

News

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Teens take on musical for the My Spacers

New Vic Youth Theatre presents

Don't Turn My Life Into A Musical: The Musical By Sarah Nelson and James Atherton

Fri 3 September, 7.30pm
Sat 4 September, 2.15pm & 7.30pm

Talented teenagers are telling their story on stage this month for the Midlands premiere of a new musical.

Youngsters aged 14-19 from the New Vic's acclaimed Youth Theatre are learning their OMG's from their LOL's for *Don't Turn My Life Into a Musical: The Musical*, a new show based on the experiences of real teenagers.

Composed by award-winning film and TV composer, James Atherton, the production has been written specifically for young people and with their input.

New Vic Youth Theatre Director, Cathryn Baker, says: *"The show is unique in that it has been written as a result of real testimonies from real teenagers. It's trying to get to the truth of how young people feel and examine the issues that affect them. So storylines have been based on true stories."*

The piece uses real issues affecting young people to attack the 'bitch culture' that, through blogging and the media, is increasingly becoming part of teenage life.

Explains Cathryn: *"Appetite for gossip has always been around, but social networking and the likes of Heat magazine mean that it is fashionable. It means that, as in the showbiz world, young people's problems are often trivialised."*

"Don't Turn My Life... acknowledges and questions that. But it also validates the views and real problems of teenagers as people in their own right, not just grownups in training."

The New Vic Youth Theatre production not only heralds a regional premiere for the musical, which has only been performed once before, but will also see many local teenagers make their musical debut on stage.

On board for the production is James Atherton, the show's co-writer and artistic director of the company who staged its premiere, Oldham Theatre Workshop. The Musical Director said, *"It's been a real privilege to work with these young people from the region. Many of them didn't turn up at the auditions as seasoned musical theatre performers, but they now sound as good as the professionals."*

"It's the story of their generation, so it's really from the heart. It will be an unbelievable show."

Don't Turn My Life Into a Musical: The Musical runs from Fri 3 – Sat 4 September. Tickets costing £6.00 (concessions available) can be booked by calling the Box Office on 01782 717962 or online at www.newvictheatre.org.uk.

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For interviews with young participants, images or any further information please contact Clare Hargreaves on 01782 717954 ext 317 or e-mail chargreaves@newvictheatre.org.uk.

Editor's Notes

James Atherton – Biography

James is full-time Artistic Director of Oldham Theatre Workshop. He has worked as a director, musical director and composer for theatre, opera and television. James has worked with the Royal Opera House, English National Opera, Full House Theatre Company, Glyndbourne Opera House, Centred Theatre, Opera North, English Touring Opera, English Touring Theatre, the National Youth Music Theatre, M6 Theatre, Lion Television, Channel 4, ITV, and BBC Four. His most recent credits include a new musical *Eyam* filmed for a BBC One documentary and winner of a broadcasting award, the original score for the ITV series *Survivors* and Film 4's *All In The Game*.

New Vic Education

Run by the New Vic's Education Department, the Youth Theatre and Drama groups involve 140 young people aged 7 - 18. Weekly sessions provide creative learning activity and an opportunity to build confidence and communication skills. Youth Theatre productions are presented annually in the theatre.

The Education Department also leads workshops & residencies in schools, and offers backstage tours, activity days and help with after school clubs.