


**EDINBURGH
INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL**

LAMENT FOR SHEKU BAYOH

—

National Theatre of Scotland

25–28 Aug 7.30pm; 26, 28 Aug 2.30pm
BSL 25 Aug 7.30pm; AD CAP 28 Aug 2.30pm

THE LYCEUM

The performance lasts approx. 1hr 30mins with no interval.

*Contains strong language and descriptions
of brutality and racial violence*

Co-produced by Edinburgh International Festival,
National Theatre of Scotland and Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh

Made possible through the
PLACE programme

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

LAMENT FOR SHEKU BAYOH

Hannah Lavery Writer & Director

Kirsty Currie Designer

Beldina Odenyo Composer & Musician

Cast

Saskia Ashdown

Patricia Panther

Courtney Stoddart

Elle Taylor Production Manager

Ali Low Stage Supervisor

Andy Stuart Sound Supervisor

Amy Dolan Company Stage Manager

PROGRAMME NOTE

Lament for Sheku Bayoh is a keening for a man who has been much maligned. It is also a provocation written in response to the lack of awareness to the family's long campaign for answers.

I wanted to write a lament informed by what could I discover with no special access, what anyone could find out – if they chose too. The lament comes out of all that research and all those silences too – all that turning away.

I was deeply affected by the testimony of his family and his friends, and how that contrasted with the racial stereotypes and tropes that were used to describe Sheku Bayoh. I wanted to honour the campaign's effort – all that love – and their insistence that Sheku Bayoh was due more, with a lament that attempts to give a public space and demand dignity for their grief and anger. It is in the tradition of keeners, a demonstration and call for solidarity.

I wrote the *Lament* in 2019 and maybe now more people know about Sheku Bayoh and understand better what the racist tropes used to describe him mean, but we're not the country we promote

to others and more importantly to ourselves.
People in Scotland who experience racism have
to spend so much time getting people to admit racism
actually exists – it is exhausting. The provocation
within this play is a challenge to that devastating
lie we tell ourselves – *There's nae problem here*.
There is and we all deserve better, Sheku Bayoh
deserved better.

Hannah Lavery, Writer & Director

HANNAH LAVERY

Hannah Lavery is a poet, playwright, performer and director.

The Drift, her autobiographical lyric play, toured Scotland as part of the National Theatre of Scotland's 2019 season. In 2020, she was awarded a New Playwrights' Award by the Playwrights' Studio Scotland, and selected by Owen Sheers as one of his Ten Writers Asking Questions That Will Shape Our Future for the International Literature Showcase, a project from the National Writing Centre and the British Council. She was also selected as one of the Scottish Voices for the BBC Writers' Room.

In November 2020, her highly acclaimed play *Lament for Sheku Bayoh* was directed by Hannah in a co-production with the Royal Lyceum Theatre, National Theatre of Scotland and Edinburgh International Festival. She is one of Imagine's Accelerator Artists and an Associate Artist with the National Theatre of Scotland, as well as Writer in Residence at Lyceum Youth Theatre, and her play for children commissioned by Imagine, which was shared as a work in progress at Edinburgh International Children's Festival in May 2021,

will be developed for a full production for 2023. She was also recently selected for the Adopt a Playwright Award by offwestend.com.

She is writing a play called *The Raven* for Wonderfools' Positive Stories for Negative Times, and is also co-writing a walking audio play, *Eavesdropping (Edinburgh)*, with Thickskin and the Traverse Theatre for this year's Edinburgh Fringe. Her adaptation of *Jekyll and Hyde*, commissioned by Pitlochry Festival Theatre, is being premiered as part of the theatre's summer season 2021.

Her poetry has been published widely, and her poem *Scotland, you're no mine* was selected by Roseanne Watt as one of the best Scottish poems of 2019. Her pamphlet *Finding Seaglass* was published by Stewed Rhubarb Press in 2019. Her poetry film, *Thirteen Fragments*, in partnership with the National Theatre of Scotland and Royal Society of Edinburgh, is premiered this August.

NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND

National Theatre of Scotland is a theatre without walls. We don't have our own building. Instead, we bring theatre to you. From the biggest stages to the smallest community halls, we showcase Scottish culture at home and around the world. We have performed in airports and tower blocks, submarines and swimming pools, telling stories in ways you have never seen before. We want to bring the joy of theatre to everyone. Since we were founded in 2006, we have produced hundreds of shows and toured all over the world. We strive to amplify the voices that need to be heard, tell the stories that need to be told and take work to wherever audiences are to be found.

www.nationaltheatrescotland.com

ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE EDINBURGH

The Royal Lyceum Theatre Company is Scotland's leading producing theatre, led by Artistic Director David Greig. With a strong reputation for excellence in both classical and contemporary work, the Lyceum is committed to developing Scotland's considerable indigenous talents while presenting the best of international drama. The Company rehearses in its own rooms opposite the theatre, and costumes and sets are designed and built at the Lyceum's workshops in Roseburn.

The company has been resident at the Royal Lyceum Theatre since 1965 and has been shaped by artistic and associate directors including Tom Fleming, Ian Woolridge, Kenny Ireland, Bill Bryden and Richard Eyre. Throughout its long history, the company has welcomed many stars to its stage including David Tennant, Alan Cumming, Emily Mortimer, Tony Conti, Ian McKellan and Marlene Dietrich. In Season 2015/16 the company celebrated its 50th anniversary with an acclaimed season programmed by outgoing artistic director Mark Thomson, which included the award-winning,

sell-out return of Brian Cox and Bill Patterson to the Scottish stage in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. The company also runs a varied engagement and outreach programme through our Creative Learning team and at the heart of our offering to young people is the Lyceum Youth Theatre, which has given many Scottish actors a start on the stage and inspired many others with new-found confidence and friendships that stand the test of time.


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AT HOME

in partnership with



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from Wed 25 Aug to Tue 31 Aug.

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