

Transcript: How To Write A Play with Mike Bartlett

Episode #1

Released 28 April 2023

Transcribed using Otter AI, lightly edited by Alex Coke. Please excuse any remaining typos.

Alex 00:08

Hello, welcome to How To Write A Play. I'm Alex, I work for the Old Fire Station art centre in Oxford. And we're currently running a playwriting course with triple Olivier Award-winner Mike Bartlett. Stay tuned for Mike's advice, writing tips, writing exercises, answers to questions from listeners and our thoughts on the theatre world in 2023. Today, we're talking about how theatres are ghosting playwrights. What session are we doing today?

Mike 00:32

It's funny you should ask. Well, we're starting today. So today's the first session, we're going to meet our writers. And so I thought it appropriate that we would talk about how you start and the sort of blocks that you get when you start. So we're going to look at some exercises about how you might overcome those blocks, and also where plays come from. So we can talk about that. That's the headline.

Alex 00:56

Lovely. Excellent. So what how this is going to work is I'm going to give us a little update on what's happening in the Old Fire Station. Because we're not just a podcast, we are a place. Then we're going to look at this week's news topic. And then I'm going to ask Mike what we're covering in the course, and your writing exercises. And I have some questions from listeners as well. This week at the Old Fire Station, we have 24, 23, 22 on 3 May, which is a gig theater piece from a group called Chronic Insanity coming up on Wednesday, and that is promises scuzzy beats and the reverse of the flow of time. So it's a romance story, gig theatre, a romance story that is told backwards. And fun fact, Chronic Insanity is a company that our very own Hannah Gallardo Parsons, editor of this podcast, is part of. On Friday 5 May we have our very first Art Friday on Gloucester Green. What is an Art Friday on Gloucester Green I hear you ask?

Mike

What's an Art Friday on Gloucester Green?

Alex

So basically, we have Gloucester Green Market. Yeah, we - the building, the Old Fire Station right next to Gloucester Green, we back out onto it. And we and the market managers LSD Promotions have been trying to work out how we can make Gloucester Green Market a cool art and cultural place. And one of the ways we do that is Offbeat festival. Every year, we do kind of cool theatre pieces and interactive things. And between Offbeats, we've decided to do the first Friday of every month, we will go out there with as many independent artists as we can find, and as many cultural venues as we can find, and there will be artwork sold. And you can come and get some tickets and find out what's happening in

the city. Amazing. So it's gonna be it's gonna be fun. And we also have this week Mitigating Circumstances, which is a brand new play from a local theatre company is about children and they come - one of them comes to school and someone's died. And he's feeling like his his tragedy is the most important thing and then someone else comes into school. His like nemesis comes into school. And someone in their family has also died. And then becomes this weird like grief contest.

Mike

I remember that used to happen at university a lot. Really not sure why I think it's people with completely different experiences all come into one place, and with no experience much of of negotiating how your problems and background work with someone else's, and used to in your own little world where you left that having currency. And negotiating how that doesn't vary. So interesting about happening as a student. They're not really happening so much

Alex

So I have a news topic for us, Mike. The Stage have reported the Future of Theatre conference, David Eldridge, the playwright read an anonymous letter from another playwright saying that they were being ignored by a theatre for whom they were developing a play. The writer said they had received positive feedback and encouragement following r&d process with a venue, but then received no communication for almost a year, despite repeated attempts to make contact. And they compared it to being ghosted after a date. And the Writers Guild was asked for comment by The Stage and said it was frequently contacted by writers in similar situations. So and then lots of writers on Twitter like Tim Crouch, and various other people have come out and said the same thing that they've had exactly the same experience. So I wanted to ask you, number one, what would your advice be for writers in that situation? And number two, what does a good relationship look like to you between a playwright and a venue?

Mike 03:35

Well, I mean, it is all about the relationship, isn't it? And I think the problem - one of the problems is that, for whatever reason, I think some theatres do take on too many relationships with writers, I think they have so much. Obviously, there are a lot of people wanting their place, and a lot of people wanting that relationship. And so the theatre wants to try and respect that and engage with as many writers as possible. Unfortunately, it's quite time consuming to engage with the writer properly, and to really get into their play and to read it properly. And not to just do lip service, but to work on it and work on it in a way that they might produce it. So, sometimes, some theatres are, you know, I've certainly experienced this - are developing loads, in a way too many different plays, given how many slots they've actually got to produce. And I think that comes out of the individuals wanting to do well by the writers, and it comes down to theatres wanting to encourage writers. But the problem is, you then end up with a lot of writers being encouraged and then the play doesn't go on or they - as it sounds like here, they do stop contact. And it reflects a difficult truth, doesn't it really, which is the number of people wanting to write plays and the number of opportunities to get plays on. And that's very hard. It's very hard and it's very sort of, you could say competitive. And it's difficult for theatres who want to both be realistic with writers but also want to encourage them. But I think the key, I think it's really key that if a theatre engage with the writer, they stay engaged with the writer. And I think at the heart of it the best relationships I've had both with the back in the day at the Royal Court, and then Headlong with Rupert Goold, what they both made

really clear when we started was they were engaging with me as a writer, they weren't engaging with only just one play. So this was this was if we're going to take the dating analogy, and why not? This was a long term relationship. It wasn't a date. It was it was we see potential and we're interested, not just in this play, but the next one, and potentially the next one. So if they lost contact for a year, that would, that would be awful. Why would they do that if they're interested in you as a writer, so I think that for me is at the core of this is that theatres and literary managers and directors should be looking beyond the single play to what's the potential of this writer over their career. And they should be investing a little bit more in in maybe fewer writers, but over a longer term, because sometimes the writer does a great first play, and then they don't do such a good second play. But their third or fourth is incredible. They need a bit of long term investment. And that would solve this, I think. But yeah, I think the other thing is it just reflects is really - not to be negative. But it's a really hard time at the moment, theatres don't have money. They've got the still programming shows that they wanted to do before COVID. And so there's not that many slots, and et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. So it's, it's, it's hard for everyone at the moment.

Alex 06:32

And what to you would that, like, imagine you're creating from the ground up your perfect new writing theatre? What would that look like to you? Like, how would playwrights be developed? And how many plays would you get done? What do you what do you think?

Mike 06:50

Well, I think there's a benefit, which is sort of why we're doing this course as well, too. I think there's, there's a joy in writing plays. I think a bit like Stephen Fry wrote a great book on poetry on how to write poetry, which I found really useful, because I didn't really learn, didn't really get into poetry at school, and so read this much later in life. And one of the things he talks about is just the joy of writing it for yourself, whether or not you show anybody whether or not you know, you have any success in inverted commas, there is a joy to simply engage in the art of writing poetry, and learning and through writing it, you also learn to read it better. And I think the same is absolutely true of playwriting. So I think my ideal theatre would absolutely encourage people of all sorts to write plays, and learn about how they work and enjoy writing them. And then understanding might never get them perform, they might never want to, they might do them in their local amateur group in their town community, or they might want to try and do it professionally. But that wouldn't necessarily be the end game. And then every stage, as you perhaps got more professional, you would be very, very clear on what the chances of getting a play on where and, and you would just have an eye on I suppose on how many writers you engage. And I've always felt that theatre should have a if they can afford it in our new writing theatres, they should have at least a writer on salary. You know, I used to walk around. And David Eldridge, I'm sure said something very similar to this, I think we've all had this experience as writers is you walk around new writing theatres. And they'd be employing 50 people, not a single writer. And you'd think that writing is no different to any other job, a salary is worth so much the security of having a year's income, you know what you're doing, and you can stop all the other work and commit to that. And I think that's also relevant for diversity and getting different sorts of writers. Because if you're on a lower income, it's going to obviously be harder to write. So a set salary would be worth even more to someone who comes from a lower income background. So that's what I would do. But you know, as I say, it's very hard at the moment, there's no money, it's very difficult, all those sorts of things apply. But what I hope with this course and indeed with this podcast, is that we can say, let's write plays for us. Now, let's, let's

enjoy the imaginative experience of what could we put on stage. And let's explore the craft at the moment, let's just leave whether they're going to go on or not, to a later date, and just get as good as we can at it, enjoy it like a hobby, enjoy it, like an interest in a passion. And just make a little pocket of space to go what could happen on the page, what can happen in the theatre, and the joy of that.

Alex 09:29

Okay, so tell me why you wanted to do this course - because you came to us, it was your idea, I think to come to us and do a course with us. Is this something you've always wanted to do?

Mike 09:40

Yeah, I've taught courses in the past. I think I just felt like I did. I did a course with Hampstead Theatre in 2021, sort of, sort of in lockdown like we did it on Zoom. And what I felt was it was really great to sort of reach out and connect people and I really missed that community. theatre of meeting other writers and artists and people and chatting about theatre and moaning about theatre and all that sort of stuff. We obviously couldn't do it for such a long time. And even over zoom, it was felt like this was really important. And I remember doing the young writers program at the Royal Court. And like a couple of courses there. And part of it was a large part of it was just meeting other writers and forming a community. And the, the shared experience of learning together, not necessarily sharing your work, but just meeting people who had the same interests as yours. And having a space where you could both explore your writing and learn. And I just think, given that we've been to COVID Given that finances are hard for everybody. And given that it's, it is really hard to get a play on at the moment, because not only is theatre struggling in general, but even within theatre, and even before COVID playwriting was not at its peak. It you know, the new, obviously, we've lost to some extent we've lost absolutely lost funding, Hampstead Theatre. So we're not quite sure what's happening there. But to some extent, a lot of the theatres have struggled even before COVID, to put new plays on and for new plays to have an impact, and then COVID happened. So I sort of think the only way to reestablish the place of new writing is ultimately going to be for writers to write plays which cannot be ignored, which have amazing ideas, either coming from experience, or coming from what people see in the world, or coming just from their imagination, to that's what's going to really fire up new writing is just that the writers writing plays of that just astound us in a provocative and interesting and an entertaining and all those sorts of things. And so I was really excited to to get a group of playwrights together of all different experiences, and just meet for 10 weeks and explore that together.

Alex 11:58

Right? So what are you covering this week?

Mike 12:02

So this week, we're covering how to start and where plays come from. So, Sarah Kane, she said that plays come from three places. And I've always thought of this. She said that they come from your own personal experience. They come from what you see in the world, the outside world, and they come from your imagination. And a good play is a blend of those three things. And that plays often go wrong. When they tip too much into one of those threes. They tip too much into the outside world, but they don't relate to your own personal experience. They're too much imagination, but they're not enough connected to the world. And I've always thought that that certainly for me, that's true. So I wanted to do

an exercise, which I've done in workshops before, and it kind of is jumping in at the deep end is we're going to put people in pairs. And they're going to be given very big bits of paper, which we're going to sellotape together, and then they're going to draw around the body. If they have a sort of, you know, as if they've died, basically, a sort of outline of their body. And then on the inside of that for every year that they've been alive, they're going to write something which is like, a personal memory. And they obviously didn't have to write it in detail, it just needs to be a key word for them. Or it can be a drawing, something that reminds them of that memory for every year they've been alive. On the outside, they're gonna write of their of their body line, they're gonna write something that happened in the world, for every year. So you end up with a sort of picture of yourself in a way. And part of this is not just what you end up with. But it's the process of trying to remember both who you are and the world that you've lived through over your whole life. And then we're going to sit and looking at that imaginatively come up with ideas that might connect through the outside world and your own personal experiences into some imagined play. And we're going to write 10-15 ideas for a play. If you want to do this at home, you don't need three pieces of large paper or indeed a friend to draw around your body. But you can if you want an interesting evening! You can just draw a picture of yourself on a line, imagine what your body might look like on the page and do the same exercise or indeed just do it as two lists. But as I say the process of this is really important, because often, you kind of go, you've blurred areas of your life together, you sort of go well, that was my university time, but actually taking the time to go well what happened in that year and what happened in the next year is it really helps you to sort of understand that your development of yourself as you go. And that's fascinating. And I think linked in with all of this today is going to be trying to convey a sense of it doesn't matter what you put in the page. You can always never show it to anybody. You can always throw it in the bin if you want. You can cross it out. No one ever needs to see anything you ever write. The most important thing is to just learn how to write freely. More subconsciously. So hopefully this exercise will do that. Also, today, I'm gonna do an exercise, which is called the morning pages. And this comes from a book called *The Artist's Way* by Julia Cameron, which is a bit Hollywood, it's a bit Hollywood, probably a bit dated, and certainly to the British taste, you have to kind of, there's quite a bit of God. It's a bit Eat, Pray, Love. And she, she, she talks about. She says she talks about God, but she doesn't need to mean God to you. But you know, you have to sort of get through that. But there's some interesting stuff. And what she particularly good is good at is getting over your block. Like if you're not artists, and you're what's blocking you. And anyway, the main thing I got from it was these morning pages, which is the idea is you just write three a4 pages, and your pen has to keep moving. And you do this every single morning, you sit down, and you write your morning pages, which is three pages of just automatic writing. And I found this really useful actually, because apart from anything else, what it can do is, before you start writing proper, your head can be full of all sorts of like, mundane things about your life, frustrations and things, bothering you, whatever, and just get them all out on the page. And often you get to the end of the second page, you've really written all the annoying real life things out. But you've got to keep writing the third page. And then you get into something creative, and perhaps a bit more interesting or about yourself, and then you're into it. And it also shows that you can write three pages of a4, all those words, in about 15 minutes. And that's always been part of my philosophy, which is just write just write every day, you could write, it might not be good, but you could write 10 pages of dialogue every single day of your life. And the chances are, if you did, some of it would be good. You just need to find the good bits in that. So I think that's what I want to do today is to free up the idea that you need to sit around and have some genius idea before you're allowed to put a word down on the page. You don't. You just need to write you

need to explore through writing, whether that's automatic, whether that's having two characters starting to talk to each other, just a moment in your head, and then you go and you just start a bit of dialogue and you explore. And I think that freedom to explore is one of the great things about playwriting as opposed to perhaps screenwriting or other forms of writing, which require a bit more planning is a lot of the greatest plays ever written. were written by a writer who just started. So most Harold Pinter plays were written like that. Private Lives is on at the moment at the Donmar. And the first act of that I think, was just written by him, just starting to write some dialogue for him and his favourite actor that he wants to play the scene with. And you can sort of tell it's got a freedom, and it's got a fluidity and that kind of improvised quality. That means the, the writing isn't trying to do anything than what it's doing right now in the moment, because there isn't any more to it than that. And I think there's something in the theatre that you feel you can feel that liveness. And sometimes it leads to dialogue and lines and moments that feel completely original and true. If you'd planned them, you would probably base them on other things you'd seen. But if you're just improvising dialogue and improvising stuff in the moment, you're far more likely to get something that's no one's ever seen before, because it's as it's potentially random as and rich as real life. So that's really all we're doing today. It's going to try and sort of break the ice and get everybody relaxed, and writing.

Alex 18:28

And are you going to ask them to read the writing out in front of the whole class?

Mike 18:32

No, we're not I don't think I don't think we're going to share on the battlefields really mean? Yeah, no, no, no, no, no. I mean, I don't think we're gonna share anything, unless people want to, and I don't, and certainly not for, you know, a little while.

Alex 18:47

So I have some questions from listeners, listeners, please do send us your questions to info@oldfirestation.org.uk. And I will ask them to Mike. So the first one I have is from Tamsin in Oxford, how did you first start writing?

Mike 19:01

That's a good question. Well done. Good. I didn't want I didn't think I was gonna be a writer I thought I was going to be I acted at school. And I wanted to be a director. At first, once I realised I wasn't gonna be an actor. I thought a director was the person who holds the power, so I'll do that. But then it turned out I wasn't to be a director, you have to walk into a room with nothing and persuade everyone that you're brilliant. And I didn't really have that skill. So I then I did a bit of assistant directing and had some meetings with people to try and get work but it wasn't really going anywhere. So I was stuck at home. And I thought and I'd written bits and pieces of plays before this. And I just said, well, I'll write a play. And suddenly I wrote it and I was having meetings with some of the same people but I was walking in confident because it wasn't about me and all my insecurities about me personally, which of which there were a lot because I am a writer, it turns out. It was about the collection of pages on the desk and Suddenly, I was much more confident. And I realised that that was my way into theatre making. I mean, I think of myself as a theatre maker really. And that's always been what I've interested in, being interested in is, is the whole craft of making theatre design and publicity and acting and stage craft, and

all of that stuff. I feel I love and love all of it. But the way I get into it for me is through writing, I think that's true of a lot of theatremakers is they take a little while to find, which they often we all think we're actors. And then we find I find I couldn't learn my lines or making them I believed that I was telling the truth. So you then find your way in, don't you. But I - people come to writing through all sorts of places. And I think, I think the thing I also the other things, just to say is that I didn't know anyone in theatre at all, like, I read books, and they'd say, well go through your contacts and find somebody's relate to that world. And I did. And I didn't know anybody, I didn't have anybody in my family or friends who was in any way related to art at all. And so I, I just sort of had to, I did a course University in theatre. And then I just wrote play, I wrote a play and wrote bits and sent it off to the theatres and, and tried to get him to meet me. And it was just through that, really. So I was very lucky that they did read them and didn't meet me. So, you know, in reference to the earlier point, I feel it's really important to call out bad practice on the part of theatres. But I also, there's a bit of me, which also is so grateful for new writing theatres, and to have unsolicited script. I think it's so important that anybody can send the script in. And, you know, I know it's a lot of work. And there's a lot of reading required, but it's the biggest access thing you can do. And it's the biggest gesture you can do to the country to say basically, anybody could write a play and put - and send it to us. And we would value it. Because I didn't know anyone in theatre or art at all. But if no one had been open, if the doors hadn't been open, it would have felt completely like a closed shop. And so I'm really in favour of the theatres keeping those doors open too, because it just encourages people to think that they might want to roleplay

Alex 22:08

Mark asks, do you start with characters or story?

Mike 22:12

Well, we will come on to this. But I start with well with wit, well - probably the story, of those two, definitely story, but it's normally story and form at the same time. So it's going, what, what what's this about? And who, who is sort of what's the person going to do to start the story but also then what is the form? So is it a? Is it like a cockfight? Or is it like a iambic pentameter, like a Shakespeare play, that sort of formal thing tends to happen at the same time as the story. So I know not only sort of roughly how it's going to start and what's going to happen, and what but also what the shape of the evening is going to be. And for some reason, I need those both those things to get me up and riding with it. If it's just the story, then it just feels like a normal play with no rules of the game. I find it drifts a bit. So I need to know. You know, like any board game, I suppose you need to know what the rules are, you can't enjoy it. And it's the same for me, I sort of need to get the rules. But we'll come on to that later.

Alex 23:21

Last question comes from Miriam, it is a question of three parts. How many drafts of a play do you do? How wildly different Are they from each other? And how do you know when to stop?

Mike 23:32

The first thing it completely changes. I've had my play - this is the answer no one wants to hear - my play Cock is pretty much a first draft. Like it was edited. I wrote it quite quickly. And then there's editing after that. But once I got to the point where I was like, I think this is the play as a first draft. That is pretty much the play, and I've tried to edit it to make it better. And I can't. I tried to fix bits. And whenever I

fixed bits we'd go into rehearsal, and then the actors go this bit isn't working. And then we end up reverting back to what it was it was it was obviously a sort of moment that the play was written. On the other hand, there are plays like that I wrote, like Earthquakes In London, which went through hundreds of drafts, hundreds and hundreds of drafts, like before rehearsals and then in rehearsals constantly redrafting like like a screenplay. And you know, that's, it's just the nature of what the piece of work requires. And the way it's going to be made Cock was written. It was written in a sort of moments of improvised, whereas Earthquakes In London was much more conceptual. It was like, this is the sort of play it's going to be I planned the evening I planned the storylines, and so it's a much more conscious process. So I understand that that's going to take a lot of drafts, but you just have to follow what the play is telling you really I think Brian Friel talks about stalking a play, that you mustn't get too close because it will run away. But you also mustn't get too far away because you'll lose it. So you've got to stay just the right distance behind. It's good, isn't it? And then the last question was about how do you know when it's finished? Well, I do a thing where I print it out, which is not good for the environment. But it's just the way that you could probably do it, I'm trying to move to doing it on iPad with a pencil, but you do something, which means you get away from the ritual of writing, so I write it on a computer. So the reason I print it out and then use a biro is it's a different, I can go and sit in a different chair, read it a bit fresh. And then I mark with a biro, anything, anything that's wrong with anything I bump on at all. And then I, as I try and come up with a solution with with the biro, as I'm going, I then type out those changes, then do the same process again, print it out, biro, same, same, same same time until I don't make any marks on the paper. And then that's at least a draft, it probably isn't finished. But it's probably as far as I can go. If I can read from the beginning of the play to the end of the play, and not find anything that's bothering me. That's a good, that's a good mark. I mean, it's not foolproof. So I've been placed, I've got that. And yet still, I read the play and go, oh, there's something not right here. But that probably means there's something wrong with the conception of the play. But it's got as far as it can, in terms of its form. But maybe there was something wrong right at the beginning. And I couldn't see it until the end, which is really frustrating. But it does happen.

Alex 26:15

I've worked with you in rehearsals when you've changed big and small bits of dialogue. But I remember in Mrs. Delgado, which was 2021 Was it? Yes. 2021 pandemic life - where she made a fruitcake, and it first of all, it had pineapple. And then I think the day before the show you were like "it's peas It's definitely peas.". Yeah. And it's down to that last those small, tiny changes at the last minute.

Mike 26:48

Yeah, well, those are I mean, you often get those with jokes. It's very, you know, you. And I love that craft of joke writing that that you it gets a laugh, but it's not as good a laugh, as you know, you could get on that. So why is it not? It's the sound of the word is it the rhythm of the sentence, and that sort of thing. It's hard to do without an audience. So you do end up making those changes in previews. But then there was also changes that act as a brilliant, you know, there were two traditions that I sort of got involved with was I went to the royal court and their tradition, which is great is you don't touch anything, unless the right absolutely consents to it. So if someone says, Oh, I'm not sure that maybe this comma is in the wrong place, and it's all sort of free, someone looks at you and go, I'll go away, I'll go away. I'll come back next week. Now think about that comma, you know, it's like a big deal. And, and I love that, because it's putting the you know, and what it forces you to do actually in the room, is to explore what's

there in the play already, to trust that the writer must have had some instinct, why they wrote it like this in the first place. So actually, is a process of really deep diving into lines and all of that text. And then I went to work with Rupert Goold at Headlong and it was a completely different experience. Like, after three days sitting around the table. He'd open up and go to the actors, right? So what do we think is wrong with this scene? Something's wrong with it, isn't it? What did we all think? And the actors would then just suddenly all pile in with all their thoughts. And working with him, he often, you know, now we've worked together enough that he'll just look across the room and do a kind of little smile. And I know the smile means the scene isn't working, is it and you need to rewrite it. And both those processes are completely valid. And again, it's just depending on what, what the play needs. And so some I rewrite a lot and some I don't touch

Alex 28:44

I should give us a bit of context for where we are. And what we're doing here. We're recording at the moment in the Old Fire Station, which is an arts centre in Oxford, we are the only - as far as we know, art centre of our kind. So we are a combined arts centre and homelessness centre. So we share the building with the homelessness charity Crisis, and we embed working with people who are facing homelessness and tough times at every level of our work. So we have people on our board who've experienced homelessness. We do artistic projects, quite a lot of our volunteering cohort have experienced homelessness and some of our staff members too. We do a lot of artists support working with communities across Oxford, helping people making good art. So we do all sorts of stuff here at the fire station and we are recording at the moment in the meeting room of one of our offices. We are next to the busy Gloucester Green bus station, so we're not in a recording studio. And you may hear occasional beeps or whistles or...

Mike 29:49

The Oxford Tube that goes from Oxford to London. And we are available for sponsorship.

Alex 29:55

Yes, Oxford Bus Company, please come and talk to me. We will happily do a jingle for you, anytime. Any local restaurants, let me know, alexandra.coke@oldfirestation.org.uk, we're here. That's the end of the podcast. Do you have anything to add, any last wise word of wisdom?

Mike 30:15

I don't have any wise words of wisdom, I think all I'd say is that if you are listening to this podcast, and you're somewhere that's not near a new writing theatre, this is really the reason for doing the podcast actually, is that you know, we're going to do this course here with with 20 people. But I really want to find a way of encouraging people who aren't necessarily near a new writing theatre or theatre running a course or for whatever reason, can't get access to that, to just start writing a play. And we're going to do this podcast every week of the course. And we're going to say the exercises that we're going to do. And if you are doing that somewhere and listening to this podcast, and it's of value, then please do email us and let us know what's useful and what isn't. And with any questions wherever and tell us if you're starting to write and what you're writing, because I would love there to be lots of people writing plays. And as I say, I think there's such a joy to just the act of writing. So let's just start there for now and see what we can create.

Alex 31:06

How To Write A Play is hosted by Mike Bartlett and Alex Coke, editing and music is by Hannah Gallardo Parsons and it's produced by the Old Fire Station Oxford. Please support us by giving five star ratings and reviews wherever you get your podcasts to help us be seen by more theatremakers. This show receives no exterior funding. If you'd like to support the work of the Old Fire Station, please donate at oldfirestation.org.uk. Thank you