steven Ritchie is Director of Actors for Human Rights Scotland.

# ICE&FIRE THEATRE COMPANY ACTORS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS SCOTLAND

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Director **Steven Ritchie**

ice&fire explores human rights stories through performance for a wide range of audiences throughout the UK. The company develops original theatre pieces shaped by human rights testimony, documentary evidence and by working closely with people and communities. From full-scale productions to small pieces with vulnerable groups, its work aims to be provocative, principled and innovative, and to inspire artists and audiences to create positive change. Actors for Human Rights is ice&fire theatre's national outreach network, founded in 2006 and now comprising hundreds of professional actors throughout the UK who are dedicated to drawing public attention to contemporary human rights concerns.

# SCOTTISH DETAINEE VISITORS

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Director **Kate Alexander**

Scottish Detainee Visitors is a small charity that supports people in immigration detention in Dungavel and advocates for detention reform. Since 2001, when Dungavel opened as a detention centre, and only interrupted by COVID-19, its volunteers have been visiting the centre twice a week to offer support to the people held there indefinitely. The charity offers a range of practical and emotional support. Its policy work aims to ensure that the people and decision-makers of Scotland are aware of the impact of detention, and alternatives to it.