

PRESS RELEASE

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WRITERS RABIAH HUSSAIN, LETTIE PRECIOUS AND ROSS WILLIS AWARDED THE FIRST ROYAL COURT THEATRE AND KUDOS WRITING FELLOWSHIPS

Ross Willis, Lettie Precious, Rabiah Hussain. Photo credit: Ali Wright

Last night the Royal Court Theatre and Kudos announced that writers Rabiah Hussain, Lettie Precious and Ross Willis had been selected to each receive £10,000 through new writing fellowships created by the two companies.

This is the first year that the fellowships, which support three writers already establishing a career in order to focus purely on their writing for six months, have been in place.

Commenting on the Fellowships Lucy Morrison, Royal Court Associate Director said;
“Stories are still one of the most powerful ways we have to get people to imagine a different life, a different world and to understand our experiences as humans.

We need to ensure that the right people are given the opportunities to tell their stories and this fellowship enables that.

These three extraordinary writers can make change happen. Together with Kudos, we will support, challenge them and celebrate them to make art and tell the stories everyone needs to hear.”

Diederick Santer, CEO of Kudos added;

"I'm truly buzzing at the potential of these three writers and delighted that Kudos has joined forces with the Royal Court again to find and encourage fresh new voices. This scheme really gets to the heart of the issue for any emerging writer; how to live while building a career. It will be thrilling to see how these incredibly talented writers develop given the space and support to immerse themselves entirely in their work."

The Royal Court and Kudos met with 13 writers who perceived that there are barriers to getting their work developed and produced in theatre and television. These shortlisted writers were Josh Elliott, Amy Bethan Evans, Sami Ibrahim, Yasmin Joseph, Benjamin Kuffour, Joanne Lau, Benedict Lombe, Iman Qureshi, Stefanie Reynolds and Annie Siddons.

Each will have a continuing relationship with the Royal Court and Kudos.

During the six months Rabiah Hussain, Lettie Precious and Ross Willis will be able to take part in and challenge the work of the Royal Court and Kudos. They will each be firmly embedded in the organisations, spending time with all departments, shadowing colleagues observing rehearsals, attending first previews and visiting TV sets. There will be opportunities to take part in monthly workshops run by leading creatives in theatre and television; attend script meetings at the Royal Court and development meetings at Kudos to be part of the conversations about potential productions; and have space and time to develop their own projects.

The fellowships continue the relationship between the Royal Court and Kudos who have collaborated for the past two years to deliver bespoke writers groups. This partnership has focused on developing new talent for television and theatre, championing the need for diversity in both sectors.

On receiving the Fellowship Rabiah Hussain said:

"I feel absolutely honoured to be awarded this fellowship. I'm at an exciting, but also daunting, time in my writing career but knowing I have the space and time this fellowship allows, makes all the difference. It also means I have the guidance and support of both the Royal Court and Kudos - the very best in theatre and TV. For someone like me, who has had to struggle to get a foot in the door, this is an opportunity like no other and one I hope will pave the way for many more in the future."

Lettie Precious added;

"I was absolutely gobsmacked when I found out I had been selected for the Royal Court and Kudos Fellowship! 'Wow' was the only word I could master for a good twenty minutes. This opportunity means the world to me, it has come at a time where I needed it the most in my writing career. I feel very privileged."

Ross Willis added;

"Telling stories is the only thing I've ever wanted to do with my life so receiving one of these fellowships means so much to me. It gives me the chance to breathe in, a lifeline to carry on and is a high five from two brilliant organisations whose work I adore."

See below for writers biographies.



KUDOS

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For more information please contact Rosie Evans-Hill on 0207 565 5157 / RosieEvansHill@royalcourttheatre.com

To download images [see here](#).

Notes to Editors:

Rabiah Hussain

Rabiah is a writer and poet. Her debut full-length play, *Spun*, premiered at the Arcola Theatre in July 2018, and her short plays and monologues have been part of programmes with Theatre Absolute, The Bunker Theatre and RADA. She was a storyteller for BAC's London Migrant Stories festival and contributed to their film project *What Keeps You Awake at Night*. Rabiah has performed poetry at venues including Rich Mix and The Space Arts Centre, and has contributed poetry to an anthology by The Asian Writer. Commissioned by Tamasha Theatre and Titi Dawudu, she contributed three monologues to *Hear Me Now*, a collection of diverse monologues created for and with diverse actors and published by Oberon books. In 2018, Rabiah was part of the BBC Drama Room programme and has completed writing programmes with Tamasha Theatre, Criterion Theatre, Hachette Publishing, Kali Theatre and the Royal Court. Accompanying her creative work, Rabiah has contributed opinion pieces to The Guardian, Huffington Post Blog, Exeunt Magazine, *Burnt Roti*, The F-Word, Gal-Dem and Wales Arts Review.

Lettie Precious

Lettie is a playwright, poet, author and artist. In a short space of time after quitting their job as a nurse to concentrate on their writing, they became active within the theatre industry and won the Best New Artist Award at Museum of the Mind in 2016, as well as becoming a published author in 2018. Lettie worked with Team Angela Productions to produce a piece at Theatre Royal Stratford East, before producing their own play at the Arcola in 2017. In 2018, Lettie completed a yearlong Write to Play programme with Graeae Theatre and has had works produced at Soho Theatre, Ovalhouse and the Bush in partnership with Talawa Theatre Company, as well as working with the BBC London Voices Writers Room.

Ross Willis

Ross is a member of the Orange Tree Writers' Collective, BBC Writers Room and a playwright on attachment at the Bristol Old Vic. He was the writer-in-residence at Theatr Clwyd and is an alumnus of Tamasha Playwrights and Soho Theatre Writers Lab, where he developed *Wonder Boy* produced by Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. He was commissioned by Tamasha and Titilola Dawudu to write a series of monologues for *Hear Me Now*, a book of monologues for diverse actors, and collaborated with Arcola Youth Theatre on the play *We Make Fire*.

Ross is currently one of the 503Five, a group of resident playwrights at Theatre503, where his debut play *Wolfie*, a surreal telling of life in and after the care system, will open in March.





KUDOS



KUDOS

About the Royal Court

The Royal Court Theatre is the writers' theatre. It is a leading force in world theatre for energetically cultivating writers - undiscovered, emerging and established.

Through the writers, the Royal Court is at the forefront of creating restless, alert, provocative theatre about now. We open our doors to the unheard voices and free thinkers that, through their writing, change our way of seeing.

Over 120,000 people visit the Royal Court in Sloane Square, London, each year and many thousands more see our work elsewhere through transfers to the West End and New York, UK and international tours, digital platforms, our residencies across London, and our site-specific work. Through all our work we strive to inspire audiences and influence future writers with radical thinking and provocative discussion.

The Royal Court's extensive development activity encompasses a diverse range of writers and artists and includes an ongoing programme of writers' attachments, readings, workshops and playwriting groups. Twenty years of the International Department's pioneering work around the world means the Royal Court has relationships with writers on every continent.

Within the past sixty years, John Osborne, Samuel Beckett, Arnold Wesker, Ann Jellicoe, Howard Brenton and David Hare have started their careers at the Court. Many others including Caryl Churchill, Athol Fugard, Mark Ravenhill, Simon Stephens, Debbie Tucker Green, Sarah Kane – and, more recently, Lucy Kirkwood, Nick Payne, Penelope Skinner and Alistair McDowall – have followed.

The Royal Court has produced many iconic plays from Lucy Kirkwood's *The Children* to Jez Butterworth's *Jerusalem* and Martin McDonagh's *Hangmen*.

Royal Court plays from every decade are now performed on stage and taught in classrooms and universities across the globe.

It is because of this commitment to the writer that we believe there is no more important theatre in the world than the Royal Court.





KUDOS

About Kudos

Kudos, part of the Endemol Shine Group, is one of the world's leading television production companies. We are a team of individuals – passionate programme makers who specialise in scripted content. We work with the best global talent to create, develop and produce popular, innovative, award-winning drama and comedy series. Recent work includes Humans (Channel 4 / AMC), Troy: Fall of a City (a co-production with Wild Mercury for BBC 1 / Netflix), The Tunnel (Sky Atlantic), The Boy with the Topknot (BBC 2), Gunpowder (BBC 1), Tin Star (Sky Atlantic / Amazon), Man in an Orange Shirt (BBC 2), Grantchester (ITV), Broadchurch (ITV) and Apple Tree Yard (BBC 1). We are currently in production on a second series of Tin Star, a fourth series of Grantchester, a new series for ITV (Deep Water) and a US version of hit series Utopia for Amazon.

