

A China Plate and Belgrade Theatre Co-Production

PLEASE
DO NOT
TOUCH



Written by Casey Bailey and Directed by Gail Babb

Wed 11 - Sat 21 Sep



**BELGRADE
THEATRE**



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

A Belgrade Theatre and China Plate Co-Production

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CAST

Mason

Tijan Sarr

VOICEOVERS

Radio Presenter

Jade Samuels

Marsh/Anson

Corey Campbell

Judge

Paul Warwick

CREATIVES

Writer

Casey Bailey

Director

Gail Babb

Designer

Miriam Nabarro

Sound Designer

Kayodeine

Lighting Designer

Gillian Tan

Associate Lighting Designer

Jodi Rabinowitz

Movement Director

Keiren Hamilton-Amos

Dramaturg

Yaël Shavit

Engagement Facilitator

Adaya Henry

Associate Producer (China Plate)

Jade Samuels

Producer (Belgrade Theatre)

James Ashfield

Production Manager (Belgrade Theatre)

Rob Wimperis

Company Stage Manager

Emily Davies

Touring Production Manager

Terry Lee Dickson

Technical Assistant Stage Manager (Touring)

Maddy Wade

Producing Assistant

Maya Shah

Executive Producer (China Plate)

Paul Warwick

Wardrobe Supervisor (Belgrade Theatre)

Naomi Thompson

LX Op (Belgrade Theatre)

Rob Coates

Stage Crew (Belgrade Theatre)

Seth Blackburn

Creative Associate (Belgrade Theatre)

Kritika Agarwal

Creative Associate (Belgrade Theatre)

Jasraj Sahota

Creative Associate (Belgrade Theatre)

Jodi Rabinowitz

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Foundation**



China Plate is a theatre producing studio based in Birmingham and working across the UK. As an arts charity, we help people to make creative projects happen – from theatre shows, to musicals, from audio anthologies, to bus stop galleries.

Our mission is to develop a new model of creating and producing theatre that opens up the way performance is made, who makes it and who it's experienced by.

We have recently made work with Caroline Horton, Inspector Sands, David Edgar, Chris Thorpe, Rachel Chavkin, Claire O'Reilly, Rachel Bagshaw, Urielle Klein-Mekongo, Roy Williams, Chris Haydon, April De Angelis, Lucy Rivers, Tim Sutton, Casey Bailey and BBC iPlayer.

We are Associate Producers at **Warwick Arts Centre** and were partners in **Derby CAN** - Derby Theatre's Arts Council England Producing Hub, which was recently shortlisted for a Charity Award in the Arts, Culture & Heritage category.

For more information, please visit: www.chinaplatetheatre.com

X (formerly Twitter): [@YourOldChina](https://twitter.com/YourOldChina)

Instagram: [@china_plate_theatre](https://www.instagram.com/china_plate_theatre)

Facebook: [chinaplatetheatre](https://www.facebook.com/chinaplatetheatre)

LinkedIn: [China Plate Theatre Ltd](https://www.linkedin.com/company/china-plate-theatre-ltd)

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TIJAN SARR

MASON



Tijan Sarr (he/him) graduated from Guildford School of Acting and has since worked with the Birmingham Rep on **Grimeboy** and **Please Do Not Touch** (both by Casey Bailey) **Boys Who Cry**, as well as three brand new plays under the Sky Comedy Scheme. TV work includes **Doctors** for the BBC, **Shadow & Bone** for Netflix and most recently a lead reg on all episodes of **The Marlow Murder Club** (Series 1 & 2) opposite Samantha Bond and Jo Martin.

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CASEY BAILEY

WRITER

Casey Bailey (he/him) is an award-winning writer, performer and educator, born and raised in Nechells, Birmingham, UK. Casey was the Birmingham Poet Laureate 2020 - 2022. Casey's second full poetry collection *Please Do Not Touch* was published by Burning Eye in 2021. In 2023 *Legacy* - an in-depth exploration of 20 years of the Birmingham Grime and Hip-Hop scene - co-authored with Jess Monroe was published. Casey's debut play **GrimeBoy** had a sold out run at the Birmingham Rep in April 2022. He was commissioned by the BBC to write *The Ballad of The Peaky Blinders* in 2019. In 2020 the poem was internationally recognised, winning a Webby Award. In 2022 Casey won a Royal Television Society award for a film for his poem *Dear Brum*. Casey has performed his poetry nationally, and internationally. Casey was named as one of the Alfred Fagon Awards' Black Champions of Theatre in 2021. He is a Fellow of the University of Worcester and in 2021 was awarded an honorary doctorate in Education by Newman University.

GAIL BABB

DIRECTOR

Gail Babb (she/they) is an award-winning theatre maker who specialises in new writing, devising and experiments with form. She has created shows for theatres, found sites – including museums, swimming pools and a derelict school – as well as national and international touring. As a director and dramaturg, she has worked with Royal Exchange Manchester, Fuel, Brixton House, Soho Theatre and Hackney Showroom.

Recent credits include, as director, **Stars** by Mojisola Adebayo (OFFIE's Best New Play 2024 - Tamasha/ICA), **Bodies** by Ray Young (Unlimited/Southbank Centre) and as co-creator, **The Body Remembers** (Heather Agyepong/Fuel) and **Run it Back** (Talawa). In 2021, Gail won the Kenneth Tynan Award for Excellence in Dramaturgy and was named one of Alfred Fagon Awards' 25 Black Champions of Theatre. Gail also facilitates creative processes in community settings and co-directs the MA in Applied Theatre at Goldsmiths, University of London.

MIRIAM NABARRO

DESIGNER

Miriam (she/her) is a UK based British/ Australian artist and award-winning scenographer. Her work is characterised by its political and socially engaged focus, and often incorporates elements of participation and co-production. She has created work across the UK and internationally in Europe, the US, across Africa, Syria and Iran. She particularly likes working with new writing, spoken word and with installation.

Recent work includes **Stars** (ICA/ Tamasha/ Best New Play OFFIES 2024) directed by Gail Babb, **High Times and Dirty Monsters** (Graeae/ 20 Stories High, ACCESS award OFFIES 2024), **Palace of the End** (Royal Exchange/ Galway / Traverse/ Amnesty Freedom of Speech Award) and **At the Forests Edge** (RSC). She is creative associate with 20 Stories High (**Touchy**, **Buttercup**, **I Told my mum...** which were made as stage productions and as BBC films). She works regularly with Clean Break, Tamasha, Theatrerites and Belarus Free Theatre. She has designed over 30 productions including **The Great Game**, **Afghanistan**, (Tricycle. US tour), **Bang Bang Bang** (Royal Court), **The Winters Tale** (Headlong).

Miriam is Artist in Residence at SOAS and spent 5 years as a team member with Art Refuge offering creative psychosocial support in Northern France. As a visual artist, she works with photographic and printmaking processes. Her work held at the V and A, the British Library, Centre George Pompidou and in private collections. www.miriamnabarro.co.uk

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KAYODEINE

SOUND DESIGNER

Kayodeine (she/they) is a Black trans femme theatre-maker, sound designer and performing electronic musician and DJ working across theatre, film, nightlife, performance art and music with a focus on amplifying marginalised stories and experimentation. She constantly references her identity, heritage and culture in her work, and staying connected with community through workshops and collaboration. She was recently awarded the Light and/or Sound Recognition Award by the Black British Theatre Awards. View her work here: linktr.ee/kayodeine

GILLIAN TAN

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Gillian Tan (she/her) is a multi-disciplinary designer, working across lighting and video for various theatrical, immersive and interactive experiences.

Theatre credits: **Mind Mangler** (Apollo Theatre, New World Stages – New York, Virgin Cruises, UK Tour); **Elephant** (Bush Theatre); **A Playlist for the Revolution** (Bush Theatre), **South Pacific** (Chichester Festival Theatre, **Sadlers Wells** & UK Tour); **Cabaret Royale** (Gaillard Center, Charleston USA); **The Body Remembers** (Fuel), **Black Love** (Paines Plough & Belgrade Theatre Coventry production, in Association with tiata fahodzi); **Really Big & Really Loud** (Paines Plough & Belgrade Theatre Coventry production); **Cinderella – The Awesome Truth** (Polka), **Alyssa, Memoirs of A Queen** (Vaudeville Theatre); **Aisha and Abhaya** (Royal Ballet/Rambert); **Majestique** (Skråen); **The Song Project – Is In Our Blood** (Royal Court Theatre); **4.48 Psychosis** (revival. Lyric Hammersmith/Royal Opera House); **La Soirée** (Aldwych Theatre/Southbank Centre/Skråen); **Coraline** (Barbican Theatre/Royal Opera House); **Tamburlaine** (Arcola Theatre); **Invisible Treasure** (Ovalhouse Theatre); **Crocodiles** (Royal Exchange, Manchester). Film credits: **NYX** and **Gazelle Twin Present: Deep England**, a performance film by Iain Forsyth and Jane Pollard, Held Momentarily (RAM).

She was the recipient of the Unreal Engine Fellowship - Spring 2022.

KEIREN HAMILTON-AMOS

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR

Keiren Hamilton-Amos (he/him), A native of Birmingham's inner city. A graduate of the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire is an actor, writer and movement director. A founding member of internationally acclaimed Strictly Arts Theatre Company this is where Keiren honed his skills as a movement director. Since then, he has gone on to work with the RSC, Birmingham Rep and Nottingham Playhouse to name a few. He is currently in development of producing a movement film anticipated to be released 2025.

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YAËL SHAVIT

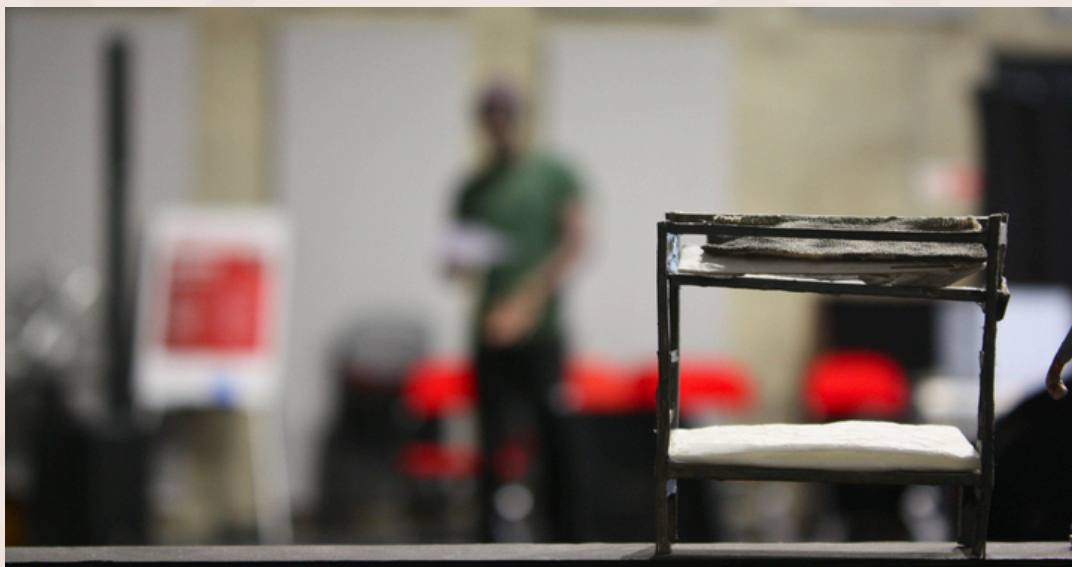
DRAMATURG

Yaël Shavit (she/her) is a dramaturg and director with twenty years' experience collaborating with theatre, film and visual artists, poets, musicians and dancers both nationally and internationally to develop new work. Yaël is currently working as dramaturg on **Trash** by Urielle Klein-Mekongo (China Plate), **The Reckoning** (Dash Arts) and with resident artists Kate Ireland and Tife Kusoro at Roundhouse, London. She is a recipient of the Jerwood Directors Award, is on the Artist Advisory Board of Projekt Europa and currently teaches directors and actors at Rose Bruford College and RADA with a focus on collaborative practice.

JADE SAMUELS

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

Jade Samuels (she/her) is a Midlands based Producer. She is a founding member of Mawa Theatre Company (Shakespeare's Globe/British Vogue). Producing credits include Charlie Hartill Recipient 2022 **Rapsody** and The Guardian top ten show **The Architect** – a celebration of Stephen Lawrence's life 30 years after his death. The celebration was on a moving bus – a co-production between Actors Touring Company & Greenwich Docklands International Festival. Jade has been a driving force behind **Please Do Not Touch** and continues to have ambitions that it lands not just in prestigious theatre spaces but engages the polarising conversation surrounding heritage and items of contention and the criminal justice system at the source, potentially shifting the dial and not just existing within an echo chamber.



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CASEY BAILEY

WRITER

When I embarked on the journey of writing this play, I initially saw it as an extension of my poetry collection of the same name. In early discussions I even described it as a ‘theatre adaptation’ of the collection. Over time I have come to realise that this play should not be an extension, or mutation of the poetry collection, it isn’t a branch off of the poetry collection’s tree, it is a different tree in the same orchard.

Throughout the process of writing this play, at times the poetry became a barrier to the story. I was trying to tell a story around the poems, or to honour the poems when really I wanted to honour the feeling that the poems came from. It was work throughout the process with Gail, Yaël and Jade that really helped me to understand that the poems were the scaffolding for this story, but the story was not written to serve them.

One of my favourite parts of the process of creating theatre is all of the things that happen beyond the page. With **Please Do Not Touch** this has been the case again. From the start of production watching Gail direct Tijan and seeing Tijan take Mason from an idea in my notebook to a walking, talking representation of the ideas that started this journey for me has been all the inspiration I have needed to keep coming back with fresh ideas, and energy. We have arrived at a stage where lighting, sound and set design are now playing their role in this story and I am in love with everything that they give to the piece. I have been so privileged to work with a team of super creatives. Now, having transferred the idea in my head to a script on the page, and handed it to a team to bring it to life on the stage I am excited to make the final transition and join the audience to take it all in.

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GAIL BABB

DIRECTOR

Thanks for coming to see **Please Do Not Touch**.

This piece, like most new plays, has been on a long journey. When new plays are being created, there is usually a series of workshops where the writer works with a director and actors for a couple of weeks – hearing the script out loud and trying out new ideas. The writer then rewrites before going back into a room to conduct more experiments. Often the writer is the only constant, with cast, director and producers changing from one stage of development to the next.

What has felt rare in the making of **Please Do Not Touch** is we have had the same core team since Tijan (actor) and I joined Casey (writer) and Jade (producer) in 2022. Over the last couple of years, we have crafted the story together and breathed life into the main character Mason from our different perspectives.

When Mason walks into the space we see glimmers and echoes of his past selves – the ones he’s grown out of and the ones that still live within him. When he speaks, we hear all the things he decides not to say. The lines and the poems we’ve cut but that still inform how he thinks, feels and moves through the world.

This gives us a shared knowledge, language and trust in the piece and each other that enables us to easily welcome new members into the team along the way. All of whom have challenged and expanded the story in their own ways and shaped how we tell it. I want to thank all the **Please Do Not Touch** collaborators for their artistry, their care and the creative conversations we’ve had.

I hope you enjoy our efforts and your time with Mason.

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The National Trust looks after more than 300 historic properties and over a million collection items for the benefit of everyone.

There is still a great deal we don't know about the places and collection pieces in our care, which is why we are keen to work with a range of researchers and communities to understand the multiple stories that make up the whole history of a place.

Some of these histories can bring us face to face with painful and challenging periods in the past. As well as developing our research work, our aim is to create space for balanced public discussion of difficult, unresolved questions that are still very much part of our national life.

We are delighted that Jade Samuels and the **China Plate** team have asked us to be involved with **Please Do Not Touch**. We're here for people to explore and discover more about the collections and places we look after and we particularly welcome opportunities for young people to learn and develop new skills, to become the next generation of curators to care for the nation's historic places and collections.

While **Please Do Not Touch** is a work of fiction, this collaborative, inclusive and research-based production enables audiences to explore the idea of the country house and its collection through a new perspective.

In addition to hosting performances of the play at Attingham Park and Upton House and Gardens, we are looking forward to welcoming the young people involved to explore some of the themes raised in the play and share ideas and creative responses.

History, art and culture are rich areas for exploration across the generations and by hosting these performances - and collaborating with the young people involved - we hope to offer a space for conversation, using our places and collections to bring people together.

Emma Hawthorne

Assistant Director of Consultancy
National Trust Midlands

www.nationaltrust.org.uk

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China Plate Team

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Executive Director **Chloe Courtney**
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Digital & Data Manager **Sarah Isaacs**
Associate Producer **Nassy Konan**
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Producer **Susan Wareham**
Producer **Abbie White**

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General thank you to the people and organisations that took part in the research and development of **Please Do Not Touch**:

Emma Hawthorne, Claire Connolly, Charlotte Holmes and their colleagues at The National Trust
National Trust Volunteers at Upton House & Gardens and Charlecote Park
Flora Holdsworth, Mark Agnew and the staff and volunteer teams at Attingham Park
Michèle Waugh, Emily Knight, Anna Shaw and the staff and volunteer teams at Upton House & Gardens
Andrew Fowles and Birmingham Museums
We Don't Settle
Corey Weekes
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Birmingham Hippodrome

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Lion Picture Framing Supplies
Pleasance Theatre
Vaults Festival
Newman University
Kerri Bailey
Lucy Reid
Surita Mamseri
Rosie Kelly

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Aysha Afridi
Magdalen Gorrige
Corinne Fowler
Burning Eye Books
Room 204
Adrian B Earle

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We are also grateful to **Coventry City Council**, **Birmingham City Council** and **John Ellerman** for their generous support.



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Creative Facilitator **Katherine Allen**
Director of Producing/Co-Creation **Adel Al-Salloum**
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Technician **Rob Coates**
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Usher **Megan Donnachie**
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Catering Assistant **Marnie Evering**
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Usher **Alex George**
Marketing Officer **Alice Gordon**
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Usher **Malachi Griggs-Taylor**
Usher **Joanna Griggs-Taylor**
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Usher **Debs Harlow**
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Usher **Jacqui Southern**
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Operations Assistant/ Usher **Mary Tobin**
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Catering Supervisor **Kay Tuddenham**
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Senior Technicians **Adam Warren**
Box Office Assistant **Abbie White**
Usher **Carol Williams**
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Underground Lights

The Belgrade Springboard Initiative is a Belgrade scheme to support emerging artists through providing training opportunities, Organisational development and assistance in developing productions for the stage. We place a particular emphasis on supporting artists and companies from backgrounds that are under-represented in the industry.

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