

Tilly Branson

Director, dramaturg, theatre-maker, producer

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Directing

2021: Gaze by S L Page, Northern Stage.

2019-20: Pepper and Honey by Kristina Gavran. Notnow Collective, Derby Theatre/ touring. Re-directed for digital broadcast Dec 2020 as part of The Library Presents. Touring again 2021-2022.

2019-20: Inside Voice by Madeline Gould, currently in development.

2019: It Is Now by Madeline Gould. Anonymous Is A Woman, spring & autumn tours.

2018: The Memory Museum by Hannah Stone. The Gramophones, site-specific show, Shire Hall, Dorset.

2018: Think of England by Madeline Gould. Anonymous Is A Woman, Vault Festival and national tour.

2017: Alfred's War by Marilyn Ricci. Three week ACE funded research and development.

2016-17: Getting Better Slowly by Nick Wood. Lincoln Drill Hall, national tour.

2016: Think of England by Madeline Gould. Anonymous Is A Woman, national tour.

2015-16: Acting Alone by Ava Hunt. International tour including London, Cork, New York, New Zealand and Sweden.

2015: Soi Disant by Marilyn Ricci. Workshop week and performance at Y Theatre Leicester.

2015: Homing by Beccy Smith. Site-specific rural touring PhD research project performance.

2014: Something Blue by Beccy Smith. Interactive rural touring PhD research project performance.

2014: Man to Man by Manfred Karge. Park Theatre, London.

2013: Man to Man by Manfred Karge. Mercury Theatre, Colchester.

2013: Due Course (new writing showcase). New Perspectives, regional tour.

2013: Entertaining Angels by Brendan Murray. New Perspectives, national tour.

2012-15: End to End by The Gramophones, Edinburgh Fringe and three national tours.

2012: Goldfish (new writing showcase). New Perspectives, regional tour.

2011: Always in the Afternoon by Cathy Grindrod. Theatre Writing Partnership, rehearsed reading, Derby.

2011-14: Associate Director, New Perspectives. Leading on strategies for audience engagement, responsible for talent development scheme for emerging regional artists, directing annual New Perspectives training ensemble touring productions showcasing emerging artists and new writing from the East Midlands.

In 2016 I was shortlisted for the final round of the Young Vic Genesis Future Directors Award, in the same year I was also selected by the Young Vic for a two-week paid placement as part of their Reach Out scheme for directors outside of London.

Writing/performing: Aunting

Since 2018 I have been developing a new theatre show as a writer/performer: Aunting, about the importance of being an auntie, and of having aunts. This project has been

supported by Nottingham Playhouse, In Good Company, ARC Stockon, and Hull Truck and funded by ACE. Work in progress has been shared with audiences at showcases including China Plate's First Bite at Midland Arts Centre, Nottingham Playhouse's Amp Night, Venues North, and Hull Truck Grow Festival.

"Clever, witty, honest, moving, true, heart warming and heart breaking"; "Your show has made me a better auntie"; "Such warmth and tenderness, effortlessly poignant".

Dramaturgy

2020: During 2020 I worked with writers including **Jane Upton, Madeline Gould, Sarah Middleton,** and **Louisa-Mai Kuster** to give dramaturgical feedback on scripts currently in development.

2020: Another Planet by The Gramophones Theatre Company (audio adventure for parents and children).

2020: The Foundation by Kieran Spears

2020: Powered by Fairydust by Alison Dunne and Lesley Emery

2016-20: Think of England, It Is Now, Inside Voice & Original Material by Madeline Gould

2019: Pepper and Honey by Kristina Gavran

2019: Journeys of Destiny by Craig Christie, Ava Hunt Theatre

2016: Memories Made in Mansfield and Present Company: A Theatrical Detour by The Gramophones. Written by the company and directed by Nikki Disney, presented in Mansfield and Bolsover.

2016: Script reader/judging panel, Fifth Word Theatre Company/Nottingham Playhouse Promising Playwright competition.

2015-16: Acting Alone by Ava Hunt.

2011-14: Dream Up script competition judge, New Perspectives.

Producing

2021: Freelance Grant Writer, Nighttime Economy Solutions

2019-20: Co-producer, Inside Voice, by Madeline Gould

2018: Producer, I Dare You. A new play by Tom Powell, directed by Beth Shouler (winner of In Good Company mid-career commission), ACE funded; Nottingham Playhouse/Curve.

2017-2020: Founder member and producer, The Party Somewhere Else. One of twelve women who have established a female led collective in Nottingham and have organised a sell-out scratch night, an Open House and Open Mic event to discuss diversity in the arts, and two week-long festivals at Nottingham Playhouse as well as events for Curve Inside Out festival, Centenary Cities Nottingham and Derby Book Festival.

2017-18: Producer, Major Labia. Leading on organisational development, rehearsal and tour planning, marketing, press, funding and financial management for all-female comedy collective. Producer for ACE funded shows at Playground Festival, Nottingham Playhouse and Inside Out Festival, Curve (3 sold out shows), autumn 2017; Nottingham Playhouse main stage (February 2018) and Edinburgh Fringe 2018.

2017 Producer/Tour Manager, Mashi Theatre. Producing and managing tour for Tales of Birbal, touring nationally Oct-Nov 2017, including to rural venues and as part of Big Imaginations Festival in the North West.

Assistant/Associate/Staff Directing

2017 All the Little Lights by Jane Upton (George Devine Award winner). Fifth Word Theatre Company. Director Laura Ford. Supporting show on national tour and for Arcola run, facilitating post-show Q&As, designing and delivering schools workshops.

2011 Skybus by Andy Barrett. Derby LIVE. Director: Esther Richardson.

2010-11 Those Magnificent Men by Brian Mitchell and Joseph Nixon. New Perspectives Theatre Company, national tour and Edinburgh Fringe; in charge of re-rehearsing 2 act version post Edinburgh and opening at Salisbury Playhouse while Director on secondment. Director: Daniel Buckroyd.

Other roles

I am an Associate Artist with The Gramophones and on the Board of Pentabus. I have worked in teaching, lecturing and workshop leader roles with groups aged from eighteen months to adult. I have delivered education and community projects for companies and organisations including Nottingham Playhouse, National Theatre Connections, Curve Leicester, Fifth Word Theatre Company, Castle College, Lakeside Arts Centre, NHS Arts in Reach, and Kazzum Theatre Company. My PhD focused on the contemporary UK rural touring sector and I teach, lecture and offer consultancy on rural touring for theatre companies, universities, colleges and other organisations. I have also presented my research at two major conferences (TAPRA and NRTF). I am an Associate Lecturer for the University of Derby. I have written theatre reviews for Left Lion, Nottingham and for the PuSh Festival in Vancouver. While living in Vancouver from 2010-2011 I worked as Artist Services Co-ordinator at Vancouver International Fringe Festival and as Fundraising and Administration Assistant at Pi Theatre.

Education

2012-17: The University of Nottingham. AHRC funded practice-based PhD, 'Re-imagining the Rural Tour'.

2007-09: The University of Nottingham. Masters of Research in Theatre (with Merit), 'Contextual Dramaturgy'

1999-03: The University of Birmingham. BA (Joint Hons) 2:1 English and Cultural Studies

Reviews of my work

Pepper and Honey

★★★★ "A warm and gentle show... evocative" – The Stage

★★★★ "a beautifully written story which flows fantastically from one perspective to the next. A story of new beginnings, loss, and the sharing of cultures" – Reviews Hub

"a subtle and charming production, rich in detail and interconnecting threads of meaning and experience" – British Theatre Guide

Think of England

★★★★ "an unexpectedly frank glimpse of the grubby realities of women's work in wartime." - The Stage

★★★★★ "stellar production... definitely one to catch" - LondonTheatre1

★★★★★ "Crafted & performed to perfection - the show of the festival so far... Tilly Branson's direction presents the play in a straightforward but never predictable way" - Mind the Blog

★★★★ - "Tilly Branson directs crisply and effectively... a lovely, understated piece of

immersive theatre... it's a gem" - Stage Talk

★★★★ - "Our top show of week 3... Gould and Branson intelligently tease out such subtle interplays between all the characters that this tea dance is jam packed full of intention and subtext" - Miro Magazine

Man to Man

★★★★ "Theatrically speaking this is a tour-de-force, award deserving performance by Tricia Kelly... Director Tilly Branson... build(s) the tension gradually but remorselessly up to a final coup de théâtre" – What's On Stage.

★★★★1/2 "a tour de force... scenes both realistic and surreal are strongly drawn... the powerful ending is unrelentingly dark"– The Public Reviews.

Acting Alone

"More than just storytelling, more than a play, quite an experience" – Left Lion

"accomplished... different threads are tied together with aplomb... a brave and thoughtful show". Fringe Review

What others say about working with me

"Tilly's greatest gift is the ability to open up a safe, respectful, creative space in which to work... her openness, intelligence and constructive critical eye inspires confidence allowing her to draw the very best from everyone involved" – **Marilyn Ricci, writer, Alfred's War/Soi Disant/Due Course**

"Every voice was equal, every voice was heard. All of us in the creative team felt we'd been through an experience that had changed our practice, and that Tilly's firm leadership had helped us to work on a deeper level than we had experienced before, both as individuals and as collaborators" – **Nick Wood, writer, Getting Better Slowly**

"Throughout the process of writing, Tilly was encouraging, giving me tasks that were opening my creativity and I couldn't believe with how much detail she reads each draft and offers structural suggestions to make it better. Once the play was finished, she approached it as a director with incredible ideas, her work with the actress and the creative team was highly professional, and she created an atmosphere of creative freedom for everyone" – **Kristina Gavran, writer, Pepper and Honey**