



It's The Nativity...but not as you know it.

Bristol communities unite for special project this Christmas.

20-28 Dec

Angels in Bristol: The Story of Christmas in 9 Miracles

Co-created with the communities of Bristol
and featuring a new cycle of poems by Vanessa Kisuule.

A mysterious star has appeared over the slopes of Southmead...

A mighty exodus brings hope of a promised land named Weston-super-Mare...

A great ark begins to take shape on the waters of Bristol's harbour...

This Christmas, ***Angels in Bristol: The Story of Christmas in 9 Miracles*** brings together schools and communities from across Bristol and the region, to share a uniquely Bristolian version of 'The Greatest Story Ever Told'.

Created from the soaring poetry of **Vanessa Kisuule**, with music from **Dan Jones** and **Guy Hughes**, imagery by **Limbic Cinema** and co-directed by **Tom Morris** and up-and-coming Bristol director **Julia Head**, ***Angels in Bristol...*** will be delivered as 9 short stories, designed to be told one-a-day from 20 until 28 Dec.

Reaching across the length and breadth of Bristol and into North Somerset, ***Angels in Bristol...*** combines the creative powers of professional and community artists alike and draws on the generosity of playgrounds, pubs, churches and businesses to bring these stories to life. Filming in locations such as St Pauls Adventure Playground, The Black Swan in Easton, Underfall Yard, in Bristol primary schools and on doorsteps, the project showcases the way an entire community can come together, to tell stories of comfort and joy.

For nine days, each episode will wing its way daily into your inbox, free to anyone who would like to share a moment of togetherness after this extraordinary year - a gift from us to you.

Angels in Bristol... was originally conceived as a live performance in Bristol Old Vic's Courtyard Theatre. However, due to the lockdown and sudden Tier 3 restrictions in Bristol, the production has been reimagined over the course of two weeks into a completely digital experience, thanks to the imagination and invention of the theatre-makers, composers, film-makers and communities involved.

One of the community groups involved is **Theatre Orchard**, based in North Somerset. Angela Athay-Hunt, Engagement Manager at Theatre Orchard, said: *"Working in collaboration with Bristol Old Vic to be part of its Christmas show has been an exhilarating experience for our engagement groups; Open Door adult drama and Chapter One creative writing. Both groups have played an integral part in contributing creative ideas and devising content that shine a warm festive light on Weston-super-Mare and showcase their 'promised land' through a wonderful kaleidoscope of personal stories, memories and hopes."*

Angels in Bristol... was co-created by Vanessa Kisuule, Tom Morris, Julia Head, Young SixSix, Chapter One, Open Door, Miss Simmons' Year One Class at Stoke Park Primary School, Meadows to Meaders, Reception Year at Headley Park Primary School, Dan Jones and Guy Hughes, Limbic Cinema, RedLeaf AV, Alison Reid, James Newton, Theatre Orchard, Local Learning, Jack Offord, and Bristol Old Vic.

With thanks to Julie and Andy at Underfall Yard, Mel and Kaden at The Black Swan, Rachel Davies and St Pauls Adventure Playground, Jack and the staff at the Left Handed Giant, Ruth Myers-Insole, Angie Athay-Hunt, Bob Walton, Eli Lower, Xahnaa Adlam, Alex Wollacott, Rod Maclachlan, Bristol Film Office.

Please note:

While the stories are completely free to watch, 50% of any donations received for **Angels in Bristol...** will support future Bristol Old Vic projects in the community and 50% will go to the charity St Mungo's for their work helping people who are homeless this winter.

Visit www.bristololdvic.org.uk/angels-in-bristol to register and donate.
Or text **BOV** and your donation amount to 70085

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Listings:

Unwrap a new story in your inbox every day for nine days this Christmas, by registering for free at bristololdvic.org.uk/angels-in-bristol

Final date to register to get the stories in your inbox: Fri 18 Dec at 5pm

All stories will arrive via email each day, free of charge. Just register to receive this special gift!

Dec 20 **Story 1 - The Creation: God in Bristol**

Dec 21 **Story 2 – Noah and Nancy**

Dec 22 **Story 3 - Exodus: Weston-super-Mare, The Promised Land**

Dec 23 **Story 4 - Jay and the Whalefish: The Ballad of Eastville Pond**

Dec 24 **Story 5 - The Prophet of Stapleton Road**

Dec 25 **Story 6 - The Chicken Stealer's Nativity, a Legend of Southmead**

Dec 26 **Story 7 - The Lost Child**

Dec 27 **Story 8 - David, Big G and the Flat Caps: A Fern St. Flashback**

Dec 28 **Story 9 - A Mother's Farewell**

Editors Notes:

Vanessa Kisuule is a writer and performer based in Bristol. She has won over 10 slam titles and was the recipient of The Jerwood Micro Arts Bursary in 2017. She has performed at an array of renowned poetry events and venues such as The Royal Albert Hall, The British Library, Blahblahblah at the Bristol Old Vic, Tongue Fu and Chill Pill in London as well as many festivals including Shambala, WOMAD, Wilderness, Secret Garden Party and Glastonbury. Her poetry collections *Joyriding The Storm* and *A Recipe For Sorcery* are both published by Burning Eye and her work was Highly Commended in The Forward Prize Anthology 2019. Her one woman show *SEXY* toured with the kind support of Arts Council England, Bristol Old Vic and Camden People's Theatre. She was the Bristol City Poet for 2018 – 2020.

Tom Morris is Artistic Director of Bristol Old Vic and has been Associate Director of the National Theatre since 2004. Productions at Bristol Old Vic include *Cyrano*, *Touching The Void* (Bristol, West End and UK and International Tour), *The Grinning Man* (Bristol and West End), *Swallows and Amazons* (Bristol, West End and UK tour), *Juliet and Her Romeo*, *The Crucible*, *King Lear*, *Handel's Messiah* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Other credits include: *The Death of Klinghoffer* (ENO and Metropolitan Opera); *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* (National Theatre); *War Horse* (as co-director for National Theatre; 2011 Tony Award for Best Director); and *A Matter of Life and Death* (adapted from the film with Emma Rice, National Theatre).

Julia Head is a Theatre Director from Bristol. She works extensively with Bristol Old Vic's Engagement department and is Company Director of their Young SixSix Ensemble. She was awarded the Henry Augustine Forse Award for her contribution to Engagement and in 2018 received a Ferment Leverhulme Scholarship. She is the Artistic Director of FullRogue, and an Associate Director of both Ad Infinitum and Twisted Theatre. Julia is also a trustee of MAYK. Recent credits include; *MASSIVE* by Charlie Josephine (Audible Original Productions), *Wild Swimming* (Pleasance/Bristol Old Vic), *Chaos* (Tobacco Factory Theatres), *The Garden of Earthly Destruction* (Headlong Futures).

Dan Jones is a BAFTA and Ivor Novello Award-winning composer and sound designer working in film and theatre. His scores for feature films include *Shadow of the Vampire* and *In Transit* (both starring John Malkovich), *Jericho Mansions* (starring James Caan) and *Manno Meyjes' Max* (starring Joh Cusack), for which he received the Ivor Novello Award for Best Film Score 2004. He has written for all the major British television broadcasters and his work includes Sir David Attenborough's *The Life of Mammals*. He has also created music and soundscapes for large scale public artworks. He is the co-creator of Sky Orchestra where music is played from seven hot air balloons positioned over a city, making it one of the largest sound works in the world.

Guy Hughes is a Bristol-based actor, composer, musical director. For the stage, he has worked with the internationally renowned cycling theatre company, The HandleBards, since their inaugural tour in 2012, writing music for over 12 different Shakespeare productions. He has also written music for award-winning company New Old Friends, collaborating with the Ustinov Studio at the Theatre Royal Bath. Most recently, Guy worked closely alongside Olivier Award-winning composer Adrian Sutton and BAFTA and Ivor Novello award winning composer/sound designer Dan Jones to deliver music for Tom Morris's *Cyrano* at Bristol Old Vic.

Limbic Cinema is an award-winning multimedia design studio specialising in projection mapping and immersive video environments. Creative use of technology is integral to their particular approach to storytelling, allowing them to transform spaces and transport audiences in new and exciting ways. From architectural projection mapping on urban facades, to light sculptures in public gardens, their work takes a rich variety of forms according to the individual aims of the project.

Young SixSix is an initiative which began through Bristol Old Vic's Engagement Department in 2019 and is an ensemble that meets regularly at Bristol Old Vic to make and watch theatre. It draws young people from across the centre and north of Bristol to take part in the project through schools and youth clubs. The aim of the project is to offer pathways into theatre for young people who may not have considered it before.

RedLeaf AV are a Bristol-based production company who specialise in virtual production, broadcast media and live events. Since 2008, RedLeaf have been creating, realising and delivering ambitious projects across Europe and further afield.

Myers-Insole Local Learning is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company (C.I.C.) that was established in Bristol in 2005. They work collaboratively on creative approaches to explore local heritage and culture. Over the last 10 years they have worked with local schools, colleges, universities and communities on many innovative projects across Bristol, working in partnership with other specialists to create engaging and inclusive learning experiences through street theatre, storytelling, art, film, radio, archaeological investigations and digital technologies.

Meadows to Meaders is a project run by Local Learning, in partnership with Bristol Old Vic Engagement team since 2017 with the Southmead community. Thanks to funding from Arts Council England and Bristol City Council they are delighted to be working again with partners, Southmead Development Trust and Bristol Old Vic on a third episode of Southmead's own community soap opera, Meadows to Meaders that tells the true stories of those who have lived, worked and grown up here. They have written the script together, building on the wonderful characters and script created originally by Bea Roberts.

Theatre Orchard was founded in 2007 and is passionate about enabling arts and culture to play a pivotal role in uplifting and transforming lives and communities. They work in partnership with communities throughout North Somerset, supporting pride of place and emotional and physical well-being through a wide-ranging, dynamic and inclusive programme of live and digital activity; from large scale outdoor festivals to online workshops. Their thriving programme of engagement activities, including the Open Door adult drama group and Chapter One creative writing group has expanded through Covid-19 to offer a digital platform of creativity, keeping people and places more connected than ever - opening hearts and minds to the life-affirming spirit of live arts.