



UEL Research & Knowledge Exchange Conference 2013

Call for Abstracts

Name & Title of Presenter:	Dr Dominic Hingorani
School:	Arts and Digital Industries – Institute For Performing Arts Development
Co investigators:	
Title of Abstract:	Creating Theatre for Young Audiences: Engaging diverse communities and creating external partnerships – Guantanamo Boy
Key Theme/ Key words:	Theatre - Young People - Community Engagement External Partnership - Arts Funding

Abstract (No more than 400 words):

I was commissioned by Stratford Circus Arts Centre in 2010 to write, direct and produce *Guantanamo Boy*, a play adapted from the critically acclaimed novel for teenagers by Anna Perera. This commission came as a direct result of my teaching and learning practice at UEL in designing and delivering a module on Theatre For Young Audiences for undergraduates at UEL and my research work in this area (currently commissioned by Palgrave for a monograph (2015) *Theatre For Young Audiences – Contemporary Approaches to Practice and Performance*) allied with my experience as a professional theatre maker.

The production premiered at the Stratford Circus Arts Centre in 2012 and while originally programmed for 15 performances, due to demand this was increased to 18 performances attracted audiences of 94% box office.

The production attracted funding from Arts Council (£25,578), Stratford Circus Arts Centre (£16,000 & £4,000), Stanley Johnson Foundation (£1,500), Unity Trust (£1,000) and Victoria Hall Foundation (£1,600).

The production will now undertake a national tour to London, Luton, Birmingham, Colchester, Bolton and Rochdale, where the novel is set, in autumn 2013 supported by Arts Council (£48,964) Human Rights Lawyers Association (£8,000) Stanley Johnson Foundation (2,000) Unity Theatre Trust (£1,000) in association with the Half Moon Young People's Theatre (£9,865)

I should like to discuss the creation of external partnerships and models of community engagement linked to the project exemplified by the creation of the Performing Human Rights Symposium series.

Performing Human Rights Symposium: Stratford Circus (2011)

We created a forum for knowledge exchange between a range of youth groups to discuss the human rights issues raised by the continuing operation of Guantanamo Bay, dramatised in Guantanamo Boy. We brought together young people from local schools and colleges, Youth Amnesty, Muslim Women Writers, Penguin 'Spinebreakers' with practitioners from theatre, literature, human rights lawyers and advocacy organisations enabling creative debate to develop the thinking and understanding of the participants. This event was supported by our partners: Penguin Books, Amnesty International, Stratford Circus, Human Rights Lawyers Association and the University of East London.

Performing Human Rights Symposium: Middle Temple Hall (2013)

We shall convene a further symposium sponsored by the HRLA at Middle Temple Hall, Inns of Court London which will bring together schools groups Tower Hamlets – which is one of the most diverse boroughs in the country and also has one of levels of arts engagement. The event will further develop links with the partners above including MP Ed Davey.

I will also briefly highlight the digital campaign 'Find Khalid' utilising social networking media and initiating a peer led viral campaign that will allow us to respond and develop an on going relationship with our new young audience.

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