


**EDINBURGH
INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL**

YOU BURY ME

This rehearsed reading is presented by
Paines Plough, Ellie Keel Productions and 45North.

13, 14 Aug 7.30pm

14 Aug 2.30pm

BSL CAP 14 Aug 7.30pm

THE LYCEUM

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

Made possible through the
PLACE programme

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

YOU BURY ME

**Paines Plough, Ellie Keel Productions
and 45North**

Ahlam

Writer

Katie Posner

Director

Paines Plough

Charlotte Bennett

Joint Artistic Director

Katie Posner

Joint Artistic Director

Holly Gladwell

Executive Producer

Matt Maltby

Producer

Ellie Keel Productions

Ellie Keel

Executive Producer

45North

Jessica Rose McVay

Creative Director & CEO

Emily Carewe

Creative Producer for Theatre

Charlie Lees-Massey

Creative Producer for Theatre

Cast

Sharif Afifi	Osman
Nezar Alderazi	Rafik
Omar Baroud	Tamer
Hanna Khogali	Alia
Hiba Medina	Maya
Sara Faraj	Lina

PROGRAMME NOTES

I first started work on *You Bury Me* in 2015.

I think one of the reasons I was able to write this play was because I moved to the UK to study in 2011, so I've had the necessary distance. When the Arab Spring uprisings happened, there was a substantial amount of artistic work made in urgent response to the events. A lot of artists were at the forefront of the demonstrations, which were violently attacked. People died, lots of people lost friends, family, colleagues. It's been ten years and it still hurts to think about what happened. The trauma is still ongoing.

I never set out to write a play on life after the uprising. I wanted to write a play about young people fumbling their way through love, sex and discovering who they are in Cairo. Originally it was about figuring out how to love when living in a police state with a superficially conservative society. Although I was at a distance from the revolution (and the subsequent counter-revolution), it still affected me, and it became impossible for me not to write about it. I could not write about young people and love and self-discovery, without writing about the revolution

and the brutality that followed it. People (especially young people) were being punished for daring to dream of a better/fairer future, for daring to speak out, for daring to be happy or hopeful. I couldn't just ignore that.

Ahlam, Playwright, *You Bury Me*

Paines Plough and Ellie Keel Productions founded the Women's Prize for Playwriting in 2019 to dispel the myth that women can't — and don't — write 'big plays', with the aim to directly challenge the imbalance of female voices currently represented on Britain's stages. In its first year, we had over 1,100 submissions and it took a team of 20 readers and a judging panel of outstanding female creatives to reach a shortlist and award two winners — Amy Trigg for *Reasons You Should(n't) Love Me*, which has just finished its premiere at the Kiln Theatre, London, and Ahlam for *You Bury Me*. I distinctly remember reading *You Bury Me* for the first time during one of the rounds for the Prize. I was blown away by its searing dialogue and each of its richly drawn characters, all navigating life in a police state. As soon as I finished it, I wanted to inhale it all again — and I did! Its ambition translates way beyond the page and its political undercurrent takes hold of us and refuses to let go.

In setting up the prize, we committed to making change to the voices heard in theatres across the UK. In its first 18 months we have done exactly that — two brand new, female voices with two extraordinary plays, both totally different but equally as bold and rich will be performed

to live audiences. After the past year of separation and silence on our stages, the Prize's mission couldn't be more pressing and its legacy more joyful.

Katie Posner, Director, *You Bury Me*

AHLAM

Ahlam has taken her grandmother's former stage name — the shared name makes her feel closer to her late grandmother and brings her comfort. For those that don't speak Arabic, the name translates to 'Dreams', which feels like a fitting name for the writer of this play. Ahlam spends a lot of time analysing her own dreams (a skill learnt from her grandmother) as a way of understanding her emotions, and thinks a lot about the emancipatory power of dreaming and daydreaming.

You Bury Me is the only play she's written using this name, but it's not the only play she's written in general.

KATIE POSNER

Katie Posner joined Paines Plough as Joint Artistic Director with Charlotte Bennett in August 2019. She is currently directing the Paines Plough Roundabout 2021 season, which includes *Hungry* by Chris Bush, *Really Big and Really Loud* by Phoebe Eclair-Powell and *Black Love* by Chinonyerem Odimba, which she is co-directing with Chinonyerem Odimba.

Posner is an experienced and award-winning director. She has worked across a wide variety of productions both overseas and on national tours, including multiple productions with York Theatre Royal and Pilot Theatre, with whom she was Associate Director from 2009 until 2017. Her work encompasses both intimate pieces of new writing and larger-scale community pieces. In 2019, Posner received a UK Theatre Award nomination as Best Director with her production of *My Mother Said I Never Should* at Theatre By The Lake.

Her recent productions include *My Mother Said I Never Should* (Theatre By The Lake), *Mold Riots* (Theatr Clwyd) and *The Seven Ages Of Patience* (Kiln Theatre).

Recent credits include *Swallows & Amazons* (Storyhouse), *Babe* (Mercury Theatre), *Playing Up* (NYT), *Finding Nana* (New Perspectives), *Made In India* (Tamasha, Belgrade, Pilot), *Everything Is Possible: The York Suffragettes* (York Theatre Royal), *The Season Ticket* (Northern Stage), *A View From Islington North* (Out Of Joint), *In Fog And Falling Snow* (National Railway Museum), *Running On The Cracks* (Tron Theatre), *End Of Desire* (York Theatre Royal), *York Mystery Plays* (Museum Gardens York) and *Blackbird*, *Ghost Town*, *Clocking In*, *A Restless Place* (Pilot Theatre).

PAINES PLOUGH

Paines Plough tours celebrated new stories, performing them wherever you are across the UK. Founded in 1974, we have worked with over 300 outstanding British playwrights including James Graham, Sarah Kane, Dennis Kelly, Mike Bartlett, Sam Steiner, Elinor Cook, Vinay Patel, Zia Ahmed and Kae Tempest.

Our plays are nationally identified and locally heard. As a touring theatre company dedicated to new writing, we find, develop and empower writers across the country and share their explosive new stories with audiences all over the UK and beyond.

We tour to over 40 places a year and are committed to bringing work to communities who might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience much new writing or theatre. We reach over 30,000 people annually from Cornwall to the Orkney Islands, in village halls and in our own pop-up theatre Roundabout, a state of the art, in-the-round auditorium that travels the length and breadth of the country.

Our shows might appear in your local theatre, park, community centre, market square, university campus, on the seafront, or online. Our audio app COME TO WHERE I'M FROM hosts 180 original mini plays about home, and our digital projects connect with audiences via WhatsApp, phone, email and even by post.

Wherever you are you can experience a Paines Plough Production.



'The lifeblood of the UK's theatre ecosystem.'

The Guardian

'I think some theatre just saved my life.'

@kate_clement on Twitter

ELLIE KEEL PRODUCTIONS

Ellie Keel Productions is a multi-award-winning company that commissions, develops and produces new theatre and audio productions. Credits include *Collapsible* by Margaret Perry (Bush Theatre, Abbey Theatre, HighTide Festival and tour), the smash-hit shows *HOTTER* and *FITTER* by Mary Higgins and Ell Potter (Soho Theatre and on tour), *Still No Idea* by Lisa Hammond and Rachael Spence (Traverse Theatre, Southbank Centre and tour) and *Reasons You Should(n't) Love Me* by Amy Trigg for Audible.

EKP is the co-founding partner (with Paines Plough) of The Women's Prize for Playwriting and co-produces this major prize on an annual basis.

45NORTH

45North is an award-winning production company that champions, develops and produces outstanding work by female-identifying and non-binary artists. Founded in 2019 and working with the very best creative teams from a variety of performing and producing backgrounds, we continue to reinvest in emerging artists who are beginning and expanding their practices through our seed commission schemes.

45North commits to maintaining creative teams of no less than 75% female-identifying or non-binary people, working to bring inclusive and exciting new theatre and events to our audiences. Based in Hackney and beginning in 2021, 45North commits to no less than 40% People of the Global Majority across our creative teams.

We take risks to challenge our ideas of self and the world in which we live. We encourage our audiences to do the same.

Selected credits include *Post-Mortem* by Iskandar Sharazuddin (Edinburgh, The Blue Room and Holden Street Theatre), *(un)written (un)heard*

devised by the company and directed by Jessica Rose McVay (Fringe world – Winner of the Physical Theatre and Dance Award), *Meat* by Gillian Greer (Theatre503), *Reasons You Should(n't) Love Me* (Kiln Theatre) and *Written on the Waves* Seasons 1 and 2 (online).



AT HOME

in partnership with



This performance will also be available to watch online free of charge, from Tue 17 to Thu 19 Aug.

Visit **eif.co.uk/AtHome**



AUDIENCE SURVEY

We are delighted to welcome audiences back to live performances. The past year has been one of the most challenging in the International Festival's history, so your feedback is more important to us than ever. Anyone who completes the survey will be entered into a prize draw for a chance to win £200 in vouchers of your choice.

Visit **eif.co.uk/survey** to participate



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