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Digital Programmes Jamie Hale: CRIPtic Pit Party

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Welcome to the Barbican for Jamie Hale's *CRIPtic Pit Party*. We're delighted to welcome Jamie back to the Barbican with their second Pit Party. Jamie's appearances at the Barbican are always a highlight of our Theatre and Dance programme, and we're especially proud that our nomination for the Evening Standard Future Theatre Fund resulted in a win for Jamie, and that they have recently become a Jerwood Compton

roeiry reliow. vve also warmly welcome all the a/Deat and alsabled artists assembled here by Jamie. We hope you enjoy the show.

Toni Racklin, Head of Theatre and Dance, Barbican

CRIPtic Arts welcomes you to our 2021 Pit Party. Humans are storytellers, and this night brings you into the stories we tell ourselves, to ourselves, about ourselves. We are

inviting you into this space with a mood both generous and welcoming. This is art created by d/Deaf and disabled people, for ourselves, and now audiences are also able to see it. We hope you enjoy it.

Jamie Hale, Artistic Director, CRIPtic Arts

About CRIPtic Arts

CRIPtic Arts was founded by Jamie Hale following the 2019 CRIPtic Pit Party as a space to develop, support, and promote work by d/Deaf and disabled artists. The 2021 CRIPtic Pit Party is the culmination of a year's development programme for a range of d/Deaf and disabled artists to develop skills, experience, and the work you now see tonight. cripticarts.org

Visual Journey

Please email theatre@barbican.org.uk if you would like to be sent a **Visual Story**

CRIPtic Artist Photos

↓ CRIPtic Artist Photos PDF 1.73 mb

Access information

All performances are Audio Described (by Quiplash), Captioned, BSL interpreted (by Jacqui Beckford) and Relaxed.

Duration: Approximately 2 hours 30 mins, including an interval Age guidance: 16+ (contains scenes of self-hitting, references to sexual assault and flashing images)

Fri 19 Nov Post-show talk

With Jenny Sealey, CEO and Artistic Director of Graeae and Jamie Hale

Free to same-day ticket holders

The performance on Friday 19 November will be filmed and the filmed version of the show will be made available on the Barbican website from Friday 26 November.

Taking Our Space by Jamie Hale

What do I mean when I call myself a disabled artist?

That question comes to the heart of what CRIPtic is, and what CRIPtic does. Because to say that I am a disabled artist is to identify two things: firstly, that I am being disabled, and secondly, that I am an artist. It requires that I claim that I am an artist, despite being disabled. This does not mean that I am inspirational for becoming an artist despite the tragedy of my body. It means that I am fighting against a world that makes my body a tragedy, and a world excludes that (tragic) experience from the arts.

I am an artist despite the fact that many theatres do not offer wheelchair access to the audience

I am an artist despite the fact that even more theatres do not offer wheelchair access to the stage

I am an artist despite the fact that very few theatres have a toilet I can use as an audience-member

I am an artist despite the fact that the only theatre I know with a toilet I can use backstage is here, at the Barbican, and that's why I'm here.

I fell in love with performance and the life of an artist by accident – and a happy accident that let me be completely unaware of many of the access barriers in the industry. I started my performance career at the Barbican, and didn't realise how rare these access provisions were until I started to try and perform elsewhere, and met roadblock after roadblock.

The performance world does not welcome d/Deaf or disabled people, and especially not those who face the highest access barriers. We're costly, an imposition, can't hear you, can't sit still, can't climb stairs, can't keep track of projects, can't make eye contact, can't dance. We're a series of *inabilities* to it – and we're not inabilities it wants to accommodate. Maybe the world is changing, but when I look at the physical access provisions available to disabled artists at major theatres, I'm still horrified. Many still don't offer wheelchair access to audiences, let alone to the stage. Shows are rarely BSL interpreted.

That disability arts exist at all is a challenge to what one might call 'mainstream arts'. It says, 'your ways of working are not the only ways, or the best ways'. It says, 'we can take the breaks and the time we need to build work'. It says, 'if your theatre is not

accessible to our whole cast, then we can do it without you'. There's a history of doing it without. When mainstream theatres won't meet our access needs, we have to go elsewhere. Therefore our cultural scene is one of mutual support and solidarity. The same £5 changing hands in ticket sales, day after day. People doing work they love, and being paid pennies, if at all. And when you don't have the financial means to work in that way, this also makes it inaccessible. Much of disability art is free, cobbled together,

and built into something beautiful, because we are trying to understand and build replicas of the world in which we wish we could be living.

Part of that world-building is knowing that we will always fall short. That we will never create art which is 100% accessible, that spaces will never be adapted to everyone's needs – but that we must work together, and try together, and learn together. And when we fall short, it is an act of solidarity and growth to understand that we have done so and to explain it.

So I am a disabled artist not just because I face barriers, but because I am proud to come from a community of people who are shut out, who face barriers, and who build their own art anyway.

This is what CRIPtic is. As an organisation, CRIPtic exists to provide spaces, opportunities, support and development for artists who would not be able to access those programmes elsewhere. We want to give people everything from a new skill, or confidence boost, to *one big chance* that they need to launch their careers – but we also want to go beyond that into creating a world in which d/Deaf and disabled creatives are interlinked and interconnected. We want to bring that mutual support from our own spaces out into the world. We want to show the world that it can do better.

CRIPtic came from our 2019 showcase at the Barbican. I was lucky enough to have performed here previously to that, in a different showcase. I was able to suggest – in the way that connections make you able to suggest – that the Barbican host a showcase of d/Deaf and disabled artists.

I know nowhere else that could have done this for us. For that showcase to be feasible, the Barbican did the backstage building work I needed so the space had a hoist I could use. A toilet and shower. Somewhere I could change backstage. This meant I could put on my solo show, NOT DYING, as part of the showcase – and later win the Evening Standard x TikTok Director/Theatremaker of the Year award for the work involved in that.

The reasons I haven't put *NOT DYING* on since late 2019 are more related to the pandemic than to any failures of access – but it remains the truth that I have found no other venue in the country with these facilities built in. Suddenly, instead of the privilege I was aware of in being able to launch my artistic career at the Barbican, I faced the limitation, the challenge, and the oppression of the fact that there would be nowhere I could easily take the show from there.

This meant that when it was time for CRIPtic to return, the Barbican Centre was its natural

home – and also its only home.

Opportunities for d/Deaf and disabled performers to perform are crucial – but we also need to do that learning and have that growth, and we especially need to learn about access. We don't come automatically knowing how to create accessible work – and this showcase has arisen from a development programme in which we explored and learned about that. In transmitting skills and experience there's an element of also transmitting culture, and I want disability arts to have a culture that works to create accessible work for others.

This period of development hasn't all been easy. During the preparation time for CRIPtic, Barbican Stories released a book of accounts of institutional racism – and we've had to consider our place here.

Our decision to continue to present the showcase here came down to knowing there was nowhere else we could offer this work a home. It had to be here, or nowhere. But that was still a difficult decision. How could we be in solidarity with people experiencing institutional racism in the arts world, while continuing to use the venue in which they experienced that? On the other hand, how could we contemplate further perpetuating and extending the institutional disableism in the arts world by declining one of the few accessible opportunities?

It came down to a willingness to hold the tension. To recognise that building antioppressive spaces involves knowing the contradictions you're navigating, and navigating them nonetheless. To openly acknowledge the decisions, and the reasons for those decisions, and also to acknowledge where you've fallen short. Here, the decision we took to go ahead was taken in awareness of that complexity, and also with the desire to use our platform to send a clear message of solidarity to people at the Barbican, and more broadly, who've faced institutionalised racism. Is that enough? I'm not sure, but there were no easy decisions.

Within CRIPtic, I want to examine and dismantle access barriers for performers by asking, 'what do you need in order to create your best work?' 'What barriers stop you from doing so?,' and in order to do that, I needed to start from a venue capable of meeting everyone's access needs.

Often, we assume that d/Deaf and disabled people will know everything we need – that making accessible work is a natural consequence of being disabled – but this is something we need to grow, and is one of the reasons CRIPtic was designed to be more than the single event you see here, but also a chance for people to learn about their access needs, to explore, to play, to better come to understand how they can make their best work, and how to communicate back to the world.

That best work is what we are now bringing to you. After a year of work – a year of iterative improvement, learning, attempting achievement, back to growth – after all that, we now have this group of artists ready to come on stage and to perform.

And what's revolutionary are the stories we're tellina. There are no tired narratives – https://www.barbican.org.uk/digital-programmes/jamie-hale-criptic-pit-party

there are no hackneyed overcomings – and everything is deep, complex, exploratory. This work is not bound by what people think disabled-led work should be. We are not telling medicalised narratives, fitting boxes; we are feeling and pushing. We are complex, powerful, and yes – challenging. Because this is what we, as disabled people, choose to tell ourselves. This work is the stories we want to hear, it's the narratives that sustain us, and it's the stories we tell ourselves and each other privately, in community

spaces. It's finding new words for the stories we tell about ourselves. It's the faces we present to the world balanced against the words we've chosen this time and place to share. It's rejecting the words others have chosen for us to share. And it's these stories we, ourselves, are telling, here on the stage.

And that is a reclamation, of sorts. It is saying both that we are, and aren't, outsiders. It not only says that we have a right to the stage, but that we have a right to choose what we present once we are on that stage.

We hope you enjoy this.

Credits

Live performers

Alice Christina-Corrigan (she/her)

FlawBored - Aarian Mehrabani (he/him), Samuel Brewer (he/him) and Chloe

Palmer (she/her)

MC Geezer (he/him) and Troi Lee (he/him)

Miss Jacqui (she/her)

Oli Isaac (they/them)

Tink Flaherty (they/them)

Digital performers

Sahera Khan (she/her)

Gold Maria Akanbi (she/they)

Tom Ryalls (he/him) performed by Jodie Mitchell (they/them)

Creative team

Jamie Hale (they/them) Curator and Director

Lata Nobes (she/her) Associate Director

Mik Scarlet (he/him) Producer / Production Manager

Jess Kinsey (she/her) Co-Producer / Assistant to Jamie Hale

Caitlin Richards (she/her) Co-Producer / Assistant to Jamie Hale

Rufus Isabel Elliot (it/its) and Rylan Gleave (he/him) Composers

Megan Lucas (she/her) Lighting Designer

Creative access team

Louis Kissaun (he/him)

Bex Hesketh-Smith (she/her)

Georgia Carnaby (she/her)

And the wider team of excellent access workers and BSL interpreters

Acknowledgments

With thanks to Arts Council England and the Barbican Centre for funding and supporting this work, to Graeae for the rehearsal space, to our excellent workshop leaders, including Jess Thom, Quiplash, David Ellington, Samuel Dore, Laura Horton, Martin O'Brien and Mandy Colleran, and our mentors Sin Wai Kin, Robert Softley Gale, Kris Halpin, Nickie Miles-Wildin and Amy Trigg.

Oli Isaac would like to acknowledge Jess Rahman-González and Silent Faces.

Presented by the Barbican.

Supported by Arts Council England and Graeae.

Biographies

ALICE CHRISTINA-CORRIGAN (she/her) Live performer

Theatre-maker, Performer and Sound Designer

Past Life is a one-woman show with embedded access. Inspired by Tame Impala's album Currents, this show follows our lead and 'Betty the brain' on a journey through heartbreak, happiness, self-discovery, grief and acceptance. Intertwining creative captioning, BSL, animation, descriptive language and accompanied by a soundscape, Past Life is a sensory exploration of what it feels like to go through a breakup, and how sometimes it is okay to not be okay.

Based in the North West, Alice Christina-Corrigan has worked in many different creative realms, from touring to motion capture. As she begins to make her own footprint on the industry, Alice is passionate about utilising her skills to make theatre that is accessible to the d/Deaf and Disabled community. Showing that there are no limitations to what the Disabled community are capable of doing, her work focuses on bringing audiences together through shared experiences. On looking to the future, she says, 'I am so excited to share my latest project with the world later this year. The future of theatre is accessible, and I can't wait for this journey.'

@aliceccorrigan

TINK FLAHERTY (they/them or he/him) Live performer

Participatory theatre-maker, performer

Tink Flaherty's short film explores self-hitting from the perspective of an autistic person. Self-hitting can be a shocking ritual to bear witness to, creating a dynamic where people feel responsible to intervene, feel the need to fix, make better and control. It is ugly, scary, disturbing, disruptive, messy and abject. In this film they hope to make this private ritual both beautiful and unapologetic.

Tink Flaherty is a disabled, working class, multiple neurodivergent artist. They make intimate, provocative work exploring connectivity and radical inclusivity engaging the alternative functioning body and mind. They work part-time as an advocate. Tink Flaherty developed their artistic practice 7 years ago through The Butch Monologues, exploring different aspects of queer lived experience. In the past year they were commissioned by Home Live Art, Cambridge Junction, Trinity Centre Bristol, LADA, FilmPro with Disability Arts Online and Proforma. Their work is driven by connecting 'appropriately' in a predominantly neurotypical world.

Facebook: Tink Flaherty @tinkflaherty

FLAWBORED

Live performers

Aarian Mehrabani (he/him), Samuel Brewer (he/him) and Chloe Palmer (she/her)

It's a motherf**king pleasure is FlawBored's debut show, currently in development.

In a world of late-stage capitalism where anything and everything is driven by profit, major corporations take advantage of oppressed groups as a way of generating income. The idea of blindness has somehow not been commodified as cool or sexy... yet.

A social media star goes viral for an ableist video, causing severe backlash for their talent management agency. Using their only blind talent manager as a levy, RIZE Talent desperately try to build the career of a blind influencer in an attempt to cauterise a PR wound... oh, yeah and because disability rights?

FlawBored is a new disability-led theatre company that creates ensemble-based work. They take traditional devising techniques, break them into pieces and then use those pieces to create new ways of working that are inclusive for all. Currently supported by The Watermill Theatre and Wildcard through their Launchpad programme, their work is messy, silly and strange.

Twitter: @flawbored @clopalmer @sambrewer133 @aarianmehrabani

MC GEEZER (he/him) Live performer Deaf MC, bass-head, jungleist

MC Geezer will be bringing both new music, as well as old classics, to CRIPtic. His work will be focused on creating a piece of music with his drum machine and working with other performers to collaborate, creating something unique, powerful and impactful.

MC Geezer has always loved music and began learning to mix from a very young age. When he was just 13 he started to DJ and by the age of 15 his interest in drum and bass developed. He saw how other MCs were spitting bars and thought, 'why don't I give this a go?' And his journey began, starting to MC over drum and bass. His early experiences were really rooted in the 'hearing world' of music.

Instagram: @mcgeezer1 Twitter: @mcgeezerfari

Facebook: Mc Geezer - The Deaf MC

OLI ISAAC (they/them)

Live performer

Theatre-maker and performer

Dear Tongue-Tied-Tongue is a multimedia performance that plays with the speech therapy exercises Oli was given growing up. Resisting how speech therapy can frame the stutterer as being the problem, Oli stages an ode to their stutter to challenge the shame and guilt placed on people with speech impediments. A reclamation of language through poetry and performance, Dear Tongue-Tied-Tongue seeks celebration amidst the battle Oli waged on their tongue and body growing up.

Oli Isaac is an artist who works across poetry, film and theatre to explore the failures of language through their lived experiences of having a stutter and being non-binary.

They are one half of Clumsy Bodies, a trans performance duo in a creative and romantic relationship. Clumsy Bodies are currently Starting Blocks artists with Camden People's Theatre.

Oli Isaac is an alumnus of Soho Theatre's Writers' Lab, Roundhouse Poetry Collective and Apples & Snakes' Writing Room. Their work has been published by Aesthetica, Apples & Snakes' Black Box Sessions, Bath Magg, and Huffington Post.

@oliisaac

MISS JACQUI (she/her)

Live periorine

Spoken Word Artist and Songwriter

Miss Jacqui's piece uses poetry and music to explore what intersectionality really means and is centred on exploring what it means to be a black woman and disabled.

Her piece also considers how access can be thought about from the beginning of the creative process to enhance the performance. She wants to look at the performance as a whole, from her writing to the music and sound and the lighting, and how those things coexist in an accessible world.

Miss Jacqui is a poet and songwriter. Her work focuses on challenging societal perceptions, like what it actually means to be a Black woman with a disability.

A wheelchair user herself, Miss Jacqui wants her poetry and music to be accessible for all while carrying a strong message which will help people see the world differently. She hopes her music inspires others to feel comfortable about being themselves.

Miss Jacqui has performed at the 2012 Paralympic Team Welcoming Ceremonies, Theatre Royal Stratford East, National Youth Theatre, Southbank Centre and The Roundhouse.

@iAmMissJacqui

SAHERA KHAN (she/her)

Digital performer

Freelance writer/creator, artist/actress, filmmaker and YouTuber

Sahera Khan is Muslim, Deaf and British South Asian; her native language is British Sign Language. She was born in the UK and her parents were born in India and Pakistan. She lives in London.

Sahera Khan's work includes creating three videos: Hurts Me, I don't care if it is repeated and Why Together?

Hurt Me was her first Kindle book and she created a video which was commissioned by Disability Arts online, about her vision and feelings about the world and its impact.

She wrote I don't care if it is repeated, about the importance of representation for sign language in the UK and worldwide. It was part of International Day of Sign Language 2021 and shown on the digital platform worldwide by the organisation Deaf Rave.

Her poem Why Together?, in response to the impact of COVID-19, is about community and was included in the Together! 2012's Together! 2020 Poetry Anthology. Sahera Khan also created the video which was shown at Sangdam Festival 2021.

Twitter: @Sahera04 and @Deaf1Sign

TROI LEE (he/him) Live performer

Troi Lee aka DJ Chinaman is the CEO of Deaf Rave, established in 2003. Deaf Rave provides entertainment with music, sign song and visual performances to an all-inclusive audience, globally and across the UK. Their aim is to unite everyone through the love and passion for music, promoting their unique Deaf/Disabled identity and teaching everyone about Deaf Culture.

GOLD MARIA AKANBI (she/they) Digital performer

Artist

Can I Be Free looks to reflect on the physical, emotional and mental restrictions placed on vulnerable and marginalised Black individuals by faceless institutions and state authorities. With our identities often being whittled down to nothing but statistics and figures in graphs and on computers, Can I Be Free attempts to express these restrictions placed on the Black body and identity, both metaphorically and physically. The need to exercise control over the performance of Black bodies, whether visibly or invisibly disabled, through the tool of false benevolence is something that the State has normalised as a form of oppression. Inspired by Artificial Intelligence, Afro-futurism and ancestral divination.

Gold Maria Akanbi is a bisexual neurodiverse British-Nigerian artist that lives and works in both Liverpool and Kent. Their artistic practice takes on a multidisciplinary approach due to the nature of their identity, attempting to fully draw in the audience by giving them a full and rich experience through a variation of mediums, touching upon their senses in a multitude of ways, to help grasp their understanding of neurodiversity.

Instagram @goldmakanbi

TOM RYALLS (he/him) Digital performance

Writer / Theatre Maker

A whole industry has sprung up around self-care, one that has made the practice individualistic and mainly about how much you spend on a scented candle. No matter how much I spend, my ADHD means my mind never really clears.

But, never one to be defeated, I'm going to try all of the self-care crazes, and work out if any of them are more than a good sales pitch.

Then I'm going to create a whole new 80s TV special, 'Self-care for the hyperactive anti-Capitalist or how to start a revolution'.

Tom Ryalls is a writer and theatre-maker who makes childish shows for adults. He focuses on giving people the chance to be playful and to examine the systems that run our world in childish and tacky ways.

He created *The Black Hole Project*, a series of shows exploring the experience of epilepsy and childhood hospitalisation. His other strand of work is 'Inbadtaste', an attempt to use tacky aesthetics to undermine the middle-class ideas of good taste.

He's made work for Shoreditch Town Hall, CPT, a field, a few basements, working men's clubs and once a vegan pub in Wood Green.

@BoyAndPen

www.boyandpen.com

Lead Artist and Writer **Tom Ryalls** (he/him)
Video Designer **Tim Kelly** (he/him)
Movement Director and Artist Support **Sally Lofthouse** (she/her)
Performer **Jodie Mitchell** (they/them)

JAMIE HALE (they/them) Curator and Director

Winner of the Evening Standard Future Theatre Fund Director/Theatremaker of the Year in 2021, Jamie Hale founded CRIPtic Arts to support and develop d/Deaf and disabled creatives. They headlined the previous CRIPtic Showcase in 2019, and are directing the 2021 showcase, featuring a range of artists, many of whom have been through the CRIPtic Arts Lead Artist training programme in 2021. Jamie Hale is a poet, a current Jerwood Poetry Fellow, and is working as a screenwriter with projects in development.

@jamierhale jamiehale.co.uk

LATA NOBES (she/her) Associate Director

Lata Nobes is a theatre director from south-east London. She specialises in live performance that uses auditory storytelling and music. She is interested in theatre that is challenging, gritty and embraces liveness. Her recent work as director includes 12 at The Greenhouse Theatre in 2021; The Mozart Question at Upstairs at the Gatehouse in 2019; Babybox (for which she was associate director) at York Theatre Royal in 2019; Richard III at Upstairs at the Gatehouse in 2018; Not About Heroes at the Lion and Unicorn in 2016, and Amadeus at Oxford Playhouse BT Studio in 2016.

Twitter: @lata_nobes

MIK SCARLET (he/him)

Producer / Production Manager

Mik Scarlet is best known through his work in the media, as a presenter and journalist, and as a leading equality campaigner and inclusivity expert. He is very proud and excited to be part of the CRIPtic Arts team on the Pit Party 2021, in his role as producer

and production manager, supporting Jamie Hale and the amazing D/deaf and disabled artists appearing.

Twitter: @MikScarlet mikscarlet.com

RUFUS ISABEL ELLIOT (it/its) Composer

We are making music exploring how loneliness affects gender- and neurodiverse folks.

We work with our instruments in ways that accommodate our needs, be that navigating traditional playing techniques, or occupying a performance space with visible stims. Transness plays into our performances also, influencing which methods of expression are available. With close attention paid to each other's gestures, we create sounds that reflect our sense of voice.

Rufus Isabel Elliot is a composer and musician based near Gairloch in the North West Highlands. Its work is concerned with honesty, giving testimony, and the conditions in which one speaks out.

In the last couple of years, Rufus has worked with the likes of the Nevis Ensemble, Red Note Ensemble, sound festival scotland, and Magnetic North. Rufus' collaborative work has included projects with composer Fergus Hall, artist Iman Tajik, singer Lea Shaw, and poet Ella Frears.

It founded and curates the trans, non-binary, and otherwise gender-diverse music-making world of OVER / AT.

RYLAN GLEAVE (he/him) Composer

We are making music exploring how loneliness affects gender- and neurodiverse folks.

We work with our instruments in ways that accommodate our needs, be that navigating traditional playing techniques, or occupying a performance space with visible stims. Transness plays into our performances also, influencing which methods of expression are available. With close attention paid to each other's gestures, we create sounds that reflect our sense of voice.

Rylan Gleave (b.1997) is a Glasgow-based composer and vocalist whose music addresses intersectional identity, re-contextualised natural situations, and quiet, furious resistance. His music has been praised as 'haunting' by *The Herald*, and 'rapturous' by *The Scotsman*, who named him 'One to Watch' 2021, describing him as 'one of the brightest lights in Scotland's new music scene'. Rylan is half of HONK Ensemble,

alongside Rufus Isabel Elliot. Rufus and Rylan improvise as a trans, neurodiverse duo, communicating expressively through their instruments (viola, voice, and electronics).

Twitter: @GleaveRylan Instagram: @RylanGleave

Facebook: @rylangleavecomposer

MEGAN LUCAS (she/her) Lighting Designer

Megan Lucas is a lighting designer and technician. She works for Royal and Derngate, Northampton as well as the Cambridge Arts Theatre as a lighting technician, and as a freelance designer working across several theatrical productions and venues, most recently as Lighting Designer for *The Masks We Wear* at the Royal in Northampton. She is also a freelance Architectural Designer and the Chair and co-founder of the Northampton Arts Lab, together with author Alan Moore.

Megan Lucas is also one of the artists supported by Royal & Derngate's Generate Artist Development Programme and developed the NextGen: Lighting Design programme, leading on online training sessions in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

As a deaf, disabled and autistic creative, she has been inspired by the opportunity to showcase and enhance the performances of so many other d/Deaf, neurodivergent and disabled artists.

Barbican Theatre Department

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Anna Dominian, Bridget Thornborrow Assistant Producers
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Elizabeth Wilks, Harriet Davis, Rob Norris Centre Managers (Delivery)

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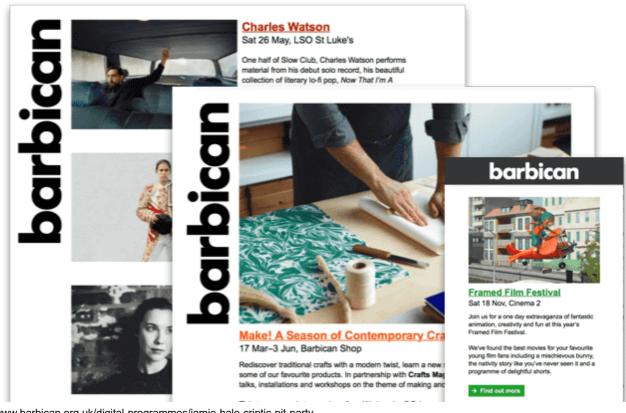
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Julian Fox, Albi Gravener Stage Door

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