

# UN Sung

## Tour Pack: Spring 2020



Unsung promotional photography, credit Antony Jones

**Ada Lovelace.  
Sophia Jex-Blake.  
Lilian Bader.  
Andrea Dunbar.**

**Heard of any of them? Neither had we.  
And we're meant to be a group of feminists.**

***Unsung* explores the untold and under-acknowledged stories of four pioneering and inspirational female figures from British history, asking why they, and hundreds like them, have been relegated to the footnotes.**

**They were bold. They caused riots. And it's about time their stories were told.**

***"Unsung is a one hour tour de force of compelling storytelling."* LondonTheatre1. ★★★★★**

***"A punchy, unconventional call-to-arms that embodies the same spirit as Shakespeare's Globe's recent runaway success Emilia."* A Younger Theatre, ★★★★★**

# THE SHOW

*Unsung* has been devised by a group of female theatre-makers, developed in collaboration with writer Lisa Holdsworth. In Spring 2019, with the support of Arts Council England and the Fenton Arts Trust *Unsung* embarked on a twelve-venue tour, seeing **sell out** performances at Square Chapel Arts Centre, the Lawrence Batley, Harrogate Theatre, Bradford Playhouse and the Carriageworks in Leeds.

## CONTENT

**Ada Lovelace (1815-1852)**, a talented mathematician who composed the first algorithm for the Analytical Engine, and is hailed as the world's first computer programmer – a visionary by today's standards.

**Sophia Jex-Blake (1840 – 1912)**, a medic and the first woman to be permitted to study at a UK university; her pioneering persistence fighting for her education paved the way for women today.

**Lilian Bader (1918 – 2015)**, one of the women of colour to serve in the British Armed Forces. Determined to overcome racial prejudice, she enlisted with the Women's Auxiliary Air Force and trained in instrument repair, soon gaining the rank of Acting Corporal.

**Andrea Dunbar (1961 – 1990)**, the Bradford born author of *Rita, Sue and Bob Too*, *The Arbor*, and *Shirley*. Acclaimed as 'a genius straight from the slums', she wrote *The Arbor* as an assignment for GCE English at the age of only 15.



Production Images, Spring Tour 2019

## SPIRIT

*Unsung* is neither a history lesson, nor a historical drama. Instead, this piece of new writing interrogates in a lively and relatable way the underrepresentation of women in history, and society at large. Using a combination of biographical elements, along with physical performance, and an ambient electronic soundtrack from the BBC Introducing featured band PEAKES, the show explores with immediacy the very modern struggles of four women who made – or ought to have made – British history.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

In developing this work we wish to raise public awareness of our protagonists' incredible achievements, and draw attention to their lack of recognition. In doing so we hope take small but meaningful steps towards altering the narrow perspectives that govern the way in which women are regarded today, and question why figures like these are so absent from what we, as a nation, are taught of our history.

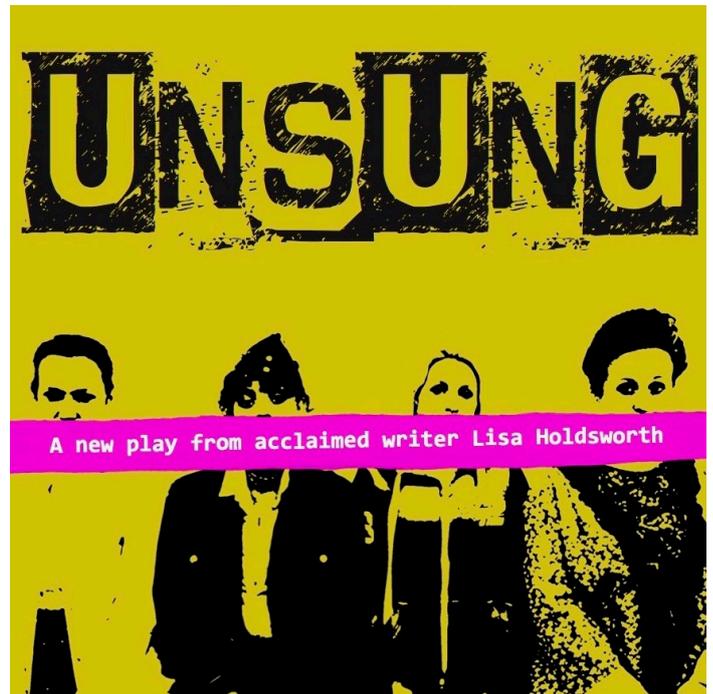
# AUDIENCES

## Target Audiences

The show is targeted primarily towards female audiences. We have been entirely inspired by our four protagonists, and want other women to hear and spread their brilliant stories too.

As well as appealing to broader audience groups (women passionate about feminism, history, or gender politics; young women of 6th form or university age), the diverse breadth of disciplines and backgrounds represented by the characters appeal to several specific demographics. A selection of the demographics that attended the Spring 2019 tour is as follows:

- Women with careers/interests in STEM
- Women who are BAME
- Women from military communities
- Women from working class communities
- Female writers
- Women born and bred in Yorkshire



Audience members identified with the characters on a series of different levels, either as individuals or through their collective struggles.

## Audience Feedback

A selection of audience feedback gathered via feedback forms is as follows:

- *"Fantastic show, extremely slick! Excited to research these women and more on your website."*
- *"This is important stuff. Get it into schools. All young girls should see it."*
- *"I was genuinely moved by this performance. I laughed, I REALLY cried, and it has made me realise the importance of enjoying the freedom these women fought for."*
- *"Brilliant equations, clever dialogue, amazing characterisation - the time is right for this message, keep touring!"*
- *"This show was fantastic! I know so many people who would love to see this! Well done!"*
- *"Absolutely BRILLIANT - very moving and inspiring. Thank you for giving these women a platform"*
- *"I've seen 11 plays in London in 7 days and this was the most engaging - bravo!"*
- *"Really great show - was on the verge of tears for a lot of it, but in a good way!"*
- *"Really interesting show - I immediately want to go and find out more, it will stay with me. A must-see for all women. Reasoned, questioning and inspiring"*

# ENGAGEMENT

The subject matter of *Unsung* presents a wealth of opportunities to engage with community groups and young people, as well as being a topic that many feel compelled to discuss post-show. Our work with a group of women at the Women's Centre in Halifax during a residency at Square Chapel, for instance, helped to shape and inspire elements of the show. We also run an online exhibition via our website, which audience members are encouraged to visit to find further reading around our brilliant women, and have the opportunity to add their own female *unsung* heroes to the page.

# TEAM

Unsung was devised collaboratively by a group of passionate and like-minded female artists. The show has been Directed by Elvi Piper (National Theatre Connections, Associate Director *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time*), Produced by Alice Barber (Red Ladder Theatre Company, Front Room Productions), Designed by Antony Jones (Wrongsemble Theatre Company, Derby Theatre) and the script is written by Lisa Holdsworth (*Call the Midwife*, *Midsomer Murders*, *New Tricks*, *Black Teeth and a Brilliant Smile*).

# MARKETING

## Marketing Support

- Up to 1000 over-printable A5 colour flyers and 15 colour posters (please request sizing - A0/A1/A3/A4)
- A trailer for use on digital platforms and social media
- A selection of promotional images in varying specifications ready for immediate use, including main show image, promotional photography and production photos
- Dedicated pre-scheduled promotion across *Unsung's* social media channels
- A press release adaptable to venue and location
- A pre-made social media/tweet sheet for venue use, and review quotes sheet

## Selling Points and Marketing Angles

- *Unsung* is immediate, joyful, poignant, and, perhaps most importantly, modern. This is a show about now – an exciting, multidisciplinary piece of theatre that appeals to women from many walks of life.
- Capitalising on the buzz and popularity of the Spring 2019 tour, which saw excellent reviews, passionate audience reactions, and sold out shows at five venues well in advance of performance dates.
- While movements such as #MeToo and #TimesUp remain at the heart of gender political discourse, a piece of theatre that combats the historic silencing of women's voices could not be more important in the current climate.
- The first studio-length touring production from the acclaimed television writer Lisa Holdsworth (*Call the Midwife*, *Ackley Bridge*, *Midsomer Murders*, *New Tricks*).
- Contributing to the resurging interest in the work and life of Andrea Dunbar (Out of Joint's nationally touring revival of *Rita, Sue and Bob Too*, and Freedom Studios' adaptation of Adelle Stripe's *Black Teeth and a Brilliant Smile*)
- A show from a truly female led company – directed, written, produced, performed and operated by women.
- A stirring soundtrack from up and coming band PEAKES, who have a substantial following.
- We predict similar audience demographics to contemporary feminist works by companies such as Gracefool Collective, Eggs Collective, and RashDash.

## Images

See Production Photos here: <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmCmK4ty>

See Promotional Photography here: <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmw6CszJ>

# PRODUCTION SPECIFICATIONS

## **Running time:**

60 minutes

## **Touring details:**

Available for booking from 20<sup>th</sup> April – 17<sup>th</sup> May 2020

## **Company:**

*Unsung* tours with four Performers and one Tour Manager

## **Requirements:**

Get in: min 4 hours to include tech run

Get out: 1 hour

Venue configuration: end on

Lockable dressing room or equivalent

## **Performance Space:**

Preferred Playing Space: Width 5m x Depth 4m

Minimum Playing Space: Width 4m x Depth 3m

## **LX:**

A Tech Pack containing lighting plan, pre-rig, plot and focus information is ready for immediate distribution to Departments.

## **Sound:**

In-house sound system with mini-jack input.

## **Technical staff required:**

One in-house technician to assist with get-in, focus, plot, and operation.

## **Show notices:**

Some strong language and brief references to domestic violence.

## **Contact:**

Alice Barber, Producer

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