



Mathilda and the Orange Balloon

UK Tour: February – May 2019

Mathilda and the Orange Balloon brings a diverse cast of Deaf and hearing actors to the stage to follow the story of Mathilda, a little grey sheep whose mind is always full of questions. Join her on a journey of self-discovery as she learns the joys of self-expression and see how, with a little imagination and a big open mind, anything is possible! The DH Ensemble have made Mathilda's world fully welcoming and accessible to D/deaf and hearing children and their families through the use of spoken English, British Sign Language, creative captions and animation.

Mathilda's world is small - nothing but grey sky and green clovers. She yearns for something different. When she sees an orange balloon in the sky, it sparks a new feeling about who she can be! But how can she communicate this to her herd? This charming play encourages young people to express themselves freely and demonstrates the importance of self-acceptance and positive, inclusive relationships.

Adapted from Randall de Sève's book, which celebrates children's individuality and creativity, this stage adaptation of *Mathilda and the Orange Balloon* will tell the story in an accessible way even inviting young audience members onto the stage to meet the actors for supervised interactive play on the farmyard set. Mathilda will be brought to life by Deaf actor, disability awareness advocate and fashion influencer Hermon Berhane. The production will make a strong contribution to the landscapes of both theatre for young audiences and accessible theatre and for many of the D/deaf and disabled children in the audience it may be the first time they see authentic representations of themselves onstage.

The DH Ensemble has a proven track record pioneering new approaches to accessible theatre practice with their show *People of the Eye* successfully touring the UK on several occasions. Their company of D/deaf and hearing artists collaboratively creates original performance.

Director Jennifer Bates comments, *After several years of making bold theatre and pushing the boundaries of what accessible theatre can be, it's time for the DH Ensemble to make a show for our toughest audience yet, children. When Jess Kaufman approached our company with the idea and a working script we loved it from the first read. Mathilda and the Orange Balloon is about exploration, interaction and asking questions about the world around us and our role in it. It's about identity and self acceptance. Never has it felt more important to make a performance for the future makers and their families.*

Notes to Editors

Title	<i>Mathilda and the Orange Balloon</i>
Running time	45 minutes
Social Media	@DH_Ensemble, #MathildaDHE
Notes	The show is a family show suitable for children aged 3-8 and their families. The show is accessible to deaf and hearing audiences through the use of British Sign Language, spoken English and projected animations & captions.
Mathilda	Hermon Berhane
Narrators	Adam Jay-Price and Mia Ward
Director	Jennifer K. Bates
Writer/Dramaturg	Jess Kaufman
Projection/Lighting Designer	Rachel Sampley
Producers	Erin Siobhan Hutching and Jess Kaufman
Set and Costume Designer	Jo Sargeant
The DH Ensemble Lead Artists	Jennifer K. Bates, Stephen Collins, Erin Siobhan Hutching and Sophie Stone

Tour Dates

Saturday 16 th Feb	Greenwich and Lewisham Young People's Theatre, London
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<http://www.glypt.co.uk/>

Sunday 24th Feb

Cambridge Junction

www.junction.co.uk

Saturday 2nd March

New Wolsey, Ipswich

www.wolseytheatre.co.uk

Tuesday 5th March

Arlington Arts Centre, Newbury

<https://arlington-arts.com/>

Saturday 11th May

Nottingham Playhouse, Nottingham

<https://www.nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk/>

Sunday 12th May

Attenborough Arts Centre, Leicester

www.attenborougharts.com

Saturday 25th May

Touchbase Pears, Birmingham

<https://touchbasepears.org.uk/whatson/>

All enquiries, high res images, further press information and bookings:

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