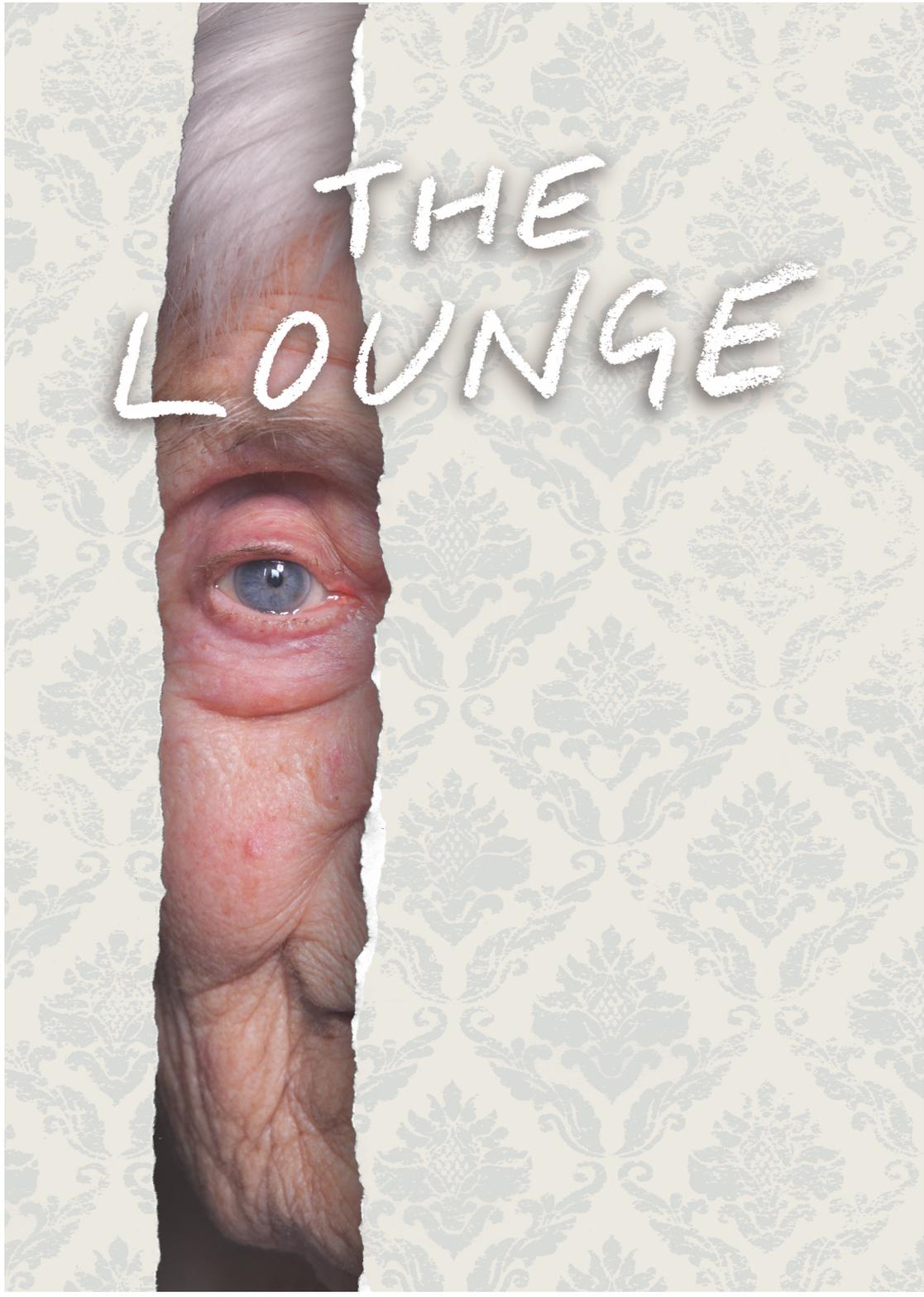


INSPECTOR SANDS



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

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BROCHURE COPY

China Plate presents

THE LOUNGE

By Inspector Sands

Commissioned by Harlow Playhouse

Supported by South Street Reading and Artsdepot

97 years go by in a flash.

An afternoon lasts an eternity

In a care home lounge somewhere off the A1, 97 year old Marsha Hewitt begins the last day of her life. But she cannot go quietly. As the radiators burn and Jeremy Kyle blares, rivalries, relatives and murderous impulses jostle for space on the Axminster carpet.

By teatime, a riot is brewing.

The award-winning Inspector Sands (*A High Street Odyssey, If That's All There Is, Hysteria*) shine a light on how we cope, or fail to cope, with growing older.

Supported by a Wellcome Trust Arts Award, The Sackler Trust and using public funds from The National Lottery through Arts Council England.

"Funny, clever and breathtakingly moving" **The Scotsman** ★★★★★

"Mischievous... with a generous dash of the fantastical." **The Stage** ★★★★★

#TheLoungePlay

Running time: 1 hour 20 minutes

Age range: 12+

Brochure/lead image: Please contact kaya@chinaplatetheatre.com for high res versions.

ABOUT THE SHOW

We are voyaging into a new realm of human life that has hardly existed before, an age where nearly one in five people currently in the UK will live to see their 100th birthday. Extreme old age defines the fastest growing sector of our society, yet we are collectively making little concrete provision for the personal and social impact this is going to have.

The Lounge is a funny, absurd and moving exploration of life and autonomy in older age. In their characteristically absurdist style, Inspector Sands explore the way we as a nation cope, or fail to cope, with the process of ageing we are all engaged in - young and old.

“The ageing narrative is implicitly contained in the body of an older person and we literally do not want to accept or imagine what we will become. But we must imagine if we are to engage - the young fighting the corner of the old, if only because we will join their ranks.”

Dr Daniel Davis, medical collaborator on *The Lounge*.

THE SHOW

The Lounge is a farce played both at high speed and breath-takingly slowly. The company, three actors in their late 30s, play characters in their very late 90s. Much of the playfulness of the piece stems from the performers' attempt to imagine their bodies as they might be in the last years of their lives. With their trade-mark physical dexterity Inspector Sands move between playing care-workers and those they care for.

BACKGROUND

Created by the award-winning and endlessly inventive Inspector Sands, *The Lounge* is the culmination of an extensive research and development period sparked by their performance of *Mass Observation*, the headline show at the Almeida's Summer Festival. Throughout it's development the show was presented as work in progress performances at the National Theatre and the Bush Theatre as well as workshops in Day Centres for the elderly and with youth groups.

The show premiered to critical acclaim at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2016.

Throughout the development of the show the company have collaborated with biomedical experts from Newcastle, UCL and Cambridge Universities and Barts Health organisation, headed by Julian Hughes, Professor of Philosophy of Ageing, Consultant in Old Age Psychiatry. These experts have supported and influenced the creative process, offering invaluable insight into the medical and social impact of ageing, both as an individual and as a society.

INSPECTOR SANDS

Inspector Sands is a multi-award winning, London-based theatre company, whose work has toured nationally and internationally to critical acclaim. The joint artistic directors are Ben Lewis, Giulia Innocenti and Lucinka Eisler. They have created work for UK venues including the Almeida, the Lyric Hammersmith, the South Bank Centre, the National Theatre and the BAC.

Inspector Sands create theatre that is irreverent, emotionally charged, often tragic, usually comic, sometimes silly and always serious. They have a particular interest in the way that global events and trends are reflected in the minutiae of everyday life. They seek the epic in the everyday and the everyday in the epic.

Past shows include *Hysteria* (Total Theatre Award, 2006) and *If That's All There Is* (Edinburgh International Festival Fringe Award, 2009), both of which were selected for the British Council Showcase and went on to tour extensively in the UK and to countries including China, Russia, USA, Armenia, Romania and Germany.

China Plate have developed, produced and toured three of Inspector Sands' recent projects – *Rock Pool* (a kind of crustacean *Waiting For Godot* for anyone over the age of 3), *Mass Observation* (commissioned for the Almeida Festival of new work) and *A High Street Odyssey* (a promenade audio-tour of the high street, which has toured sell out shows to UK town centres for three successive years).

The company has also been commissioned to create a series of new audio pieces for children by the Discover Story Centre in Stratford: *Undiscovered*, a site specific audio tour of the Discover building, *Top Secret*, a detective story trail installation, and *The Librarian*, which is currently touring to libraries in London. They are also working on an adaptation of *Wuthering Heights*.

MASS OBSERVATION PLATFORM

As well as providing a rich and exceptional theatrical experience, *The Lounge* aims to open up wider conversations about personal and societal approaches to ageing and the elderly. To help encourage that dialogue, there will be a Mass Observation Platform that can be used by audiences and the general public to share their thoughts.

The platform can be accessed by following [mass_observation](#) on Instagram.

Audiences will be asked to record a 60 second video or write down their responses/thoughts and photograph them or have open conversations with the company about their responses three questions on ageing and mortality.

This platform will exist throughout the development of the show and beyond creating an online archive of the public's attitude towards ageing. We will be asking venues to send out a post show feedback form to audiences members asking them for their thoughts on the production and encouraging them to engage with the platform.

Read more about the Mass Observation movement here: www.massobs.org.uk



Mass_observation

TARGET AUDIENCES AND KEY MESSAGES / BENEFITS

- **Previous Inspector Sands audiences** – new production from award-winning company, building on success of *Hysteria* and *If That's All There Is*. Developed following their headline performance of *Mass Observation* at The Almeida in 2014.
- Building on established creative relationships between award-winning designer Jamie Vartan and Inspector Sands associate artists; sound designer, Elena Peña and director Lu Kemp.
- **Existing drama/theatre audiences** - quality devised drama from established, award-winning team. Timely, relevant, funny and thought-provoking piece about ageing in British society.
- Exceptional creative team working collaboratively to devise the show.
- **Existing and potential drama/creative writing/devising groups** - Quality devised drama from established, award-winning creative team and energetic company.
- **Arts professionals** – Opportunity to see Inspector Sands' work professionally staged in new regions around the UK, providing a template for future tour booking.
- **Academic/medical audiences** – Opportunity to see how theatre makers use academic and medical research to inform their work. A chance to see an exceptional piece of theatre that is grounded in and inspired by medical and social research.
- **Caregivers/workers** – quality devised drama that has been inspired by visits to care homes, day centres and hospices. A chance to see an authentic, funny and touring piece of theatre that reflects the relationships built between carers and residents.
- **Students/young people** – Quality, devised drama that has been developed alongside workshops with young people exploring their opinions and reactions to ageing.
- **School / college / university students (studying drama)** – Quality devised drama from established award-winning creative team, to learn from and aspire to, Q&A sessions and post show talks available.
- **Old age groups / community centre residents** – chance to see authentic, funny and touching piece of theatre about under represented members of society on stage.
- **Student drama groups and theatre groups** – Quality devised drama with professional, established team to learn from and aspire to.
- **ALL** – a chance to reflect on personal and social reactions and relationships to ageing and mortality through the *Mass Observation* platform – an online platform of audiences reactions that will be built and developed throughout the shows and beyond.

PERFORMANCE DATES

2017

CONTACT, MANCHESTER

Thurs 20 & Fri 21 April, 7.00pm

0161 274 0600

www.contactmcr.com

SOHO THEATRE, LONDON

Tues 25 April – Sat 20 May, 7.15pm

Sat - 2pm matinees

020 7487 0100

www.sohotheatre.com

PRESS

★★★★★

[Broadway Baby](#)

"has the uncanny ability to twist your heartstrings as often as it makes you laugh...wonderfully dark and surreal"

★★★★★

[Arts Award Voice](#)

"Perfect in every way...intensely emotive and wonderfully creative...a wonderful piece of contemporary theatre."

★★★★★

[Three Weeks](#)

"Inspector Sands doesn't just deliver surreal, dark humour...be brave and confront the future in this dreadful lounge: it's a moving and important story."

★★★★★

[The Stage](#)

"mischievous and pleasing, with a generous dash of the fantastical."

★★★★★

[The Scotsman](#)

"Eisler is unfailingly brilliant as Marsha, funny, clever and breathtakingly moving."

★★★★★

[The Herald](#)

"the knack of being able to hit an audience's funny bone, and then touch on a sore spot that we think we've covered up...[a] sharp nudge to a slumbering social conscience."

★★★★★

[The Arts Desk](#)

"the trio of part-swapping actors are magnificent"

★★★★★

[The Upcoming](#)

"Charmingly funny throughout, frequently surreal, sometimes devastating but ultimately uplifting...one of the best shows you'll see at Edinburgh Fringe 2016."

[Total Theatre](#)

"Hilariously funny, beautifully written and designed, elegantly performed... *The Lounge* is an important piece of work. It's our future we're looking at"

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

"I thought I'd quickly email to say how wonderful it was. Careful, moving, compassionate and exploratory. Tender and tragic. And above all just stunningly caring theatre. Thank you! Made my fringe." **Emily Watson Howes**

"It was marvelous, superb and I have just seen a 5 star review in Broadway Baby. It was very funny, socially observational and psychologically insightful. I loved it and will recommend it." **Professor Patricia Casey**

Twitter

Kid Carpet @KidCarpet

Saw The Lounge by @Inspector_Sands. Really moving and funny. Great actors, sound, lights and design. Thank you for making a brilliant thing

ClareRebekahPointing @ClareRebekah

Keep crying in shows #theloungeplay @YourOldChina @Inspector_Sands is a beautifully observed piece of theatre. Moving& funny @Summerhallery

deryn oliver @shropshirequeen Aug 13

@Inspector_Sands beautifully crafted play with amazing actors aging before the audience's eyes. So moving, funny & honest. #TheLounge.

Emilie Patry @Emiliepatry Aug 12

Love #theloungeplay with every inch of my being. In awe of everyone involved.

@Inspector_Sands

Samuel Pashby @SamuelPashby Aug 14

@Inspector_Sands #TheLounge well worth seeing. Some captivating physical transformations, laugh out loud moments, and heartfelt performances

Dik Downey @DikDowney Aug 11

@Inspector_Sands The Lounge was brilliant today. Beautiful theatre.

Sam Sam Sam Sam Sam @samueljbailey Aug 11

@Inspector_Sands I brought some friends along today after telling them about If That's All There Is. We were all in tears. A beautiful show.

Angel Exit Theatre @angelexit Aug 13

Our #EdFringe has begun with #thelounge by @Inspector_Sands @Summerhallery quietly moving and so well observed.

PRODUCTION IMAGES



CREATIVE TEAM

BEN LEWIS | WRITER/PERFORMER

Ben is joint artistic director of Inspector Sands, co-creating all of their work. Other recent writing credits include an original comedy pilot for the BBC, *The Meet-Cute* (BBC Radio 4), *Psychobitches* (Sky Arts) and *Don Quixote* (Òran Mór). He recently completed Channel 4's 4Screenwriting programme for emerging screenwriters and has TV projects in development with Hat Trick, Hartswood, Objective and Neal Street. With Dafydd James, he co-created the music theatre shows *My Name Is Sue* (Total Theatre Award), *Sue: The Second Coming* (Soho Theatre/Bristol Old Vic) and *The Village Social* (National Theatre of Wales).

LUCINKA EISLER | PERFORMER

Lucinka is Joint Artistic Director of Inspector Sands and has co-created all of their shows to date. For Inspector Sands she has performed in *Hysteria*, *If That's All There Is*, *Portrait of The Ordinary Festival Goer*, *Mass Observation* and *A High Street Odyssey*. Other acting work includes *The Magic Flute* (Complicite at ENO / DNO), *The Pirate Project* (Lucy Foster/ Improbable), *Macbeth - The Abuse of Power* (Contender Charlie/ China Plate), *Short Stories: Florence Nightingale* (BBC/ Lambent) and projects with Shunt, Shams, *The Plasticine Men* and *Wonderful Beast*. Directing credits include *Rock Pool*, *Portrait of the Ordinary Festival Goer* and *A Life in 22 Minutes* (all for Inspector Sands), *Reykjavik* (co-director for Shams - Roundhouse), *Generation* (Central School) and *A Quiet Afternoon*, (Stamping Ground Theatre for Riverside Studios/ BAC). As assistant director Lucinka has worked with Rufus Norris (National Theatre; Young Vic), Theatre O (Barbican) and Di Trevis (Bath Theatre Royal). Lucinka is a visiting lecturer at the Central School of Speech and Drama.

GIULIA INNOCENTI | PERFORMER

Giulia is Joint Artistic Director of Inspector Sands and has co-created and performed in all of the company's work to date. Other acting work includes: *The Mouse and His Child/ The Merry Wives of Windsor/ The 13 Midnight Challenges of Angelus Diablo* (RSC); *Wagner Dream* (Barbican); *Madam Butterfly* (ENO); *1984/ Low Life* (Blind Summit); *Cymbeline* (Kneehigh); ...*Sisters* (The Gate/Headlong); *One Thousand Paper Cranes* (Catherine Wheels); *Pinocchio* (Theatre Royal Northampton); *Macbeth* (New Wolsey); *Lady Macbeth* (Quebracho Theatre, Lille); *Drip* (Attic People). For radio: *The Continuity Man* (BBC) Giulia trained at the Jacques Lecoq School in Paris.

ELENA PEÑA – SOUND DESIGNER

Sound design credits include: *The Christians* (Gate), *Brainstorm* (National), *Islands* (Bush), *The Meet Cute*, *Twelve Years* (BBC Radio Drama), *Seochon Odyssey* (HiSeoul Festival, Korea), *Patrias* (Edinburgh International Festival), *Arabian Nights*, *The Wardrobe* and *Kilburn Passion* (Tricycle), *Not Now Bernard* (Unicorn), *Macbeth* (China Plate), *Pim & Theo* (NIE), *Have Your Circumstances Changed?* and *Yes, These Eyes Are The Windows* (ArtAngel), *Flashes* (Young Vic), *Mass Observation* (Almeida), *Brimstone & Treacle* and *Knives In Hens* (Arcola), *Gambling* (Soho), *The 13 Midnight Challenges of Angelus Diablo* (RSC)

JAMIE VARTAN | DESIGNER

Designs for theatre include *Misterman*, (Irish Times Best Set Design Award 2012, Evening Standard Best Set Design Nomination), Galway, New York and NT Lyttleton ; *Bondagers* (Edinburgh Lyceum), *Ballyturk* (NT Lyttleton), *Khandan* (Royal Court), *Mass Observation* (Almeida), *The Lost Child Trilogy* (David Glass Ensemble), , and productions at Nottingham Playhouse and the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. Current work includes *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Theatre Royal Bath). Recent designs for opera include *The Last Hotel* (Edinburgh Lyceum, & New York). His design for *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (Wexford), won the Irish Times Best Set Design Award 2013. He has exhibited at Prague Quadrennials 1999, 2007 & 2011, and World Stage Design 2013 (WSD 2013 Best Set Design award).

LU KEMP | DIRECTOR

Lu is a theatre director and dramaturg working in new writing, physical theatre and dance. She is Associate Artist with Inspector Sands for whom she directed *Mass Observation* (Almeida Summer Festival 2013), and *If That's All There Is* (which won the Edinburgh International Festival Fringe Award 2009). She will direct their new show *The Lounge* in 2016. Recent work includes *Have Your Circumstances Changed* (Artangel), *Bondagers* (Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh), *Don Quixote* (Oran Mor) and *The Day I Swapped My Dad for Two Goldfish* (National Theatre of Scotland). Lu has worked as a dance dramaturg for the Xchange Birmingham, Rambert, Sadler's Wells and The Place. Lu trained on the LEM at Lecoq, Paris, and with Anne Bogart's SITI Company, New York.

AMY MAE | LIGHTING DESIGNER

Amy graduated from RADA with the Postgraduate Diploma in Stage Electrics and Lighting Design. Prior to this she completed the Stage Management and Performing Arts Degree from the University of Winchester. Design credits include; *Knife Edge* (Pond, Dalston) *Fiddler On The Roof* (Alban Arena) *Orphans* (Southwark Playhouse) *Prize Fights 2016* (RADA) *Hairspray* (Alban Arena) *Macbeth* (Italia Conti) *I'm Not Here Right Now* (Soho Theatre/Paines Ploughs Roundabout) *Cat Couture* (Music Video) *Liola* (New Diorama Theatre) *Punk Rock* (Tristan Bates Theatre) *The Three Sisters* (The Cockpit Theatre) *Sweeney Todd* (Shaftesbury Avenue/Harringtons Pie and Mash Shop) *Two Knoble Kingsmen* (RADA) *Henry V* (RADA) *Pool* (Brockley Jack) *The Gut Girls* (Brockley Jack) *The Legacy* (The Place). Amy won the Knight of Illumination Award in the musicals category for her work on *Sweeney Todd* for Tooting Arts Club.

CHINA PLATE | PRODUCER

China Plate is an independent theatre studio that works with artists, venues, festivals and funders to make original, exciting theatre that plays with form and has narrative at its heart. China Plate are currently collaborating with Caroline Horton, Sarah Punshon, Action Hero, Chris Thorpe, Contender Charlie, Dan Jones and Inspector Sands.

The company are Associate Producers at Warwick Arts Centre where they develop and commission new work, Artistic Associates at the New Wolsey Theatre where they are Directors of PULSE Festival, Programmers of New Directions (the NRTF showcase) and producers of innovative development programmes including *The Darkroom*, *The Optimists* (producer training) and *The First Bite* and *Bite Size* Festivals.

BOX OFFICE NOTES

Dates and Times

[Your Dates and Times]

Company

Inspector Sands and China Plate present

Production

THE LOUNGE

Ticket Prices

[Your Ticket Prices]

Show Information

The Lounge follows a day in the life of Marsha Hewitt, who at the age of 97, has found herself in a care home following a fall. Today she will either die or escape. It has been described as funny, poignant, absurd, moving, expertly performed.

Funded by the Wellcome Trust the show was developed with a number of medical professionals and psychologists over four years of research and development.

The show opened to critical acclaim at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Inspector Sands are an award-winning company – previous productions include Hysteria, If That's all there Is, High Street Odyssey.

Tags

Devised, new writing, Lecoq

Images

High res images are available on request, please contact Kaya Stanley-Money.

Capacity

200

Age Guide

12+

Running Time

1 hour 20 minutes

Twitter Hash tag

#TheLoungePlay

Mass Observation platform

Instagram: mass_observation

CONTACTS

CHINA PLATE

Ed Collier – Co-Director

ed@chinaplatetheatre.com

079 5763 6034



www.chinaplatetheatre.com / www.inspectorsands.com

@youoldchina / @inspector_sands