

[illegible]

a homegrown hand-stapled  
collection of ideas,,,, made  
with love xx

ART  
*l'art pour l'art*

FOR

ARTS

SAKE

*Autoteles*

**ARS GRATIA ARTIS**

“‘true’ art, is divorced from any didactic, moral, or utilitarian function.”  
*Aestheticism & Decadence*  
‘quite useless.’

is it possible to make apolitical drama? theatre without a political message?

one of the other *Noff* writers said they really enjoyed *Magic Hour* because it was just a fun spectacle, nothing more. only for us all to attend the discussion where quick duck theatre talked about the lack of representation of queer work.

[ the history and legacy of British drag and the political statement made by incorporating such a wide range of drag styles in one show.]

the thing about theatre: we make stories with light with sound with  
bodies  
audiences interpret those things, those people  
that is a fact  
and that interpretation [that act of reading what u see]  
well it's both aesthetic and political  
every fucker who comes to the theatre brings their own life experiences /  
ideologies / beliefs / biases  
no one of us is “objective”

*even if u choose not to engage with politics in ur art*  
**ITS STILL FUCKING THERE**  
*aka your audience will read politics in the work*  
because it's not about intention - - but interpretation

Sometimes I wish it were possible to create a universal truth. A bright shining beam of light of true glory, that we can all agree on. However, each time I think that in despair – I am reminded of the chaotic, widely, different twinkling constellations of pinprick-lights of truth in our vast universe. I think about how beautiful that is.

**Don't be afraid of The Aesthetic.**  
**But also.**  
**Don't be afraid of The Political.**



There's been a murder!  
Are you ready to find the murderer?

---

Hell yes!

No, I hate audience interaction

Wrong show, hun...

Glad to have you onboard - pick a colour.

Gold

Pink

Blue

An excellent choice! DANCE BREAK!

Wait, no! This is a serious investigation.  
What struck you most about the production?

---

Is literally everyone in drag?

Is that a cult shrine in the corner?

Kind of but gender is fluid, is this  
going to be a problem for you?

Yes

Lol no.

PRAISE XENU!

Wrong show, hun...

Great - time for another dance break!

Enough with that razzle dazzle!

What about the suspects? How would you describe them?

Batshit insane but I can roll with it

Well, I found them a bit 2-dimensional

Wrong show, hun...

But you haven't found the killer yet? Well what about the form?

Isn't immersive theatre a bit gimmicky?

Sacrifice the heretic - praise Xenu!

I'm not saying anything without my lawyer present

Will any of my choices affect the outcome?

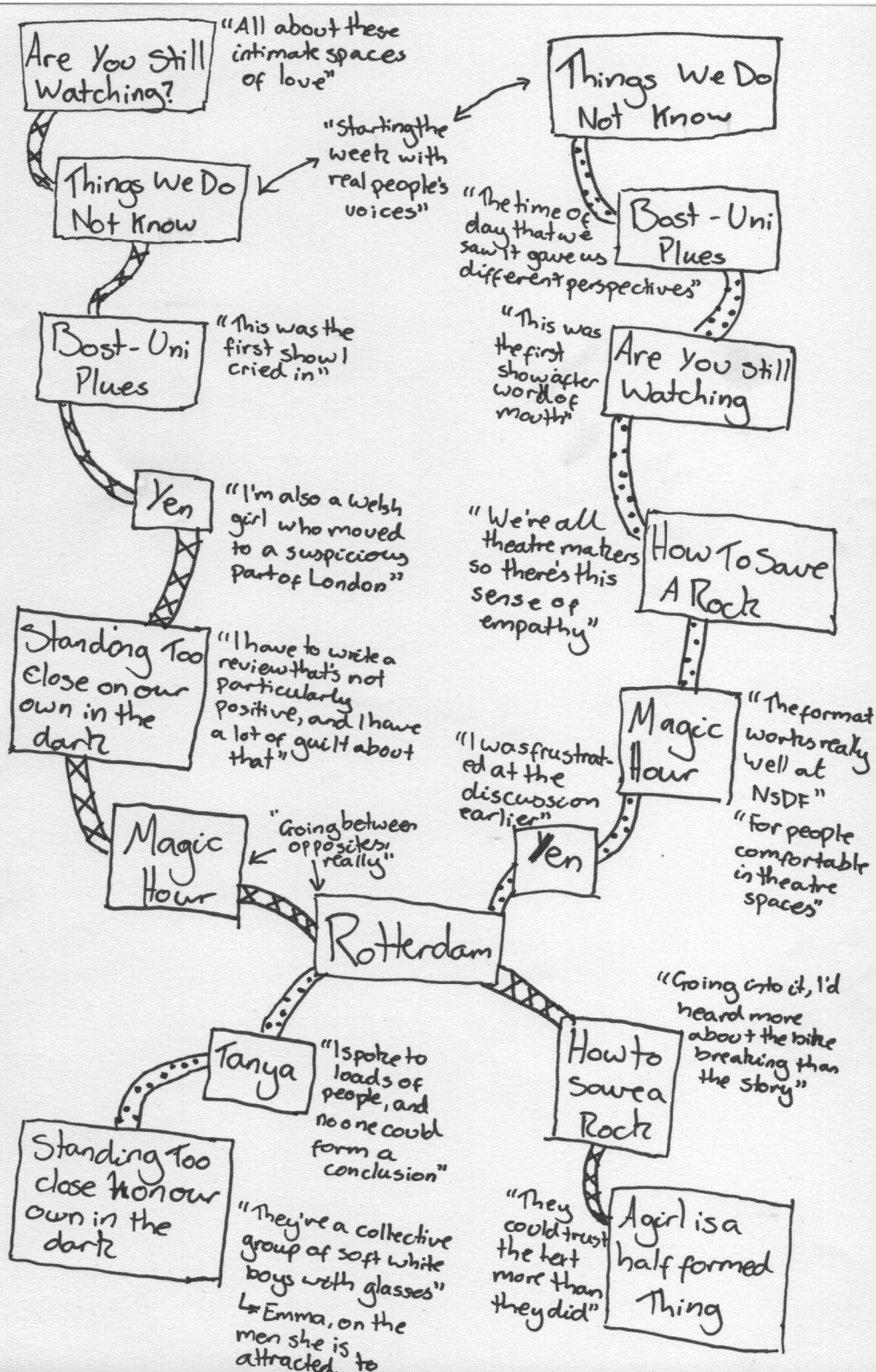
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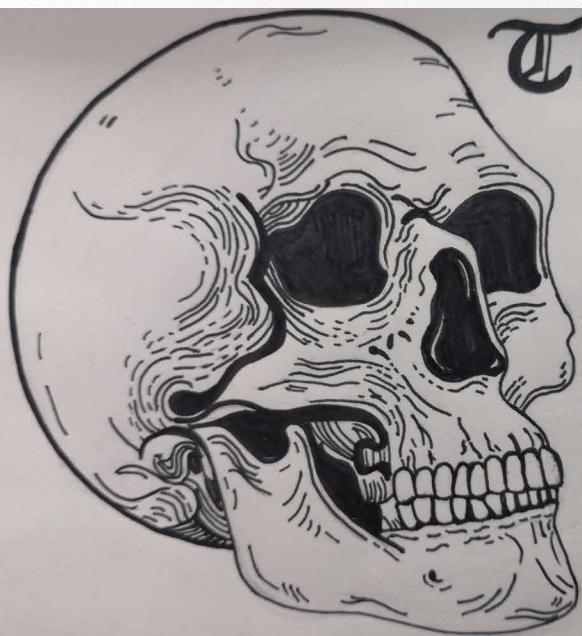
No, is that going to be a problem?

No, but I really don't care.

Wrong show, hun...

Excellent - DANCE BREAK!





To be,  
or  
not  
to  
be.



BEEP...BEEP...BEEP.....

Mama Johnson: Hi kids, we just wanted to leave a quick voice mail to wish you luck with BARRY. We don't really know what it's about, but we love you and have all our fingers crossed for you.

Who would have thought that those wide eyed freshers who wandered into Bedlam all those years ago would become these wonderful independent artists and creators. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to watch your growth. It is nice to be working in a venue where you don't have to wear a fluffy duffle to stay warm.

Lorisa, it has been wonderful to watch you fly the nest. Ange, I have never met someone who can stay so upbeat whilst hand-cutting confetti. If that doesn't bring you down - nothing will. Jess & Aggie: our fave odd couple, I feel so lucky to have helped shepherd your first show. You deserve your flock.

PAPA REES: I hope your Theatre mum has said something heart felt. I don't really understand what you are doing, or who Barry ~~had~~ Lad is but I am very proud and hope your having a fun time. Not too much fun though! Stay Safe. Get some sleep. Don't see too much Theatre.

Mama Johnson: Okay! Lots of love from your deeply uncool, but very proud Theatre Parents.  
B YYYEEEEE!

CALL  
HOME



# FIVE OBSERVATIONS OF OTHER PEOPLE (and one personal thing)

1

An actor with a dead-on impression of Jeremy Clarkson, speaking about his personal experiences and it being the first moment that clicked for me.

2

A member of staff (who will remain anonymous) ducking behind the Noffice curtain and under the all-seeing flamingo for a moment of respite.

3

Audiences flowing past each other, regular showgoers against colour-coded wristbands in one of the best bits of movement I've seen all week.

4

The contrast of a magenta-clad parking attendant against the yellow bus, a reminder that the real world is still functioning outside of this wonderful, chaotic bubble.

5

The spirit and perseverance on show, fighting their way through powercuts and broken dynamos.

+1

A change in myself. The sense that everything will be okay and not just because I have glitter on my face and a newfound ability to chat to strangers.

## On Autism and Theatre

I am really bad at doing facial expressions when acting. I couldn't do them to save my life. It's either not enough or too much. I can never really seem to hack it, feigning emotions on my face during performance. I am surprised there isn't a theatrical school of faces – we already have extensive ones for voice and physicality. But then perhaps it comes easy to most people. As someone with high-functioning autism, I've been less proficient in this area.

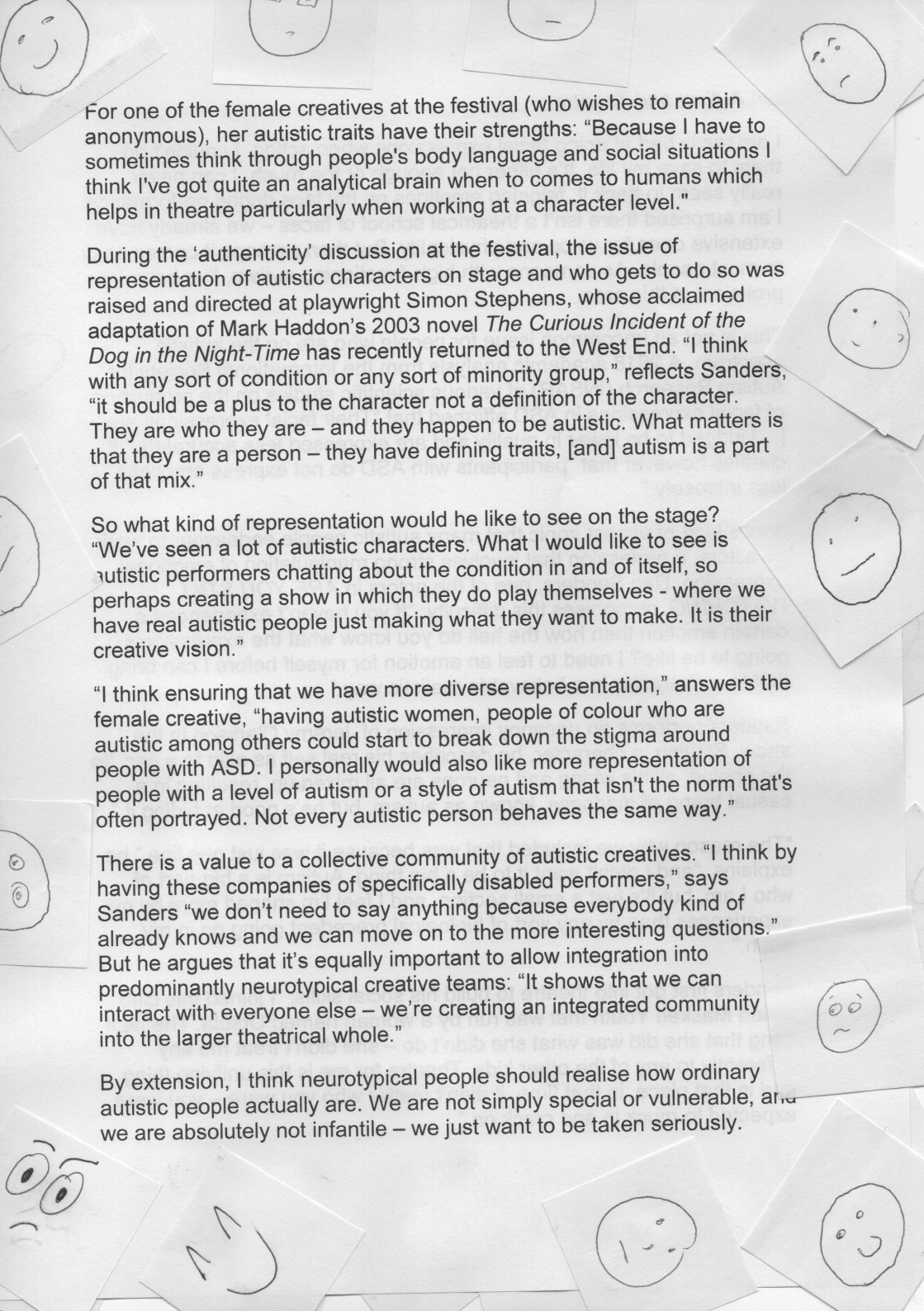
This is not an uncommon issue for people who are on the autistic spectrum. A 2018 academic analysis from the International Society for Autism Research (INSAR) of various scientific studies on the production of facial expressions in ASD affirmed that "Their facial expressions are [...] judged to be lower in quality and are expressed less accurately." It clarifies however that "participants with ASD do not express emotions less intensely."

So it's kind of almost ironic that many autistic people endeavour to work as actors, a profession that involves strong manipulation of emotional expression. Dan Sanders, one of the actors in *ARE YOU STILL WATCHING*, recognises this difficulty: "If you haven't experienced a certain emotion then how the hell do you know what the expression's going to be like? I need to feel an emotion for myself before I can bring that to a character in a believable realistic way."

Sanders performs an uncanny impression of Jeremy Clarkson in the show. Staying in character, he describes his real self as akin to a car: "In the engine, all his wiring and neurons are all mixed up, resulting in a casual brand of madness, known as autism, but he's good at hiding it."

"The reason why we included that was because it was just one line," he explains, "and I didn't want it to be a big thing. Autism is a big part of who I am, but it's just a small section, and I feel I'm shaped more by my experiences than by any sort of biological precedent going on in my brain."

Sanders first got into theatre to build his social skills: "I joined this club called Masked Youth that was run by a woman named Ursula. The best thing that she did was what she didn't do – she didn't treat me any differently to any of the other kids. Theatre for me is this unifying thing, and in that place, in that time, it didn't matter who you were – you were expected to muck in and crack on."

The background of the page is decorated with numerous small, hand-drawn faces on pieces of paper. These faces are simple sketches with varying expressions, some smiling, some neutral, and some with unusual features like multiple eyes or simple lines for features. They are scattered across the page, some overlapping the text.

For one of the female creatives at the festival (who wishes to remain anonymous), her autistic traits have their strengths: "Because I have to sometimes think through people's body language and social situations I think I've got quite an analytical brain when it comes to humans which helps in theatre particularly when working at a character level."

During the 'authenticity' discussion at the festival, the issue of representation of autistic characters on stage and who gets to do so was raised and directed at playwright Simon Stephens, whose acclaimed adaptation of Mark Haddon's 2003 novel *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* has recently returned to the West End. "I think with any sort of condition or any sort of minority group," reflects Sanders, "it should be a plus to the character not a definition of the character. They are who they are – and they happen to be autistic. What matters is that they are a person – they have defining traits, [and] autism is a part of that mix."

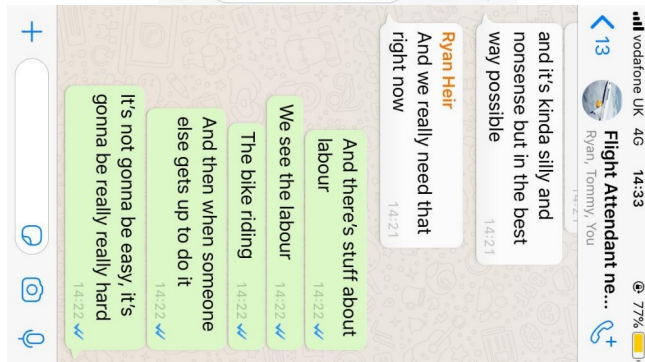
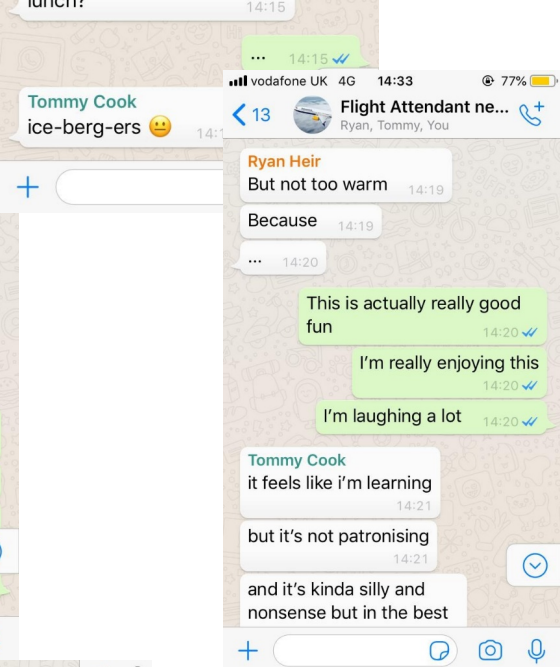
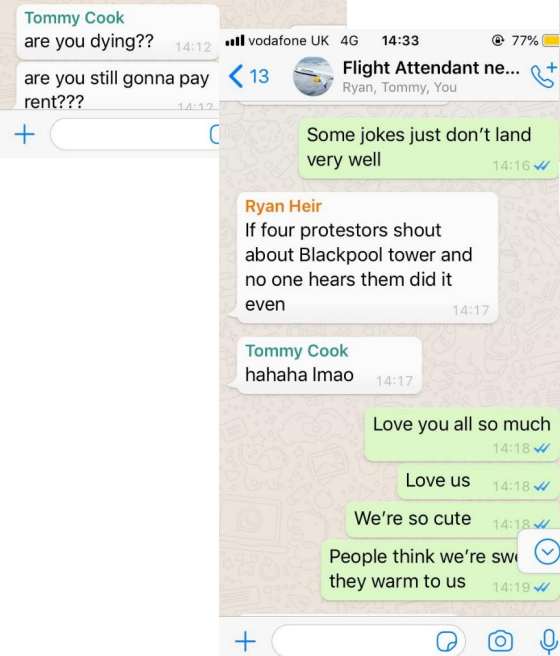
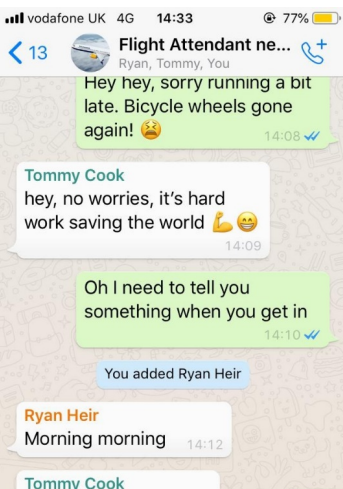
So what kind of representation would he like to see on the stage? "We've seen a lot of autistic characters. What I would like to see is autistic performers chatting about the condition in and of itself, so perhaps creating a show in which they do play themselves - where we have real autistic people just making what they want to make. It is their creative vision."

"I think ensuring that we have more diverse representation," answers the female creative, "having autistic women, people of colour who are autistic among others could start to break down the stigma around people with ASD. I personally would also like more representation of people with a level of autism or a style of autism that isn't the norm that's often portrayed. Not every autistic person behaves the same way."

There is a value to a collective community of autistic creatives. "I think by having these companies of specifically disabled performers," says Sanders "we don't need to say anything because everybody kind of already knows and we can move on to the more interesting questions." But he argues that it's equally important to allow integration into predominantly neurotypical creative teams: "It shows that we can interact with everyone else – we're creating an integrated community into the larger theatrical whole."

By extension, I think neurotypical people should realise how ordinary autistic people actually are. We are not simply special or vulnerable, and we are absolutely not infantile – we just want to be taken seriously.







# FIND YOUR NEXT SHOW



write plays.

From classics and Broadway musicals to contemporary dramas and experimental works, Samuel French can help you find the perfect play or musical to perform.

Suggestions of shows for students include:

- *35mm: A Musical Exhibition* by Ryan Scott Oliver
- *And Then There Were None* by Agatha Christie

write a play.

write plays because then you don't have to pay

£50

- *The Coast of Utopia* by Tom Stoppard
- *The Effect* by Lucy Prebble
- *The Flick* by Annie Baker
- *The Hothouse* by Harold Pinter

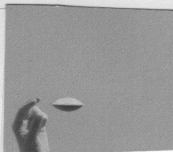
a right to say someone else's words

- *Hedda Gabler* by Henrik Ibsen/ Patrick Marber
- *Lights Over Tesco Car Park* by Poltergeist Theatre
- *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play* by Anne Washburn
- *No Quarter* by Polly Stenham

read Lucy's piece

(issue 4 page 5)

on what it means for Poltergeist  
to be in this "canon"



STUDENTS

don't be scared

anything you write will be better than  
Patrick Marber

- *The Pillowman* by Martin McDonagh



WON'T GET ME FUCKING STARTED

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Thank you for shopping at Ryman

"i know Hobson founded  
NSDF but objectively  
Tynan is better"

"CMS more like CM Tes!!!"

"i don't want to shit on her"  
-"she probably doesn't want you to"

"Society is like: eat a  
potato"

"(357) 'Gorro vones mybroz leg any not'"

overhead in leicester maccses:

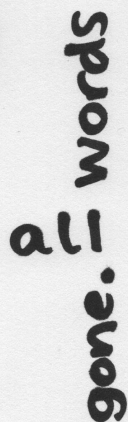
'is that Chris Thorpe? No, it's a homeless  
man in a big jumper and hat'

Submitted by  
a fan

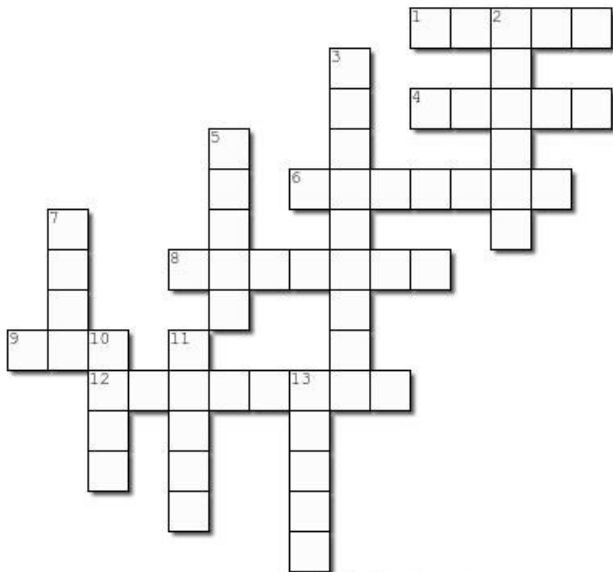
O V E R

HEARD





Complete the crossword puzzle below



### Across

1. Lelani and the act of covering ones own expenses: go...
4. Regulators of content in Are You Still Watching
6. Video games are often criticised for being excessively...
8. Birmingham's favourite material
9. 0.0069 Pound sterling
12. Common ground in Just Club's show.

### Down

2. Music genre favoured by clowns
3. One of the many Things We Do Not Know that is harmful and exists profusely in street sex work
5. A more eco-friendly way of getting to NSDF, as suggested by Pigfoot Theatre but not practiced by them
7. The glue between the characters of Magic Hour but the fire between the characters of Tanya
- 10.
11. Late comedy great \_\_\_\_\_ Elliott
13. The most musical accent here

# Techie Mad Libs

So our director is planning on setting the show in \_\_\_\_\_, but  
*Historical Era*

everything has been built from \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.  
*Colour Material Adjective Noun*

The \_\_\_\_\_ costumes need to convey a sense of \_\_\_\_\_.  
*Adjective Noun Atmosphere*

To show this, the plan is to dress them in \_\_\_\_\_.  
*Colour Material Clothing*

So they have rigged the speakers \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, and will play a mix of  
*Location Location*

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ ambience with plenty of  
*Audio effect Genre Soundscape*

\_\_\_\_\_.  
*Sound effect*

The director asked for \_\_\_\_\_  
*Adjective Adjective Mood*

lighting so the Lighting Designer gave them \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, a couple of  
*Number Lanterns*

\_\_\_\_\_, and a spotlight for \_\_\_\_\_.  
*Intelligent fixtures Scene description*

A two colour wash in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.  
*Your Favourite Gel/LEE Filter No Your second favourite*

There is no AV because of \_\_\_\_\_  
*Bullshit Bullshit Excuse*

# NOISES OFF?

More like noises on!!!

sexy simon



- loves ur eyes
- good taste in upholstery
- u like edward bond too?



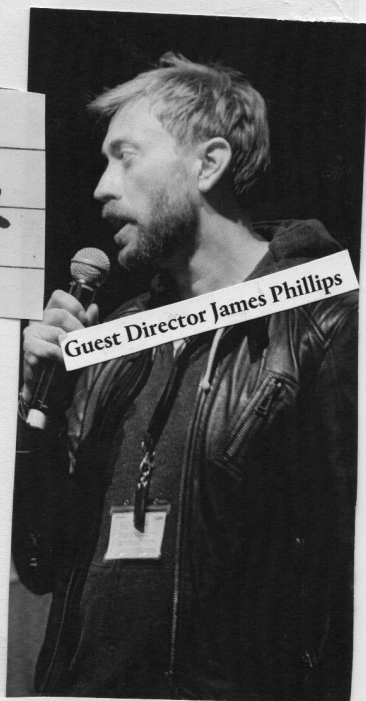
Jesus

NSDF.org.uk

/noises-off



@noffmag



Guest Director James Phillips

"Amazing! We've solved journalism."