
“SPECIAL”

“*Special*” isn't your bog standard show. It's a full engagement project, working with young Disabled and non-disabled people in your community to bring this production to life.

“*Special*” is a powerful exploration of language, disability and identity for ages 14+.

PARTNER OPPORTUNITY



THE SHOW

Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me... right? Or, actually, just totally wrong? We've all been hurt by what people say at one time or another. Words are potent, capable of shaping how we see and experience things.

"Special" looks at the power of language and the effects of words on our identity, society and culture.

This young people-centred engagement project culminates with a compelling, interactive & unapologetic show for teenage audiences. It explores the idea of terminology around disability and its place within contemporary youth culture - how different words are used through different generations, some reclaimed, some forgotten.

When talking about disability sometimes people get nervous, worried about causing offence or saying the wrong thing.

But if we don't take a chance, open up the debate, or risk putting our foot in it, then how can the conversation ever evolve? How can we ever get comfortable with talking about disability?



THE STORY (SO FAR...)

“Special” is a community engagement-led production, where the Daryl & Co team will embed with young people in your area, leading to a high quality, relevant and inclusive piece of theatre for your audiences to enjoy. This deep engagement process will lead to a rich and bespoke experience for your community, resulting in a production firmly rooted in local identity, language and place.

The project begins with community engagement, led by Disabled artists, which tackles the uncomfortable topic of language, names and terminology head-on. The end result is “Special” a visual promenade performance, where the voices of young Disabled people are firmly at the heart of the production. It will provide a thought-provoking experience for teenage audiences, and a chance to look at language & its place in youth culture.

In the R&D we joined the teams at:

- Solar Youth Theatre, a specialist group of Disabled teenagers at Half Moon Theatre
- New Wolsey Ipswich Youth Theatre
- Royal Exchange Young Company
- Two Can Theatre

Together we dug deeper and explored what it means to be ‘special’ - to receive special treatment - and also the flip-side of that, where special treatment means being singled out.

“Working with Solar Youth Theatre opened up a new way of thinking about “Special”.

It allowed me to realise the conflict is not in the words we use, or our reactions to those words, but within the process of why and how we choose certain words in the first place.”

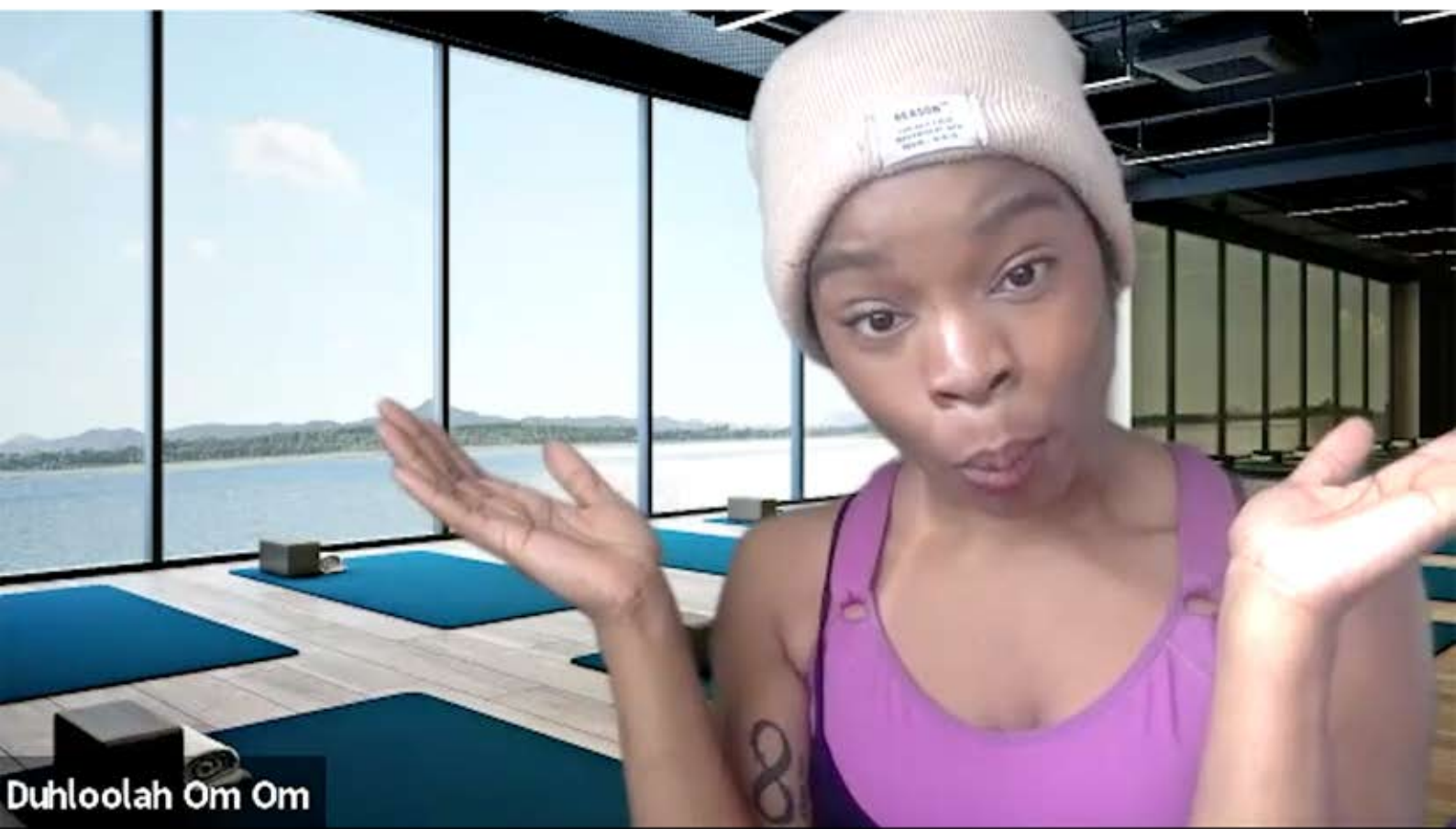
Daryl Beeton





“It’s promenade and interactive as it goes. We’re really playing around with the idea that it's about affecting the audience...rather than it being a sit down, regular show.”

Nickie Miles-Wildin, Director



DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



We've completed the R&D phase, discovering the heart of the show and creating a structure for delivery within your location and your community.

This production is all about engagement and all about a partnership approach. We will work together to embed with local young people, to bring inclusion to every element of the process and to create a distinctive piece of quality theatre.

Each time it is created “*Special*” will be different, developed to suit the partner, place and community we are working with.

It will involve learning by doing:

- Developing your team's experience of working with young Disabled people
- Building a legacy of strong relationships with local audiences and participants
- Creating a sense of belonging and valuing young people's voices
- Fostering a real understanding of inclusion, so that even after “*Special*” ends, the show doesn't have to be over.

TIMELINE & TEAM

TIMELINE

R&D Phase:

Complete

The project is now available any time between April 2022 and March 2025.

Due to the nature of the community and partnership engagement within “*Special*” we envisage the project timeline breaking down as follows:

Phase 1:

Meet with partner to discuss project parameters and community engagement. Together discuss timeframe of each following phase.

Phase 2:

Undertake community engagement project. This could be over a term, or more intensive.

Phase 3:

Embed young people's voices, ideas & concepts into the final production.

Phase 4:

Present a professional, high quality, artistic bespoke theatrical experience within your community, for your community.

CORE CREATIVE TEAM

Director - Nickie Miles-Wildin

Design Collaborator - Jon Van Beek

Composer - Ben Lunn

Writer - Daryl Beeton





NEXT STEPS

Supporting “*Special*” is a chance to work with a leading Disabled-led theatre company to create a bespoke piece of community-led professional theatre with your local audiences. It offers a unique opportunity to build long-term relationships with your community and to develop new audiences.

With an exciting concept ready, we are looking for partners who want to commit and develop a bespoke, young people-focused engagement project, collaborating with us and investing in their own organisational development.

We also believe that what is ‘special’ about working with a Disabled-led company is the chance to accelerate inclusive practice in your organisation in lots of ways:

- Diversifying your programme
- Reaching out to new diverse audiences
- Learning by experience of working with Disabled artists and participants
- Improving knowledge of Relaxed performances & barriers to engagement
- Confidence in holding conversations about identity-based language use

This is an opportunity to embed an inclusive culture within your organisation, by being part of a creative process, rather than simply programming a Disabled artist/ a Disabled-led show. It links directly with the new Investment Principles laid out by ACE, demonstrating what a well-run cultural organisation looks like. Quality, diversity and relevance are at the centre of “*Special*”, both in terms of the content of the show and the engagement process by which it is created.



THE AUDIENCE

AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE

“Special” is an unapologetic piece of theatre, straight from the mouths of young people.

Teen audiences will be treated with respect for their capacity to engage with the sometimes challenging themes of the show. The audience will see themselves onstage, reflected in the words and performances. Sometimes they will like what they see, sometimes they won't and this show will give them the space to explore and consider that.

“Special” will offer different and exciting opportunities for the audience experience as it is interactive, performed in a promenade style and bespoke to your local community. The engagement-led approach will also build strong relationships with local audiences.

POTENTIAL AUDIENCES

Teen audiences

Age Guidance: 14+

School audiences

Adult audiences

Particularly those linked to the production via the engagement process, including non-typical arts audiences.

Disabled audiences

We are experienced in creating Relaxed Performances, suitable for Disabled audiences and can work with venues to support delivery.

MARKETING SUPPORT

As part of the development of the show we will create a Marketing Pack with copy, images and supporting information about accessible marketing for Disabled audiences.

In the next stage of development we will explore this further, looking at where we can be interactive, what questions we can ask and what the contract with the audience will be.

THE COMPANY

Daryl & Co

Daryl and Co is a Disabled-led company where collaboration and co-creation meet mischief and merriment. We create accessible theatre to delight young audiences. We love working with young people and are surprised, animated and motivated by their ways of looking at – and being in – the world. We take fun seriously, we hold the door open for others and we believe in the power of the arts to include.

Our vision is a world where Disabled artists and young people have unrestricted choices to creative experiences and careers.

A Different Way

“Special” was initially developed as part of our A Different Way programme. A Different Way employed 26 freelance artists and creatives, with 77% identifying as Disabled and 42% based outside of London. 206 Disabled and non-Disabled young people, 42% from ethnically diverse backgrounds, took part in 40 creative sessions in Ipswich, London, Leicester and Manchester.

A Different Way was led by Daryl & Co, with core partners Half Moon Theatre, Spark Arts for Children, New Wolsey Theatre and Mimbres with supporting partners Graeae Theatre Company, Attenborough Arts Centre and TYA UK, to support the growth of inclusive theatre for young audiences.

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