

After Preston by Amahra Spence
Friday 1st December at 1pm
B2 Theatre



A warm welcome to the Belgrade Theatre. Thank you for joining us, and we hope you enjoy the very first sharing of this brand-new piece of theatre. You're about to witness the very first outing of a brand-new play which has been developed through a partnership between the Belgrade Theatre and the University of Warwick.

The aim of the project was to commission a piece of writing that honours the extensive research undertaken by Professor Jacqueline Hodgson and Dr Rachel Lewis whilst also challenging and exploring the power of arts and culture collaborations in contexts where there might be hostility or distrust.

Over the past few months, Amahra has skilfully used this research as a springboard to write an urgent and important play. Collaboration has been a key component to this process, and it's been a joy to explore this further with a brilliant creative team and acting company. The *After Preston* you're watching today is at the beginning of its journey and we look forward to collaborating with you, the audience, as part of its ongoing development.

Jennifer Davis - Director

SYNOPSIS

After Preston is a taut family drama set against the backdrop of a country where its government has decided to decommission all prisons. The play follows Melina and Tremaine, a brother and sister bound in grief but separated by the system, as they struggle to come to terms with loss.

After Preston is dedicated to the lives and loved ones of Tony Lawrence and Elianne Andam.

CAST

Melina	Yasmin Dawes
Tremaine	Keiren Hamilton Amos
Slick	Corey Weekes
Aunt Maureen / PCSO Nina	Lara J West

All other roles are played by the company.

CREATIVES & THE TEAM

Writer	Amahra Spence
Director / Dramaturg	Jennifer Davis
Sound Designer	Kayode Gomez
Lighting Designer & Operator	Arnim Friess
Stage Manager	Tracy Croft

For the Belgrade Theatre

Technical Manager	Rob Wimperis
Producer	Joe Rose

For the University of Warwick

Researchers	Professor Jackie Hodgson Dr Rachel Lewis
-------------	---

CONTENT WARNING

Please note that the show contains strong language, continued depiction of violence and violent images, frequent discussion of policing, racism, mental illness and death, infrequent references to drugs. There is live smoking on stage in this production.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

Since 2021, the School of Law at the University of Warwick have been researching the nature of local police engagement with different communities through arts and culture and what it can achieve. What opportunities and challenges are there in using creative initiatives to bring police and communities together in shared spaces? And how might the empathy and emotional connection generated through this kind of work change the way that the police understand and carry out their role?

We found that there are many challenges with these creative initiatives, for example some people don't want to take part in any activities with the police; and some police officers question whether they really have the time to be doing these projects. At the same time, however, we have found that these arts interventions can be a powerful catalyst in helping communities and police officers to find ways of expressing their experiences and perspectives to one another, of working together collaboratively, and to challenge stereotypes of one another.

We wanted to bring this research to a wider audience, and to bring young people and police officers into a shared space to explore these issues through different creative methods. That's what today is about: a brand-new play, written by Amahra Spence, which draws on our research findings; an exhibition from Kay Rufai; and creative scribing from Nifty Fox to capture your thoughts and responses throughout the day.

More information about the research can be found in the booklet provided.

Enjoy the show!

Professor Jackie Hodgson & Dr Rachel Lewis

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

This project is still at the start of its journey, and your thoughts and feedback are so important as it continues its development.

Please find a series of questions below to support your reflections throughout the day.

1. What barriers are there between the police and young people? What do you think could be done to overcome these obstacles?
2. What does successful policing look like to you?
3. What are the benefits and challenges of the police force engaging with communities through the arts?
4. Has the exhibition, performance, and discussion changed how you feel about the police, and about the relationships between police and communities?

There are a few ways that you can provide feedback – find a member of the team and share your thoughts or scan the QR code and fill out the form below.

SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK ONLINE

*Scan the QR code and let us know your thoughts,
or ask a member of the team for a printed feedback form.*

