

WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF ASBESTOSIS GIVEN SPOTLIGHT IN NEW SHOW TOURING TO SCOTTISH COMMUNITIES

**WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF ASBESTOSIS GIVEN SPOTLIGHT
IN NEW SHOW TOURING TO SCOTTISH COMMUNITIES**

- Fibres is a co-production with Stellar Quines and will be directed by **Jemima Levick**
- Cast includes **Maureen Carr** and **Jonathan Watson**
- Fibres will tour to venues in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and Argyll and Bute
- Written by award-winning playwright **Frances Poet**, *Gut* (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh, 2018); and Fringe First award-winning *Adam* (which premiered at the Traverse Theatre, 2018, in association with the National Theatre of Scotland and won Best Play at the 2019 Writers' Guild Awards)

The Citizens Theatre and Stellar Quines have announced the tour of ***Fibres***, a new play by **Frances Poet**. Touring to venues and community halls throughout Scotland, the production will be presented in Greater Glasgow, Edinburgh, Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and Argyll and Bute.

Written by award-winning playwright **Frances Poet**, *Fibres* uses wit and humour to explore the legacy of asbestos in the Clyde shipyards, giving weight to the stories of women and families affected by this crisis. During the twentieth century, Glasgow and the West of Scotland was the centre of asbestos production and consumption and today has the highest global incidence of mesothelioma, a deadly cancer caused by exposure to asbestos. *Fibres* binds together four interconnected stories in a funny and touching tribute to families and individuals affected by this issue.

On what inspired her to write *Fibres*, **Frances Poet** commented, *"Five years ago, I met a woman at my daughter's music class who told me that she had lost her parents six months apart. Her father had been a ship's draftsman and had served a three-day apprenticeship on the ships. His exposure to the asbestos in those three days was enough to end not just his life prematurely but also that of his wife who washed his overalls. I knew about asbestos, as something dangerous from the past. I didn't know that deaths from asbestos related diseases were still growing each year, that the West Coast of Scotland had, at that moment, the highest incidence in Europe or that some of the people dying were wives and weans who were exposed through their loved ones' clothing. It broke my heart enough to write a play about it. But because it's a Glasgow story, I found my characters making me laugh, even in the face of tragedy. Their resilience was irresistible. And suddenly the play I was writing wasn't a tragedy but a love story with as many laughs as tears. I'm so glad Stellar Quines and the Citizens Theatre are taking the play to audiences across Scotland. I suspect our story will be met with many more stories shared after the show. I want to hear them all."*

WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF ASBESTOSIS GIVEN SPOTLIGHT IN NEW SHOW TOURING TO SCOTTISH COMMUNITIES

A co-production with award-winning Scottish theatre company **Stellar Quines**, *Fibres* will be directed by Artistic Director and Chief Executive, **Jemima Levick**.

Stellar Quines is an award-winning organisation whose vision is to be Scotland's leading touring theatre company, inspiring excellence in women and girls. Of the co-production, **Jemima Levick** commented, *"I'm so excited to be bringing this brilliant, powerful play to audiences across the west coast of Scotland. Fibres is an incredibly moving and very funny piece that is deeply relevant to individuals and communities affected by the deadly legacy of asbestos. It's a story that is often only told from the perspective of the men who suffered, ignoring the wider impact on women and children who have also been profoundly affected. Fibres elevates the women's voice and brings the impact of this tragedy on families sharply into focus. At Stellar Quines, we are dedicated to creating work that nurtures, empowers and celebrates women and girls, through their stories, as artists and audiences, so we are particularly delighted that Fibres is part of the Citizens Women season in partnership with the Citizens Theatre."*

The Citizens Women season is a season committed to putting women actors, directors and stories centre stage. The season is dedicated to showcasing the extraordinary and wide-ranging talent of women theatre-makers.

Of taking *Fibres* on tour, **Dominic Hill**, Artistic Director of the Citizens Theatre commented, *"It's a great pleasure to be able to take Fibres, our co-production with Stellar Quines, to a range of performance spaces across Scotland. Whilst our home in the Gorbals undergoes a much-needed redevelopment, taking our work out into communities across Scotland is incredibly important to us. In Fibres, Frances Poet tells a critical and relevant story with compassion and humour. This is a brilliant opportunity to take this play to audiences who have been touched by the asbestos tragedy either directly or indirectly. It is also a funny and moving story that will be delivered by a fantastic, well-known cast."*

The cast includes much loved actor **Jonathan Watson** who has most recently starred in the BBC Scotland hit *Two Doors Down*. Born in Glasgow, Watson's first job after training at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama was as a member of TAG Theatre Company, the outreach arm of the Citizens Theatre which was formed in 1967. Watson has since taken on iconic roles in *Naked Video*, *City Lights*, *Rab C Nesbitt* (BBC) and *Only An Excuse* (Comedy Unit). He is joined by **Maureen Carr** known to young audiences for her role in CBBC's *Molly and Mack* and to the nation as 'ugly sister' Edith in *Still Game* and baddie Theresa O'Hara in *River City*. Carr is also co-founder of female comedy troupe, *Witsherface*.

The cast is completed by **Suzanne Magowan** (*A Perfect Child*, *Ten Feet Tall*; *Hidden Doors*, Village Pub Theatre; *International Day of the Girl*, Stellar Quines and Village Pub Theatre) and **Ali Craig** (*Into That Darkness*, Citizens Theatre; *Hecuba* and *Victoria*, Dundee Rep; *Beautiful Burnout*, *The Making of Us* and *Macbeth*, National Theatre of Scotland; *Hamlet*, Rapture Theatre Company).

CITIZENS THEATRE
PRESS RELEASE
28 AUGUST 2019 FOR IMMEDIATE USE



WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF ASBESTOSIS GIVEN SPOTLIGHT IN NEW SHOW TOURING TO SCOTTISH COMMUNITIES

The project is supported by **Clydeside Action on Asbestos**, a charity established in 1984 by men who had been diagnosed with an asbestos disease to provide practical advice and support to others affected by this condition. **Phyllis Craig MBE**, Manager of CAA said: *'This is an incredibly important story that deserves to be told. The men and women who have lost their lives to asbestos must be remembered. Through a light-hearted and warm insight into one families' experience, the impact that asbestos use has had on communities across Scotland can reach a wide audience. Whilst people are watching the production, I would like them to remember that thousands of people across the UK continue to be diagnosed with an asbestos related condition each year, because asbestos related disease does not develop until decades after the person was exposed to asbestos. If the audience can bear this in mind, then those who have died and continue to be diagnosed will not be forgotten.'*

In addition to writer Frances Poet and Director Jemima Levick, the all-female creative team comprises **Jen McGinley**, Set and Costume Design (*Interference*, National Theatre of Scotland); **Emma Jones**, Lighting Design (*The Lover*, Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh) and **Patricia Panther**, Sound Design (*Glasgow Girls*, presented by Pachamama Productions, originally co-produced by the National Theatre of Scotland, Theatre Royal Stratford East, Citizens Theatre & Richard Jordan Productions).

The tour runs from 17 October to 2 November 2019. Details of all venues and ticket information is available from citz.co.uk

-ENDS-

For more information, interviews and images please contact
Louise Dingwall, Press and Marketing Officer
lousedingwall@citz.co.uk | 0141 418 6235

PRESS PERFORMANCE ON TUE 22 OCTOBER 7.30PM
PAISLEY ARTS CENTRE
15 New Street, Paisley, PA1 1EZ

To request tickets, please contact Louise Dingwall.

WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF ASBESTOSIS GIVEN SPOTLIGHT IN NEW SHOW TOURING TO SCOTTISH COMMUNITIES

NOTES TO EDITORS

FRANCES POET

Frances Poet is a Glasgow based playwright with two decades of experience working as a Literary Manager and dramaturg for some of the UK's leading theatre companies. Stage plays include the multi- award winning *Adam* (Scottish and UK tours 2017/18 and NYU Skirball Centre 2019) and *Gut* (Traverse Theatre & Tron Theatre 2018 and in a French translation as MADRA, Théâtre La Licorne, Montréal 2019) which was shortlisted for the Bruntwood Prize For Playwriting (2015), nominated for a UK Theatre Best Play Award and won the Writers' Guild 2019 Award for Best Play.

Frances has also completed a number of classic adaptations including *The Macbeths* (Citizens Theatre/Scottish Tour 2017/18), *What Put The Blood* (Abbey Theatre, Dublin 2017 and previously as ANDROMAQUE Scottish Tour 2015), *Dance of Death* (Citizens Theatre 2016) and *The Misanthrope* (Oran Mòr 2014).

Frances also writes for TV and radio and has had short films screened at national and international festivals.

CITIZENS THEATRE

The Citizens Theatre is Glasgow's major producing theatre and one of the leading theatre companies in the UK. Over the last 75 years, the Citizens has built an international reputation for producing innovative shows on stage, alongside a highly regarded learning programme of participatory and education work. Led by Executive Director, Alex McGowan and Artistic Director, Dominic Hill who is regarded as having "*a talent for classical drama which is genuinely world class.*" (**Daily Telegraph**) we present bold new interpretations of classic texts that are accessible and relevant - and uniquely, where any member of our audience can attend a performance for as little as 50p.

We believe in breaking down barriers to engagement with the arts and that everyone should have the opportunity to take part. Throughout the year we offer a range of opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to get involved in the creative life of our theatre.

Our beautiful Victorian home in the Gorbals is currently closed while it undergoes a major redevelopment. This will be the first comprehensive, integrated redevelopment of the building in its 140-year history. The project will transform the experiences of audiences, participants and performers and secure the future of one of Scotland's most iconic buildings and leading producing theatres. During the redevelopment, our shows will be presented at Tramway and across Scotland with classes and activities based at Scotland Street School Museum. For the latest information about the Citizens Theatre visit citz.co.uk

WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF ASBESTOSIS GIVEN SPOTLIGHT IN NEW SHOW TOURING TO SCOTTISH COMMUNITIES

STELLAR QUINES

Stellar Quines retains a unique position within the cultural ecology of Scotland, as one of the few arts organisations whose primary occupation is concerned with the role of women. Our vision is to be Scotland's leading touring theatre company, inspiring excellence in women & girls supported by our mission to Celebrate the value and diversity of women and girls by making brilliant theatre, provoking change, nurturing artists and empowering participation.

The company achieves this through a year-round programme designed to excite and inspire the audiences and artists we work with that includes producing and touring world class performance, commissioning research, championing campaigns and delivering activities to support artist development and community engagement.

The name **Stellar Quines** is a combination of two old Scots words: 'stellar' meaning 'starry' and 'quines' meaning 'women'.

CLYDESIDE ACTION ON ASBESTOS

Clydeside Action on Asbestos (CAA) is a charity that was established in 1984 by men who had been diagnosed with an asbestos disease. The purpose of setting up this charity was to help others with this condition by providing practical advice and support. The charity specialises in providing free benefit and legal advice and provides representation at social security appeals. We host monthly support group meetings throughout Scotland for people to meet in order to reduce their isolation. Clydeside Action on Asbestos is proud to sponsor a specialist nurse for those in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Those diagnosed with either Pleural Plaques, Pleural thickening, Asbestosis, Mesothelioma or Asbestos related Lung Cancer or any other injury or accident at work can contact CAA on 0800 089 1717 for free confidential advice and support.

CITIZENS THEATRE
PRESS RELEASE
28 AUGUST 2019 FOR IMMEDIATE USE

**CITIZENS
THEATRE**

WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF ASBESTOSIS GIVEN SPOTLIGHT IN NEW SHOW TOURING TO SCOTTISH COMMUNITIES

TOUR VENUES AND DATES

Ticket information available from citz.co.uk

Barrowfield Community Centre Thu 17 Oct, 6pm & Fri 18 Oct, 2pm (previews)
67 Yate Street, Glasgow
G31 4AQ

Cove Burgh Hall Sat 19 Oct, 8pm
Shore Road, Cove
G84 0LY

PRESS INVITED ON TUESDAY 22 OCTOBER

Paisley Arts Centre Tue 22 Oct, 7.30pm
15 New Street, Paisley
PA1 1EZ

The Pearce Institute Thu 24 Oct, 7pm
840 – 860 Govan Road
G61 3UU

Beacon Arts Centre Fri 25 Oct, 7.30pm
Custom House Quay, Greenock
PA15 1HJ

St Francis Community Centre Sat 26 Oct, 7pm
405 Cumberland Street, Glasgow
G5 0SE

Barmulloch Community Centre Sun 27 Oct, 7pm
46 Wallacewell Quadrant, Glasgow
G21 3PX

Traverse Theatre Tue 29 – Wed 30 Oct, 8pm
10 Cambridge Street, Edinburgh
EH1 2ED

Barlanark Community Centre Thu 31 Oct, 7pm
33 Burnmouth Road, Glasgow
G33 4RZ

Dunoon Burgh Hall Fri 1 Nov, 7.30pm
195 Argyll Street, Dunoon
PA23 7DD

The Whiteinch Centre Sat 2 Nov, 7pm
1 Northinch Street, Glasgow
G14 0UG

CITIZENS THEATRE
PRESS RELEASE
28 AUGUST 2019 FOR IMMEDIATE USE



WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF ASBESTOSIS GIVEN SPOTLIGHT IN NEW SHOW TOURING TO SCOTTISH COMMUNITIES

LISTINGS

Ticket information from citz.co.uk / 0141 429 0022
On sale now

A Stellar Quines and Citizens Theatre co-production

FIBRES

By Frances Poet

Directed by Jemima Levick

AT VENUES ACROSS SCOTLAND

17 Oct – 2 Nov

Suitable for ages 14+

Contains strong language.

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Cast | Maureen Carr; Ali Craig; Suzanne Magowan; Jonathan Watson |
| Director | Jemima Levick |
| Writer | Frances Poet |
| Set and costume Designer | Jen McGinley |
| Lighting Designer | Emma Jones |
| Sound Design | Patricia Panther |

"We were two weans playing at wee hooses, him in his first job and me being the good wife doing his washing. Now we're both dying."

Resentment and kindness, sorrow and laughter, memories and hope bind together four interconnected stories in this funny and touching family history/play.

Jack is proud of his work at the Clyde shipyards; the tragedy is the asbestos he brought home is killing him and his wife Beanie, who washed the dust off his clothes.

As their daughter Lucy attempts to overcome her grief, will she be held back by her parents' shared experiences or will she have the courage to join her fate to another and allow romance to blossom with Pete?

Written by award-winning playwright Frances Poet, *Fibres* is a big-hearted play about what it means to entwine our lives with another, in sickness and in health. Capturing a very Glaswegian resilience and wit, it asks can we ever cut the cords that hold us and who will catch us if we do?