



CRIPtic
2021

CRIPtic Arts Podcast, Episode Ten Lata Nobes

Hello everybody. And welcome to another in our wonderful series of podcasts from "CRIPtic Arts". I'm Mik Scarlet and I've been introducing you to the team behind this year's Pit party, that's gonna be "CRIPtic Arts" showcase about disabled, deaf, a new and divergent talent at the Barbican theatre, in the Pit Theatre in the Barbican, I should say, on November the 19th and 20th this year. It's getting really close. It's also gonna be streamed live on the Barbican website as of November the 20th. So if you can't get down to London, you can still see what's gonna be an amazing show. So today what I'm gonna do is introduce you to a new member of the team, the wonderful, Lata Nobes. Hello, Lata, how are you, are you all right?

Ah, yeah, good, thank you, Mik.

Thank you, great, great, great. Now, what I normally do is I ask each person that comes on the podcast to introduce themselves and say a little bit about themselves, a kind of brief bio. So could you please tell us a little bit about yourself?

Yeah, so lovely to be here, Mik. So yeah, my name's Lata. I'm a theatre maker, mainly a theatre director, although I'm a multidisciplinary artist. I do some writing. I'm a musician as well. A bit about my identity as a human, I'm a mixed race, British Indian woman. And I'm neurodivergent so I'm very excited to be part of this showcase with CRIPtic.

Now, how did you become part of the team and you know, what made you want to join our wonderful, happy family?

So there's a few different kind of spheres that I'm in at the moment as an artist. One of those things is I'm a youth worker. I work with young people, particularly those with disabilities and neurodivergent young people, at the same time as working as a freelancer in theatre. And I've been really keen to kind of marry those two worlds together. And the CRIPtic call out for an Assistant Director came up some time ago. My role has kind of evolved a little bit. I'm now associate director on the showcase, which was really, really exciting.

Yeah, I think it's a really important time to be thinking about showcasing the work of artists who faced problems with access, especially following the pandemic. I think it's incredibly important. We've made some progress with it and we've also taken some steps back, it feels to me, since we've come back into the real world, I suppose. So it's a, yeah, really great time to be working with CRIPtic.

I suppose that's the thing about CRIPtic, isn't it? It's got this ethos, that says it's gonna try and get new talent that does face all of these barriers to wear to the public view. And was that part of what drove you to want to get involved?

Yeah, I think for me, it's really, really important that when we make art specifically with disabled artists, that it is of very high quality and that, something that really excited me about the work of CRIPtic was the description, Jamie's description of it as very good quality, radical, experimental art that is disability arts and those two things not being in conflict with one another. That's very, very exciting to me. I think that in my work, I've often found, that organisations really separate the two things. They separate their work with access and they work with community and their work with artists. And those two things are kind of separate. And that's quite infuriating to me. I think in terms of neurodivergence, particularly, it is something that I think gives me and other neurodivergent artists that I've worked with a real strength, a real kind of unique outlook that helps you look on things critically, thoughtfully, and to produce things that are really radical and exciting and making change in all sorts of ways in terms of disability and access, but also just society and all of its many absurdities, so yeah.

Definitely the show, it's definitely gonna be exploring that from all different angles, isn't it?

Yes.

But we'll talk a little bit about the show in a bit. What I want to know first is tell us a bit about your experience in the theatre. What have you done before?

So I've made a lot of my own work. I've self produced. So a lot of my work has a particular focus on music. So I don't tend to do musicals or I've not yet done a musical, but I make plays that are about music or concern music or have the auditory at their core. So before I was a theatre maker, I was a musician, a classical musician, originally. And that's kind of widened and I'm now interested in all kinds of music. And like that's also has got me very interested in the musicality of language and the way that people communicate. So the importance of silence and the rhythm of words and the sound of words. So I'm very interested in poetry and verse, texts and, again, terms of CRIPtic, I think it's a fascinating area in terms of who speaks, who doesn't speak, who has listened to, who has heard, how we communicate when we can't speak, or to people that can't hear. So yeah, communication is really important to me and I feel that that's very connected with my interest in music.

Yes, it is one of the things I love about what the way that CRIPtic has been working with the artist is introducing them to the idea of inclusive, creative practice. The idea that just as your impairment bars you from one means of communication, you might still have to consider that for those people that can have that ability to communicate in that way, but also you have to introduce new ways for others who communicate differently. I love that, and I think that is one of the things that both you and Jamie have brought, I think is gonna be something very special. Now, what made you think, "The arts, that's the career for me"?

Oh, that's a really good question, Mik. I think that I, maybe this is a bit of a pretentious thing to say, but I think it's true.

[Mik] It's an arts podcast, come on.

Yeah, let's be pretentious. I think I grew up an artist. I think that that's always who I was. As I said, I, somebody that, I've always found I have an outsider's perspective. I look on things creatively and differently. I've always used music as an outlet to express and writing. And also I've always been fascinated by other people's creativity and facilitating that and working with people to just do, make interesting things, and comment on the world that we live in. And as I say, comment on the worlds we live in, but also just making things that are beautiful or shocking, and I love the way that theatre, particularly, like I discovered it as a teen and really the feeling of going into a theatre and having a communal experience with many people and leaving and knowing that you've had some kind of similar experience to all of those other people. And that's empowering.

Yeah. There is something very special about the fact that, you know, that while you're gonna be seeing something that other people will see or only the people that have seen it the night you've seen it, have seen exactly what you see. And there is something wonderful about that. And I think that's also gonna be part of what is gonna make CRIPtic, right? It's only two nights, but it's still, there's still gonna be that joy of the live experience that I think, you know, hopefully, we'll capture on the Barbican and online streaming as well, but yes, it will be a joy to be there. I know that I'll be watching from the wings.

Yeah, absolutely...

With a mixture of joy and terror. (both laugh)

It's a massive theatre.

Yeah.

So those things are kind of increased in a space of that width.

What's scary about the Barbican is it's not only big upfront, it's big at behind, like the backstage is just forever, isn't it? So it means that, you know, I think part of my job on the night is gonna be making sure everyone is where they should be. Part of my job is gonna be making sure everyone is exactly where they should be, otherwise, they'll be lost. (laughs)

Yeah, a labyrinth, yeah.

I mean, I'm interested in is what struggles have you faced in your career as a, you know, a disabled creative?

So I think, I'm very aware that in many ways I've been very lucky in my life. I've had many privileges that other people have had. I went to a very prestigious university. I went to Oxford and took music. I kind of look back on my experience there with some skepticism in terms of how hard it was for me. I also look back on the process of working very, very hard to get there with the kind of brain that I have and not being diagnosed at that time.

Right.

So I diagnosed with ADHD a couple of years ago. So I kind of mentioned Oxford because I think it's something that you make assumptions about a person and their capabilities when you hear that someone has that credential. And I think, actually, it's been a bit of a balancing act for me in

terms of the kind of circles that I want to be in because I want to be making work like this and I want to be working with organisations that make really radical, left wing liberal arts, and that credential exists for me. And so there's kind of some difficulty with that, I guess. I think I'm somebody that can come across well. And on other days when I'm having what I would call an ADHD day, I kind of lose many of my abilities in a way, and that's a really frustrating experience for me because I can think of so many opportunities that have just sort of slipped away, to me as a result of that. So yeah, I think some of the barriers are internal as a result of that and some are external, but I've been very lucky to have been supported by a lot of really good organisations and be able to make work. (indistinct)

It's a thread that's coming out throughout all of the interviews is this internal thing that you're not taught or told that this is the career for you. This is the life for you. And even if you do have some of the, you know, luckiness happen and you know, those breaks happen.

Yeah.

You can't be sure that, always it, just luck. You never know it's actually talent. And as for the bad days, well, as you know, poor Anna would probably have to edit this one quite heavily because I'm having a pain day. So I've not been the professional presenter I normally am. Anyway, moving swiftly on that, so what do you see for the future? What do you see for the future of Lata?

That's a really good question. I feel that I'm in between things at the moment and I'm kind of working out what the next step is. I've been lucky enough to have lots of work post pandemic. During pandemic, I worked a bit with, well, I was made a creative associates of a company called Lazarus' Company. They work on classic texts and I've really loved the work I've done with them. It's been very influential in my practice, like text based practice. And when the pandemic, well, I was about to say when the pandemic ended, that would be nice. The pandemic has ended.

One day.

I then directed a play at the Greenhouse Theatre, which is a zero waste venue, that was during this summer. And that was really, really exciting work that was genuinely, it's, yes, zero waste, so it's sustainable there to practice, that I got huge amounts out of. So I think, I am now working with CRIPtic and I'm kind of making relationships with various organisations. I just want to keep working.

Yeah.

I want to be in a rehearsal room as much as I possibly can because it's something that gives me energy and it's what I'm here to be doing. So, yeah, but it's hard work. It's hard work getting the work.

Yes, yes, that was a bit of an unfair question, really, because I know that my calendar is completely empty as of me and CRIPtic. (both laugh)

Yeah, it feels like you're in a cliff edge, in a way. I'm like looking at my diary, I've got the next few weeks of being in the rehearsal room for CRIPtic and of which I'm incredibly excited about (indistinct) with weeks, but then also this feeling of if it goes in two weeks, and then what happens? I have many, many ideas of things that I'd like to make and plays that I'd like to put on. So I guess watch this space and, hopefully, I'll tell you about my exciting things that I've got coming up next year.

So we're getting very close as we've said. So can you give an insight into what people might expect? How's it going, how's it shaping up? You know, really, I should have interviewed you on Monday or Tuesday once you've met everyone, but, you know, what are you most looking forward to when you get in that room? I think it's the best question.

I'm very excited to meet lots of different artists. I think that's something really great about this project. Is it's lots of different artists from different backgrounds, making different kinds of art, and then putting them on the same stage and bringing them together as a cohesive whole. It's kind of, in some ways, it's challenging because they're quite eclectic. And I think the process of putting it together is gonna be really, really rewarding. And I'm looking forward, as I said, to being in a rehearsal room, because I think I'm very, very aware of what exciting places they are now, often not having had them for such a long time. So that is one of the reasons why I'm absolutely itching to get started.

It is gonna be great fun because it is such an eclectic mix, isn't it? You couldn't say, "Oh, it's gonna be this about..." It's gonna be lots of wonderful stuff. And so I can't imagine what it was gonna be like to be helping shape that because every day is gonna be really different with each act that you work with, isn't it?

Yes, and so it's really important to get a sense of what everybody needs and wants from it. And also important that everybody, that we build a situation of trust between us as creatives and the

feeling of team and the feeling of wanting to be part of a whole thing rather than us as separate individuals and artists which I think is something that CRIPtic is doing really well to create.

So finally, what we're gonna do now is I'm gonna try and get you to sell to a wonderful audience the show so that they desperately wants to come. So how would you sell it? What would your publicity bumps be around CRIPtic?

Oh, gosh, this is hard. (both laugh)

I know, there's usually professionals that do this kind of thing, isn't there?

Yeah, yeah. (both laugh)

It's only me, actually. (laughs)

Okay. So I think it is a show where there is a bit of everything. It's almost like a sort of tasting palette of a fusion of a whole load of foods from all over the world. You're gonna go, you're gonna see some really, I want to use the word eclectic again. I think I've already used it about three times. An eclectic range of different artists. There's gonna be music. There's gonna be short films. There's gonna be spoken word. It's gonna be challenging, so prepare to sit and be challenged and potentially have your buttons pushed a bit, which is something that I think overall is good to have you thinking and questioning and potentially feeling things. I want people to feel things. So you might come, you might leave feeling angry or feeling empowered or in a world where we switch off those things sometimes. So, yeah, that's my sales pitch was that any good?

That was very good. It was really good, thank you so much. Well, there you go, that was Lata Nobes. I thank you so much for joining us. Don't forget, you can get the tickets online at the Barbican still for the 19th, that's a Friday night and Saturday, that's the 20th. We'll be available on the Barbican website. If you can't make it, don't worry, you will still be able to see the joy that is CRIPtic. And with that, I'm Mik Scarlet. I'm saying thank you very much and see you all again soon and goodbye to Lata, goodbye.

Bye.

The logo for CRIPtic 2021 is centered in the bottom right of the page. It features the word "CRIP" in a large, bold, white sans-serif font, followed by "TIC" in a smaller font size. Below "CRIP" is a horizontal line, and below "TIC" is the year "2021". The entire logo is set against a black background that is decorated with numerous light blue lightning bolts of varying sizes and orientations, creating a dynamic and energetic visual effect.

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