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creating inclusivity and equality in disability

## Dust –Trafalgar studios 2 – Large print version

### Introduction

Welcome to this introduction of 'Dust' ( a one woman play ) Written and performed by Milly Thomas, directed by Sara Joyce.

The following introduction includes details about Dust, the set, costumes and props, plot outline and character description, excerpt from programme, production credits and theatre information

It has been written, and edited by Tim Calvert of Calvert Creative Concepts.

Dust runs at Trafalgar studios 2 in the heart of the West End from Tuesday the 4<sup>th</sup> of September until Saturday the 13<sup>th</sup> of October. Evening performances are at 7.45 pm with a Matinee on Thursday and Saturday at 3pm. A touch tour is available by request. The performance lasts for one hour and 15 minutes without an interval.

Please note this production contains intense strobe lighting throughout – and may be distressing for those with photo sensitive epilepsy and certain eye conditions.

Trafalgar studios 2 in an intimate theatre space with seating for 98 patrons, 96 with one wheel chair space. This is located downstairs adjacent to the bar area and toilets.

Dust was first performed at Underbelly, Edinburgh Fringe Festival in August 2017 and relocated to the Soho theatre, London in February 2018

In the opening moments of the play the main character, Alice, declares she has been dead for three days, She felt that life wasn't worth living so kills herself but finds she is ghostlike, a fly on the wall, and is forced to watch the aftermath of her suicide and its ripple effect on her family and friends. Alice quickly discovers that death changes people, and realises the impact it has and that death isn't the change she hoped for.

This part monologue, part dramatic performance is an exploration of depression, suicide, life, death and how the choices we make in life impact those around us. It is reflective and funny in equal measure.

Dust is a one woman play and centres on the character of Alice played by Milly Thomas, Milly is a writer and actress, she graduated in 2014 with a BA in acting from the Royal central school of speech and drama.

Her acting credits include Dust for the Soho Theatre and Underbelly Edinburgh( which she also wrote), Schooled,for Netflix, The Feed, for Amazon, Enterprice,

for BBC3, Quacks, for BBC2, Downtown Abbey, for ITV, and Woman in Gold, for BBC Films.

The set and stage for Dust is minimalist with a black floor and back wall, and consists of an oblong metal table in the centre, and three tall slim rectangular hanging mirrors at the back amongst an array of bright white lights and strobes.

The overall tone of the set is stark and clinical

The long table that fills the centre of the stage is a silver catering table with a smooth finish on top, and a storage area below, this resembles a gurney or something you may find in a mortuary. The table is used by Alice throughout the play as she often moves around it, sits, lies and crouches on it. When she is sitting or lying on the table you will hear it creak. There are also scenes in Dust where Alice uses the table to simulate certain actions.

The mirrors look as though they are floating around the back of the table. They are quite thin with a significant gap between each. There is a stark thin fluorescent light, like one you might find in a bathroom cupboard, lining the top of each mirror. They light up during scenes that go back in time in Alice's memory for scenes that re-enact moments when she was alive. This brings the back area of the stage more to life and make Alice's reflection a bit clearer.

The lighting in Dust plays a significant part in the action and is used to signify a change of scene, emotion or a

flashback in time in harmony with the incidental music. The white lighting differs in brightness and tone in order to illustrate the mood and strobe lights are used in white and blue with varied speed and intensity

Alice is a young white woman of moderate height, in her late twenties, early thirties, she has a pale complexion with green eyes, and auburn coloured hair tied back into a pony tail, she is barefoot throughout.

She wears just one outfit which is made up of 2 contrasting flesh coloured pieces that are generally used under garments for shape support in order to create a sheer cover (there are sheer nude tights on the legs and across the arms). The idea behind the costume is the concept that the bodysuit acts as a 'second skin'.

Although this is a one performer play it does consist of other characters that come in and out of the narrative that include mum and dad, brother Robbie, best friend Ellie and boyfriend Ben.

In an excerpt from the Programme writer and actress Milly Thomas states: “ What I’m thinking as we head into the West End, is that I’m still struck by how raw the show and the exposure feels – The sheer terror of it, really, in a good way. What we’ve made feels so fragile, yet so utterly robust and, a year, and a bit on I’m still really shocked by it.”

Director Sara Joyce reflects further by adding – “Terror, is such an accurate word- though not in the way you might apply it to a horror movie, more like the thrill of a

roller coaster. It's great to think about how it's been allowed to develop each time it's moved forward. We've been very protective of what the show is, but it's also been a gift to let it be something that has grown over time, the story is still the story, and any changes are so tiny that I don't know if people would notice the difference. Yet they feel tremendous to me – they represent the whole team's journey together, now being able to articulate what we mean to each other and what the play means to all of us.”

Dust has been produced in association with the Samaritans to raise awareness of mental health and there will be a collection at the end of each performance, with theatre staff holding buckets on your way out.

#### Production credits

Written and performed by Milly Thomas

Directed by Sara Joyce

Designed by Anna Reid

Lighting design by Jack Weir

Sound design by Max Perryment

Associate lighting designer- Bethany Gupwell

Production manager- Hannah Fisher

And Stage manager – Anna Lambert

#### Theatre information

The Trafalgar studio's is situated on 14 Whitehall, in London, postcode SW1A 2DY not far from Charing Cross train station, and Trafalgar square

There are bag checks at the Theatre on arrival and the box office is in close proximity to the entrance.

Studio 2 is situated downstairs. If you require any assistance please ask a member of staff

There is an accessible toilet that can be reached by using the lift.

Guide dogs are permitted in the auditorium with prior arrangement and can also be looked after in accordance with guide dogs for the blind guidelines,

To book tickets call the access line on 0800 912 6971

Trafalgar Studios Box Office Opening Hours are

Mon-Sat, 10:30am to 6pm on non-performance days

Trafalgar Entertainment Group

Trafalgar Studios is owned and operated by Trafalgar Entertainment Group, a live entertainment business launched in 2017 by Sir Howard Panter and Dame Rosemary Squire DBE. For more information on the company and its flagship venue Trafalgar Studios, see [www.trafalgarentertainment.com](http://www.trafalgarentertainment.com) or follow us on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram.

The manager of the venue is Martin Scorer