

Underbelly Festival supported by The Earls Court Development Company have launched the Underbelly Training Academy, which is an opportunity for eighteen, 16-25-year-olds from the London Boroughs of Hammersmith and Fulham, and Kensington and Chelsea, to gain insight and practical experience in the production and staging of large-scale events and festivals.

The Academy will run from Tuesday 06 June to Friday 15 July 2022 onsite at Underbelly Festival at Earls Court, SW6. Currently the Underbelly Festival is in full swing with the iconic Upside-Down Purple Cow taking centre with jaw-dropping circus acts, comedy shows that will leave you crying with laughter, and entertainment for all the family. All of this, alongside beautiful outdoor bars and delicious street food. See full programme of events below.

The six-week Training Academy is an initiative by Underbelly, supported by The Earls Court Development Company, and delivered in partnership with the Young Lyric Team at the Lyric Hammersmith.

The course will be workshop based with theoretical sessions covering a range of festival topics from creative programming, stage management, and technical production, to front of house, marketing, and finance. There will also be practical learning sessions with participants shadowing Underbelly staff on site, putting the classroom learning into practice.

This Academy programme will culminate with participants producing their own show as part of the Underbelly Festival programme. Participants will be responsible for booking performers, coordinating the promotion and selling of tickets with the marketing and box office teams, and working with the stage management and technical teams to deliver the show.

The aim of the Academy is to introduce participants to the process of producing a creative event from planning through to delivery, and to give them the confidence to seek further training in the field, or to apply for jobs within the sector. Previous participants have developed fulfilling long-term careers in the sector following their successful participation in the programme.

Anyone aged between 16-25 and living within Hammersmith & Fulham or Kensington & Chelsea can apply using a short online form before 10am on Monday 30 May 2022. Applicants may be required to attend a short phone interview with the Academy team. The Academy would particularly like to receive applications from those who have an interest in events and festivals but have no previous experience of working or training in the field.

This is not a paid opportunity, but travel costs to get to the training sessions, and on-site catering will be provided.

**Applicants can apply online via an application form [HERE](#)**

If you have any questions or require further information on the Underbelly Training Academy, email [academy@underbelly.co.uk](mailto:academy@underbelly.co.uk).

**Ed Barlam and Charlie Wood, Underbelly co-directors, said:**

*"We are thrilled to be launching the Underbelly Training Academy again this year with The Earls Court Development Company and the Young Lyric Team at the Lyric Hammersmith. It's a fantastic opportunity for those aged between 16-25 who live in London Boroughs of Hammersmith and Fulham and Kensington and Chelsea, to gain insight and practical experience in the production and staging of large-scale events and festivals like our exciting Underbelly Summer Festival. The experience is invaluable and we couldn't be more excited to launch it again this year! Do apply whilst you can!"*

**Rob Heasman, CEO of The Earls Court Development Company said:**

*"The Underbelly Training Academy is a key part of our early commitment to create more jobs, skills and apprenticeship opportunities on the Earls Court site. Last year's academy was a huge success with 11 of the local young students taking part. We want to create a wide range of employment opportunities and this partnership with Underbelly and the Lyric Hammersmith will provide the students with invaluable experience of the events industry. We're excited to see the show that the participants will put on at the end of the six-week programme."*

**UNDERBELLY SUMMER FESTIVAL PROGRAMME AT EARLS COURT:****THANYIA MOORE – 19 MAY, EARLS COURT**

Come join Thanyia Moore as she plays with material for her new show in the best way possible... by Just Being Funny!

Thanyia Moore was going to make her Edinburgh Fringe debut in 2020 with a heartfelt, emotional show, that was about to rock your socks off... but then 2020 happened. Now, she'd rather just be funny.

Winner: Funny Women Award. As seen on Mock the Week, Bamous, and Funny Festival Live (BBC), Rob Beckett's Undeniable (Comedy Central), Alan Davies' As Yet Untitled (Dave) and in Alma's Not Normal (BBC) and The Duchess (Netflix).

**BROMANCE – 17-21 MAY, EARLS COURT**

International award-winning smash hit BROMANCE is a five-star circus about camaraderie and affection.

Audacious, touching, exhilarating tour-de-force of physical heroics where handshakes become handstands and backslaps become backflips.

**STEVE BUGEJA – 20 MAY, EARLS COURT**

One of comedy's most exciting rising stars, Steve Bugeja (AKA 'The Mighty Booj', 'Moulin Booj', or – for December only – 'Ebenezer Booj') is bringing his brand new show for 2022.

A familiar face on TV and radio, Steve hosted the BBC Radio 4 series Economics with Subtitles, and has made numerous appearances on TV shows such as The Russell Howard Hour (Sky One), Love Island: Aftersun (ITV2) and Russell Howard's Stand Up Central (Comedy Central).

A prolific writer, Steve was a key member of the writing team for The Russell Howard Hour (Sky One) and for Iain Stirling's Celebability (ITV2), and has contributed material to Mock the Week (BBC2), 8 Out of 10 Cats (Channel 4) and to BBC Radio 4.

**CIRCUS ABYSSINIA: TULU – 24 MAY-18 JUNE, EARLS COURT**

A dazzling showcase of superhuman strength, speed, skill and flight lands in Earls Court this spring. Celebrating the true tale of an Ethiopian Olympic icon, Derartu Tulu. Circus Abyssinia blends together an unmissable performance of breath-taking contortion, awe-inspiring acrobatics and mesmerising fire-juggling with a rocking, exuberant soundtrack.

**RICHARD STOTT – 28 MAY, EARLS COURT**

Welcome to the afterparty, take a seat but don't stay forever!

We all leave the party at different times but have you hung on until the sun is coming through the curtains, the music has got weird and your heartburn is saying, "you're too old for this"? Join Richard as he contemplates whether he has missed the boat. His friends have families, 6 figure salaries and houses. He has a level 2 food hygiene certificate and acid reflux.

**JAMES BARR – 31 MAY, EARLS COURT**

People keep telling James he's "too gay". Straight Jokes is his fabulous reply. An out-of-control hour of jokes from the utterly hilarious, nearly national treasure. James exposes his employers and navigates the utterly exhausting admin of pretending to be woke for "fame". The gay half of hit comedy podcast A Gay and A NonGay, which has had over 5 million listens, and co-host of The Hits Radio Breakfast Show alongside Fleur East. The award-winning ginger returns to Edinburgh after his five-star 2019 debut, Thirst Trap.

**BABY LOVES DISCO – 2 JUNE, EARLS COURT**

The original family dance party Baby Loves Disco is delighted to be back with our good friends Underbelly to put on some parties promising a whole host of dancefloor delights. With resident club DJ, DJ Dub, mixing feel-good dance floor fillers with pop classics from the years before parenthood struck right up to the present day. The perfect party for parents and babies, toddlers and young children to dance together. Hold tight for all manner of dance floor shenanigans, mummy and daddy dance offs and a whole host of dance-floor fun and games!

**TRAVIS JAY – 2 JUNE, EARLS COURT**

Following his critically acclaimed Edinburgh debut Funny, Petty, Cool in 2019, the brilliant Travis Jay brings his brand-new show to the Bloomsbury Theatre! Despite the lockdown, Travis has had a busy year writing for classic hit show 'Spitting Image', appearing on Channel 4's 'Black, British and Funny' and also Comedy Central's

'Drunk History'. Travis has supported Britain's Got Talent Golden Buzzer winner Kojo Anim on his nationwide Taxi tour as well as the legendary Dave Chappelle on his Sticks & Stones London tour. This show promises to be fiery!

### **MORGAN & WEST UNBELIEVABLE SCIENCE – 3 JUNE, EARLS COURT**

Morgan & West present captivating chemistry, phenomenal physics, and bonkers biology in this fun for all the family science extravaganza!

Magicians, time travellers and all-round spiffing chaps Morgan & West have a secret past – they are genuine, bona fide, legitimately qualified scientists, and now are bring their love of enlightenment to the stage!

### **JENNY BEDE – 9 JUNE, EARLS COURT**

You won't have had children yet, as Jenny is the first person to ever go through this particular ordeal, but you might be keen to learn a little something about this incredible new process called pregnancy from award winning musical comedian and future nation's sweetheart, Jenny Bede.

Jenny will navigate the entire gamut of human emotions, from despair all the way through to despair, as she jokes, sings and (at last, justifiably) Mum-dances her experience to life in this new hour.

### **ABANDOMAN – 10 JUNE, EARLS COURT**

Ireland's finest hip hop musical comedian is back in the Cow with his biggest show yet. Using his trademark blend of audience interaction and razor-sharp improvisation, Abandoman will take you on a magical journey, transforming the audience's likes, loathes and daydreams into hit songs and captivating tales. Combining hip hop, pop, EDM and more, Abandoman will leave you high on life – without leaving Earls Court.

### **ISABELLE FARAH – 15 JUNE, EARLS COURT**

Standup is the outlet that keeps you sane. The nature of the game is to turn everything into punchlines. Can you do it if you feel all-consuming sadness?

'I wanted my therapist to come and watch me to see how f\*cking hilarious I am but I thought how odd it would be performing to someone who's seen so far behind my mask. Would he even find it funny or just sit there knowing what I was hiding?'

Ellipsis explores grieving, authenticity and being funny.

### **DREAMGUN: FILM READS PRESENTS LORD OF THE RINGS: FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING – 16 JUNE, EARLS COURT**

Film Reads is a show where we take our favourite movies, pump them full of nonsense and perform them in front of a live audience without doing any rehearsal beforehand.

"Hilarious read-throughs of brilliantly rewritten film classics, a joy" - Dara Ó Briain

### **ALI WOODS – 17 JUNE, EARLS COURT**

Highly-anticipated debut stand-up hour from the Hackney Empire New Comedian of the Year Winner, tackling all the big topics; Scottish mothers, sex parties, karate teachers, and mental breakdowns. During lockdown Ali was disappointed to discover he's a terrible friend. This is the hilarious and heart-felt story of how he tried to become more helpful and less... him. As heard on BBC Radio 4, and featured on LadBible and BuzzFeed UK, Ali has written sketches for BBC Three and supported Russell Kane on tour.

### **TESSA COATES – 18 JUNE, EARLS COURT**

Tessa is beside herself with excitement to be back in the Underbelly, London's finest cow-based comedy venue, armed with a brand-new stand-up show. There'll be some stories, some jokes, maybe a bit of science, possibly a character, she's not totally sure yet, but guaranteed you'll have a really nice time. Come! (If you'd like)

Co-host of the critically acclaimed and award-winning podcast Nobody Panic. As seen on Mae Martin's Feel Good, Rose Matafeo's Starstruck, The Stand Up Sketch Show, Hypothetical, and heard on her own BBC Radio 4 comedy special Resting Witch Face. Tour support for Nish Kumar: Your Power, Your Control.

### **UNFORTUNATE: THE UNTOLD STORY OF URSULA THE SEA WITCH – 21 JUNE - 16 JULY, EARLS COURT**

Disney villain. Octo-woman. Plus-size icon. From multi-award-winning Fat Rascal Theatre and fresh from complete sell out runs at the Edinburgh Fringe and around the UK comes this critically acclaimed hit parody musical. 'Unfortunate' splashes into Earls Court this summer for its London premiere - and things are gonna get wet. Join everyone's favourite Disney Diva, Ursula, as she gives her take on what really happened all those years ago under the sea. With an original hot pop soundtrack and trademark filthy humour, it's time to take the plunge and dive in to this year's hottest night out.

### **BILAL ZAFAR – 24 JUNE, EARLS COURT**

Edinburgh Fringe Best newcomer nominee and New act of the year (NATYS) award winner Bilal Zafar returns with a brand new show about how he spent a year working in a care home for very wealthy people. Fresh out

of university with a media degree, Bilal was dropped into the real world where he was given far too much responsibility for a 21 year old that had just spent 3 years watching films.

#### **EMMANUEL SONUBI – 2 JULY, EARLS COURT**

Sonubi has only been on the comedy circuit for what feels like five minutes and he's already garnering himself a reputation as the 'one to watch out for!' Having gone from open spot to closing BBC's 'Live at the Apollo' in an incredibly short space of time. He has also performed at many of the largest clubs and festivals across Europe. He made his TV debut on Comedy Central UK and was recently on The John Bishop Show for ITV1 and the Stand Up Sketch Show on ITV2.

#### **EME ESSIEN – 8 JULY, EARLS COURT**

Ever wondered what takes a girl so long to get ready on a night out? It's Saturday night, the big girls' night out and this girl is trying to get ready on time. Unfortunately, people won't stop interrupting her. Delve into her world as she figures out what to wear, how to do her hair and what to do when she gets there. Uncensored, dishevelled and sincere, this is the internal conflict of a woman trying to achieve modern ideals and aspirations, in an hour of character comedy from award winner Eme Essien.

#### **MICHELLE SHAUGHNESSY – 9 JULY, EARLS COURT**

Introducing Canadian comedian Michelle Shaughnessy who debuts at the Fringe this year. The show, directed by Adam Hills (Bafta nominee, The Last Leg), Be Your Own Daddy is the story of how Michelle spent her whole existence waiting for someone to fix her life. Already established in Canada, she's had numerous TV appearances and her debut album You Know What You Did hit number one on the iTunes comedy charts.

#### **MAMA G'S STORY TIME ROADSHOW – 9-10 JULY, EARLS COURT**

"Everyone's favourite panto dame," (Metro) is heading back to Earl's Court with more stories, for the whole family, about being who you want and loving who you are!

Join Mama G for stories and songs about how wonderful YOU are! She can't wait to introduce you to some of her most fabulous characters! Get ready to meet Eunice, the horse that wants to be a unicorn; Michael who saves Bonfire Night with the power of his floss and look out for The Something-Saurus!

#### **LAURA DAVIS – 15 JULY, EARLS COURT**

Laura Davis is internationally acclaimed as one of the strongest, most distinctive comedy voices around. Bold, hilarious and razor sharp, Davis delivers extraordinary stand-up that subverts expectation at every turn. This is a work in progress of her new hour.

#### **COLOSSAL – 16 JULY, EARLS COURT**

Following his sold-out, five-star debut show, The Man, Patrick McPherson makes his anticipated return with Colossal: a one-man comedy play that dives into love stories, morality, and the dance between the two. Colossal weaves sketch comedy, gig theatre and spoken word to tell the comedic and candid story of a man called Dan, his affinity for owls, and his messy recent past.