

Two Hander – Andy Edwards and Channing Tatum – January 2020

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We are fascinated by the 'script reading'. Most early-career playwrights only get to see their work shown through them as a 'substitute' for the 'real thing'. What if it wasn't dismissed as a half-way mark, but understood as a performance form in its own right? What if you were to write a full play, just for a 'script reading'? What could you do with it? And if you rehearsed and mined into this script reading; what choreographic and scenic possibilities and pleasures would you uncover?

Swansong is an unstagable large-cast five-act play by Andy Edwards, set during the 1904 Russo-Japanese war. It reframes a classic Chekhovian drama - the static misery of bourgeois classes - within the threat of catastrophic environmental change. It is about the narcissism and fear at the heart of empire politics, and our desperation to feel important in the face of our increasing irrelevance.

Two Hander is ambitious script-reading of the play *Swan Song*, mishandled by choreographers and visual artists Channing Tatum (Rohanne Udall and Paul Hughes), who perform all of the roles. It is an increasingly slapstick choreography of chair-swapping, unstaged stage directions, improbable substitutions and awkward elbows, within a cluttered set design of paper, tables, chairs, lamps, and jugs of water.

Edwards and Channing Tatum began testing this collaborative project in January 2019. This bursary would support the three artists to undertake a week of R&D (£450 x 3) at Wainsgate Dances in March 2020 (+ £150 travel, + £50 materials; accommodation and space provided in kind), preceded by a week of Edwards developing more draft script materials (+ £450 = £2000 total). This valuable and time-sensitive opportunity support us to experiment with the materials and possibilities of this piece – and the processes and expectations of this project's strange collaborative relationship – **before** Edwards begins writing a full draft for main rehearsals or we are locked into more significant institutional agreements / support.

Two Hander grapples with questions of the legitimacy, ownership and forms of Western 'main stage theatre' within the increasable urgent realities of mass climate breakdown and need for post-colonial reparations. We envision it to be dramatic, hilarious, unexpected and thought-provoking – enticing yet troubling for 'main stage' audiences and liberating for those on the outside. Mentorship from 1927 would be invaluable in supporting us to treading this fine-line of invading, seizing, transforming and celebrating the (aesthetics of the) 'main-stage', and delivering on a ridiculously ambitious project that represents a significant step-change in our respective practices.

Andy Edwards is a Glasgow-based playwright and dramaturg. Previous work includes *Tomorrow*, *Under Snow* (developed through FIRE EXIT's PYROMANIA Bursary and the Tron Theatre) about contemporary anti-semitism and holocaust remembrance; and *Arketype*, a retelling of Noah's Ark about patriarchy and climate change, written as Tron Theatre's Mayfesto Writer-in-Residence. More info at: www.andynedwards.com

Channing Tatum is the collaboration of Rohanne Udall (London) and Paul Hughes (Nottingham). They work across visual arts, academia, choreography and performance. Recent project include *This* (Rich Mix, Nottdance), a choreography of slapstick and thought for exhibition spaces; stage performance *Can You Feel It?* (PACT Zollverein, DanceXchange, Rich Mix); and solo exhibition *As If Nobody's Watching* (4/4 Gallery). More info at: www.channingtatum.info