

The title 'HYSTERIA' is written in a stylized, yellow, serif font. The letter 'Y' is particularly large and features a detailed anatomical drawing of a female reproductive system. The word is surrounded by various colorful line-art illustrations: a flower, a syringe, a stethoscope, a pair of scissors, a microscope, and other medical and botanical motifs. The background is a dark, textured blue with a red-to-orange gradient at the top.

# HYSTERIA

## WORKSHOP PLAN AND NOTES

This writing workshop was held on Zoom on the 6th July 2022. The aim of the workshop was to provide support for potential playwright applicants. Sophie Wink (Vivid Roots Connect Director and Artist Liaison for HYSTERIA) led the workshop.

### Introduction

Vivid Roots Collective is an emerging Highland-based theatre company which creates professional opportunities for local emerging artists. Sophie is the Connect Director, which means that she is responsible for the artist's journey and experience with Vivid Roots Collective. With HYSTERIA, Sophie is delivering an artist support package and will be on-hand to offer support at the R&D.

## WORKSHOP PLAN

### EXERCISE ONE

Give yourself **10 minutes** to write an opening scene; one page in length.

The theme is: **WITCHES**

The scene must have two characters.

**continued...**

Give yourself **5 minutes** to reduce your opening scene to two lines of dialogue. Think of the primary essence of your scene, how can two lines of dialogue capture this.

### EXERCISE TWO

Give yourself **10 minutes** to write a one-paragraph synopsis of the full play.

**continued...**

Give yourself **5 minutes** to adapt the synopsis to one sentence.

## EXERCISE THREE

### style one

Give yourself **10 minutes** to adapt your one-page opening scene to the style of a physical theatre piece.

Think about:

- Singular words
- Sounds
- Sound effects
- Theatre arts
- In what way does your character move their body?
- Do your characters touch?
- How far away from one another are they?

### style two

Give yourself **10 minutes** to adapt your one-page opening scene to the style of a radio drama.

Think about:

- Sound effects
- Pay attention to character; how can we differentiate between characters without seeing them?
- Can the audience hear your characters breathe?
- What does their breath say about them?
- If they are near one another, how do we know this?
- Who/what are your characters looking at? What are their surroundings?•

## DOING THE WORKSHOP at home

Use the same exercises but feel free to try different themes. Random word generators and current affairs can be great ways to inspire spontaneous writing sessions.

The workshop is designed to challenge your approach to writing a playscript by focusing on the way we write characters. Strong characters are foundational to high-quality plays and we generally get the sense of a character by their idiosyncrasies, how they talk and how they behave, not necessarily just the content of their dialogue.

## QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

### About the research pack:

The successful applicant will be given a digital copy of the HYSTERIA research pack. This contains some basic research into the themes and some pointers for further research.

#### How much information is in it?

We have all performed our own research on the topic and have narrowed our references down to allow the information pack to be concise and accessible. There is a sufficient amount of research within this pack to offer areas for further investigation and to provide content and context for the performance.

#### What kind of information is in it?

The pack contains a handful of articles about gender inequality in medicine, and the same regarding the history, treatment, symptoms and contemporary 'echoes' of hysteria.

#### How much research should I do myself?

The purpose of the R&D at Lyth Arts Centre is to provide live stimuli in the form of improvisations and stylistic explorations by three performers, so we would advise that the majority of your research be carried out following the R&D. We do expect you to do your own research as further questions will inevitably arise when you begin writing, redrafting and during the research and development. How much research will entirely depend upon the direction the play takes.

### About the writing sample:

#### What writing sample should I choose?

This is entirely up to you. We recommend you pick the three pages that you think best showcase your ability and your individual writing style.

#### Why have you only requested three pages?

This is simply because we are specifically commissioning an **emerging** playwright, who may not have had the opportunity to write full length pieces. We also acknowledge the amount of time that has to be given to full-length plays, which is challenging when also juggling part time work, caring responsibilities, disabilities, and more.

#### What if I do not have a writing sample?

The writing workshop is designed for this reason. As we are looking for emerging playwrights we anticipated that some applicants wouldn't have an appropriate sample ready. To make the application process as accessible as possible, we will be running a 6-week application process, so we hope you feel inspired by some of these exercises and have the time to send us your sample.