

I HAVE MET THE ENEMY

(AND THE ENEMY IS US)

TOUR PACK



"AN EXPLOSIVE, TECHNO-SOUNDTRACKED ASSAULT ON THE MILITARY MACHINE"

★★★★ THE GUARDIAN

AVAILABLE FOR TOURING FROM SPRING 2020



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

phf Paul Hamlyn
Foundation

CHAPTER



**SOUTHBANK
CENTRE**

**N
NORTHERN
STAGE**

ABOUT THE SHOW

WHAT IF WE SAID THAT BRITAIN (THIS TINY ISLAND) IS THE SECOND BIGGEST ARMS DEALER IN THE WORLD?

I Have Met the Enemy (and the enemy is us) is an immersive event that shifts between a piece of theatre, an art installation, a video call and live action role play, transforming the space into a world charged with lasers, techno, surround sound and robotic installation.

A Palestinian actor, a former British soldier and a Yemeni artist come together in a joint attempt to understand the UK arms trade and its impact on individuals globally, asking audiences to consider the role we play, as a nation and as individuals, in conflict that is seemingly far away.

Audiences will be on their feet, with action happening all around them, including moments of audience interaction. They are encouraged to take responsibility for what they can see and what others can see, and where necessary make space, crouch, sit or move aside to ensure the best possible experience for everyone in the room. They will be invited to participate, intervene, or simply observe - always complicit in the action.

AUDIENCE RESPONSE

"I Have Met the Enemy is like being inside a poem, lasers breaking the roof and stories told by match light in the darkness created by the arms trade."

"Still thinking about Common Wealth's 'I Have Met the Enemy' from last night in Bradford. Astounding, heart pumping, moving, visual, real life theatre."

"I Have Met the Enemy, what an amazing, inspiring, provocative piece of theatre. Common Wealth you always challenge me and make me look at the world through different eyes. Thank you for that."

PRESS

"An explosive, techno-soundtracked assault on the military machine" ★★★★★ The Guardian

"Mesmerising & entrancing...an incredibly immersive & disturbing piece of theatre" ★★★★★ The Reviews Hub

"Timely & challenging" ★★★★★ North West End

PERFECT FOR

Audiences with experience of or a connection to the arms trade, directly or indirectly

People with an interest in Politics & Current Affairs

Students and Young People

Contemporary Theatre & New Writing audiences

People traditionally under-represented in arts audiences

Techno music lovers



CONTEXT



The arms industry is a multi-billion-pound industry with a global impact. Its effects are present in almost every community and, in different ways, it affects every one of us. Its impact, and the impact of war, are most greatly felt by people in the directly affected communities, and it is important that their voices are central to how we explore the issues. That is what this play does.

When I met with the team producing this work, I was instantly impressed. They spoke with such passion and vision, and with such respect and care for the lived experiences and voices that it centres.

It is an uncompromising and ambitious piece of work that brings different struggles and issues together and explores these vitally important issues through the eyes of people that are living through the consequences of war. It emphasises the importance of listening to people with direct experience and learning from them. It also underlines the role that art can play in challenging our reality and bringing people together.

Its production could not be timelier. As I write this, UK-made fighter jets are flying over Yemen and dropping UK-made bombs and firing UK-made missiles. This terrible bombardment has killed thousands of people. It has destroyed schools and hospitals across Yemen and created the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.

The millionaires who head these companies live in luxurious homes and work in big glass offices. They do not see the horrific results of their actions or question the system and Government promotion that helps them to spread their weapons around the world.

Art is one way to pierce those bubbles and confront those that uphold the system with the terrible results of their business. Works like 'I Have Met the Enemy' can play a key role in pushing for action and inspiring change. We are proud to support this work and hope that you come away from it wanting to act and calling for change.

Andrew Smith, Campaign Against the Arms Trade

CAST

Mo'min Swaitat | Performer & Co-devisor

Momin Swaitat is an actor and director from Jenin who - after graduating from the Freedom Theatre (Jenin) and LISPA (London/Berlin) - has worked on numerous English and Arabic-language productions and performed throughout Palestine, Europe and America.

Alexander Eley | Performer & Co-devisor

Alexander Eley is a British Army Veteran serving 10 years in Uniform. Working as part of the Royal Signals specialising in communications and bomb disposal, he served 2 tours of Afghanistan and has worked specialist counter terrorism duties. Alex is a techno DJ and joined Common Wealth with no previous acting experience.

Shatha Altowai | Performer & Co-devisor

Shatha Altowai is a painter based in Yemen. Her paintings are inspired by her husband's piano music, who's compositions, in turn, are inspired by her artworks. Shatha interacts with Alex and Mo'min in the show via pre-recorded footage, filmed by Yemen-based Comra Films.



COMMON WEALTH

Common Wealth | Co-directed by Evie Manning & Rhiannon White

Common Wealth make site-specific theatre events that encompass electronic sound, new writing, visual design and verbatim. Our work is political and contemporary – based in the present day – the here and now. We make work that is relevant and addresses the concerns of our times.

We seek out places to stage our work that are right in a community; a residential house, a boxing gym, places where people who might not go to the theatre might come to instead. Our ideas are rooted in socialist politics, working class backgrounds, a keen interest in contemporary music/theatre/art/design, the people that we meet and an idealistic ambition to shift things. We see our plays as campaigns, as a way of bringing people together and making change feel possible.

BOOKING INFORMATION

Availability: From Spring 2020

Space: Common Wealth aims to work in spaces which are not traditionally used for theatre, and in/with working class communities that would not typically have access to world-class contemporary work on their doorstep.

Dimensions: the show requires a minimum playing space of 20m x 13m, minimum height 5m

Technical: Specific details will be discussed with individual venues. We operate lighting, sound, robotics, lasers and video using QLab 4 from a toured Mac Mini at a control position on stage. We require sufficient 13amp sockets at this position for control and sound (inc amplifiers). Full tech rider available on request

Get in: 2 days (with first show on second day)

Get out: 4 hours, depending on access

Running time: 65 mins straight through

Audience capacity: approx. 80 (dependent on size of space)

Age guidance: 12+

Touring company: We tour as a company of 6:

1 x Director

2 x Performers

1 x Production Manager

1 x Programmer / Operator

1 x Re-lighter (for the get in period only)

Watch: Documentary Film Trailer https://youtu.be/_RVad0FhTZk

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