

Thursday 27 January 2022

Edinburgh International Book Festival
Presents The First Rehearsed Reading of *Dialogues from Babel*

I think the sounds are coming from me

From my heart

My heart's a radio

Seven years after the Edinburgh International Book Festival worked on a unique collaboration with Hearing the Voice – an interdisciplinary study of voice-hearing based at Durham University - ***Dialogues from Babel***, a stage play drawn from interviews with voice hearers and novelists, is coming to Edinburgh for its first public rehearsed reading at The Traverse on Friday 4 March 2022 at 7.30pm.

Directed by Mary Robson, the Creative Facilitator in the Institute for Medical Humanities at Durham University and member of the Edinburgh International Book Festival Board, with text by Philip Howard, ***Dialogues from Babel*** weaves together conversations that unfold to illuminate the experience of hearing a voice when there is no-one speaking. A company of seven professional actors will rehearse alongside Mary, Philip and Fife-based sound designer RJ McConnell for a week, leading to readings of the script and its accompanying soundtrack in Edinburgh and then in Newcastle. There will be an accompanying series of podcasts inspired by the play.

Tamara Zimet, Deputy Programme Director at the Edinburgh International Book Festival, said “One of the functions of the Book Festival is to give people new or different perspectives and invite conversation and exchange. The experience of hearing voices is not universal, and we hope that *Dialogues from Babel* demonstrates the diversity of these experiences and the profound impact it can have on our personal, intellectual and creative lives. We are enormously proud to share this production with audiences in Edinburgh and Newcastle, a celebration of a long and exciting collaboration between the Book Festival and Hearing the Voice.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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The Edinburgh International Book Festival Ltd is a Scottish charity (SC010120) and a limited company (registered in Scotland no 79939) and has its registered office at 121 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4YN.

The Hearing the Voice project investigated why and how people hear voices. From children with imaginary friends, to the recently bereaved hearing the voices of their loved ones and novelists having conversations with their characters, its researchers carried out interviews over a period of eight years. In addition to shedding light on the relations between hearing voices and everyday processes of sensory perception, memory, language and creativity, the project explored why it is that some voices (and not others) are experienced as distressing, how they can change across the life course, and the ways in which voices can act as important social, cultural and political forces aiming to remove the stigma from voice hearing.

Dialogues from Babel is a 90-minute performance followed by a 30-minute Q&A. Tickets, priced at £12 (£10) can be purchased through the Box Office at the Traverse Theatre on 0131 228 1404 or through traverse.co.uk.

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For further information please contact:

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