

THEATRE UNCUT

In partnership with the Young Vic, Traverse Theatre and Sherman Theatre

Young
Vic



TWO PALESTINIANS GO DOGGING BY SAMI IBRAHIM ANNOUNCED WINNER OF THEATRE UNCUT POLITICAL PLAYWRITING AWARD 2019

- **UK's first major political playwriting prize in partnership with the Young Vic, Traverse Theatre and Sherman Theatre**
- **Winning play will feature as part of the Royal Court Theatre's upcoming season announcement in a co-production between the Royal Court Theatre and Theatre Uncut**

At an award ceremony today at the Young Vic Theatre the winner of the inaugural Theatre Uncut Political Playwriting Award was announced as Sami Ibrahim for his new play *two Palestinians go dogging*. For the first time Theatre Uncut will be co-producing a play with the Royal Court Theatre as part of their next season – further details will be announced.

Set in the mid 2020s Sami Ibrahim's winning play confronts the future Israeli-Palestinian conflict through an extraordinary genre-exploding story of a flawed family. Using the lens of humour to explore how the every day becomes political and the political becomes everyday in a conflict zone.

Judged by Theatre Uncut Artistic Directors Hannah Price and Emma Callander, as well as Rachel O'Riordan (current Artistic Director, Lyric Hammersmith and former Artistic Director, Sherman Theatre, Cardiff), Nadia Latif (Genesis Fellow and Associate Director at the Young Vic) and Gareth Nicholls (Interim Artistic Director Traverse Theatre), the play was chosen out of 444 entries from across the UK. Sami Ibrahim has been awarded £9,500.

Commenting on winning the prize Playwright Sami Ibrahim said;

"I'm absolutely thrilled to win Theatre Uncut's inaugural playwriting award. It's a fantastic platform and I'm really excited that this piece now has such a great chance to be heard. I can't thank Theatre Uncut and its partners enough for the honour!"

Hannah Price and Emma Callander, Co-Artistic Directors of Theatre Uncut commented;

"The panel was unanimous in its decision to award the inaugural Theatre Uncut Political Playwriting Award to Sami Ibrahim for two Palestinians go dogging. Sami's writing is

unflinching, brave and bold, alive with humour, outrage and playfulness. We can't wait to see the play in production, and are delighted to have found such an extraordinary new voice. We believe Sami has a long and glittering career ahead of him."

Rachel O'Riordan, Artistic Director of the Lyric Hammersmith, added;

"It was very exciting to be part of the judging panel for this important award. When we came to discuss two Palestinians go dogging, we all spoke passionately about the bravery and integrity of the subject and the writing. In this play, and this writer, we have a bold and boundary breaking new work which doesn't imitate, or apologise for itself. Which is surely what all great writers aim for. I am delighted for everyone involved. Thanks to the Royal Court for co-producing this with Theatre Uncut; it's a brilliant partnership."

Gareth Nicholls, Interim Artistic Director of the Traverse Theatre said;

"I had a wonderful time reading plays for the Theatre Uncut Political Playwriting Award. The range of work and quality of plays on offer from around the UK was inspiring to say the least and is testament to all the brilliant and fearless playwrights who entered. In the winner we've found a work that is bold, playful and provocative, never holding back in its pursuit to highlight some of the worse injustices around the world. I'm excited to see the next steps in bringing this play to life."

And Nadia Latif Associate Director at the Young Vic said;

"It was a pleasure to read all the shortlisted plays, however reading Sami Ibrahim's two Palestinians go dogging was something else. That rare and exquisite thrill of knowing that you have happened upon something incredibly special, that you are encountering a writer of such unbridled intelligence, wit and vision that it knocks you back in your seat. The play is simply brilliant - I couldn't be happier that the rest of the panel agreed."

Theatre Uncut aims to provoke debate and galvanise action by making new political theatre available for everyone, everywhere.

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Notes to Editors

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Theatre Uncut have been provoking debate and galvanising action since 2011 by making high quality new writing accessible for anyone to perform anywhere. The company works with leading and emerging playwrights to raise questions and examine global current events. So far over 6,000 people have performed Theatre Uncut plays in 26 countries across 4 continents. Theatre Uncut has won two Fringe Firsts, a Herald Angel Award and been shortlisted for the Amnesty International Freedom of Expression Award. The company is led by Co-Artistic Directors Emma Callander and Hannah Price. For more info please visit: www.theatreuncut.com

Emma Callander

Emma Callander joined Theatre Uncut as Co-Artistic Director in 2012. She is also currently an Associate Artist at the Traverse Theatre and a Leverhulme Fellow at the Bristol Old Vic.

Theatre includes: *BIRTH* (Royal Exchange Theatre Manchester, Traverse, World Health Organisation), *Choices* by Stacey Gregg (Bush Theatre, Southbank Centre, Dublin Fringe), *Crash* by Andy Duffy (Traverse Theatre, nominated Best Play at the Critics Awards for Theatre in Scotland) and *Cuckooed* by Mark Thomas (Traverse Theatre, winner of a Fringe First and the Amnesty International Freedom of Expression Award), *Banksy: The Room in the Elephant* by Tom Wainwright

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(Arcola, Tobacco Factory, Oran Mor, Edinburgh festival and national tour), *Dalgety* by David Greig (Oran Mor and Edinburgh festival). Emma has also directed the Arcadia Spectacular at Glastonbury Festival and community youth projects with Travelling Light. For Theatre Uncut: Emma has directed *The Power Plays* (Bristol Old Vic, Boomtown Festival), *Refugee* (Teater Grob, Copenhagen), *In Opposition* (Paines Plough Roundabout), *Knowledge is Power: Knowledge is Change* (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh), *Referendum Plays* (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh), *The Rise of the Right* (Young Vic), *TU International* (Young Vic, Latitude, Shambala) and *The Cuts* (Bristol Old Vic and Arches Glasgow).

Sami Ibrahim

Sami is a young writer from London. His most recent full-length play, *Wind Bit Bitter, Bit Bit Bit Her*, had a run at VAULT Festival 2018 - after it was shortlisted for Soho Theatre's Tony Craze Award, longlisted for the Bruntwood Prize, and published by Nick Hern Books. His most recent short play *the Palestinian in the basement is on fire* was performed at Pint Sized's October Fest at The Bunker Theatre, and his piece *Iron Dome Fog Dome* was staged at The Yard during their last First Drafts season. He is currently developing a feature film, *off land*, with the BFI Early Development Fund. He's also worked at the Almeida as a Creative Board member, where he produced and was assistant dramaturg on *From the Ground Up*. Other writing credits include *Force of Trump*, which had runs at Theatre N16, The Space and the Brockley Jack Theatre - where his short play, *Carnivore*, was also performed during the Write Now 7 Festival. He was recently shortlisted for the Kudos / Royal Court Playwriting Fellowship. He is currently a member of Tamasha Writers Group, the Oxford Playhouse Playmaker scheme, and this year will be a writer-in-residence at Theatr Clwyd.

Hannah Price

Hannah is Co-Artistic Director and Founder of Theatre Uncut. She is also a Performance Director for video games, VR, mo-cap and per-cap projects. **Theatre includes:** *End of the Pier* (Park Theatre), *Down and Out in Paris and London Live* (Senate House), *Again* (Trafalgar Studios), *Permanence* (Tarragon Theatre, Toronto), *Escape the Scaffold* (Theatre 503 & The Other Room Theatre), *Run the Beast Down* (Marlowe Theatre/Finborough Theatre), *1984 Live* (Senate House), *Rainbow Class* (Bush Theatre/ Assembly Rooms), *TEST* (Scala Theatre, Basel), *The Dead Monkey* (Park Theatre), *Boa* (Trafalgar Studios), *Cello/Fragile* (Yard Theatre), *Call to Prayer* (Southwark Playhouse), *Bud Take the Wheel, I Feel a Song Coming On* (Shaw Theatre and Edinburgh Festival), *That Moment* (King's Head Theatre and National Tour), *In a Very Real Sense* (Soho Theatre), *Portmanteau* (Arcola Theatre and Bike Shed Theatre, Exeter), *Loving Ophelia* (Pleasance London). **For Theatre Uncut:** Hannah has directed *Refugee* (Teater Grob, Copenhagen), *In Opposition* (Paines Plough Roundabout), *Knowledge is Power: Knowledge is Change* (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh, and National Tour), *Referendum Plays* (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh), *TU Istanbul: Power and Protest* (Dot Tiyatro, Istanbul International Theatre Festival and Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh), *TU 2013: The Rise of the Right* (The Young Vic) and *The Cuts Plays* (Southwark Playhouse, Soho Theatre, Latitude Festival and Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh).

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

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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.

<https://royalcourttheatre.com>