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600 PEOPLE

**DR ALEX KELLY,
READER IN THEATRE &
PERFORMANCE**

OUTPUT INFORMATION

Title:
600 People

Output Type:
I – Performance

Venues:
UK tour (42 performances, 2015 – present),
plus performances in Porto (2015) and
Beirut (2016).

Year of first performance:
2015

Authors:
Dr Alex Kelly & Rachael Walton

Output allocation:
Performance practice



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION STATEMENT

The theatre production 600 People toured for seven years, producing 72 public performances in the UK, Dublin, Lisbon, Porto and Beirut, reaching combined audiences of over 5,000.

Kelly is a leading creator of autobiographical and documentary performance work, exploring complex ideas through autobiographical narrative frames; using storytelling to make challenging subjects accessible to non-specialist audiences. The subject matter of 600 People spanned the evolution of intelligence, faith and belief, the possibility of alien life, cyborg technology, and the creation of homo prevalidus. Extensive research into these subjects was undertaken by Kelly in preparation for devising and writing the performance which Kelly realised as a flexible form suitable for both conventional and unconventional performance spaces.

Storytelling 600 People directly to the audience (with no 'fourth wall'), and using conversational devices results in the performance being experienced by attendees as individuals as opposed to being received by an audience as a collective body. 600 People incorporates re-creations of conversations with astrophysicist Professor Simon Goodwin and reflections on Kelly's other research; it borrows a formal mechanism from documentary podcasts such as Radiolab.

Touring venues included: GIFT Festival, Gateshead (2013); Teatro Maria Matos, Lisbon (2014); Sheffield Hallam University (2015); Northern Stage, Newcastle (2016); Uma Familia Inglesa, Porto (2016); Summerhall, Edinburgh Festival Fringe (2017); Festival of the Mind, Greenbelt, Sheffield and Crucible Theatre, Sheffield (2017); Manchester Science Festival (2018).

Presentations & discussions include: Splice Symposium, University of Notre Dame, London (2013); Theatre & Performance Research Association (TaPRA) Annual Conference, University of Worcester (2014); Seeing The Unseen, TaPRA, Jodrell Bank (2018); Diocese of Guildford Clergy Conference (2018); TaPRA Annual Conference, University of Exeter (2019).

Reviewed by: Exeunt, The Reviews Hub, Cuckoo Review, NETheatre Guide, Fest Mag, Total Theatre, Broadway Baby, Three Weeks, The Stage, The List, Voice Mag, The Guardian, and an interview for The Stage.

DOUBLE-WEIGHTING STATEMENT

Kelly's production *600 People* resulted from extensive and multi-layered research into the evolution of intelligence, faith and belief, the possibility of alien life, cyborg technology, and the creation of homo prevalidus, including creating new primary research resources which informed the output. Typical of Kelly's approach to theatre-making, the live production included a conversational approach, meaning that each of the 72 live performances created over seven years of touring had unique audience contributions woven into the overarching narrative. The resulting output engaged audiences with complex topics, bringing in multiple-perspectives and exploring them in an unconventional context through experimental creative means.

“Kelly reminds us — in this funny, earnest, engaging presentation — of the value, and humility, of wonder.”



GG

"an accomplished
piece of storytelling...
funny, earnest,
engaging"



Broadway Baby

GG

"...in its own
quiet way this
show is full of
wonder"



The Stage

GG

"Like the best teachers, he has a way of unpacking complex subjects and making them digestible... in its own quiet way this show is full of wonder."

The Stage

GG

"Fascinating, question-packed performance-lecture exploring our place in the universe"

The Stage

GG

“600 People is fascinating & thoughtful performance lecture from @AlexanderKelly @Summerhallery Who are we & how did we get to here. Loved it.”

Lyn Gardner (The Guardian, Twitter reaction)

GG

"He has a fiercely sharp grasp of the facts, his mind and mouth work at a breakneck speed, and the enthusiasm for his subject is contagious... humbling, beautifully live and communal."

Total Theatre Magazine

GG

"...like the best TED talk, only more interesting."



North East Theatre Guide

GG

“It’s a modest, direct piece of theatre which still has the power to knock you to the floor; intelligent, honest and brilliantly inquisitive.”

Andrew Latimer, Exuent

REVIEWS & ARTICLES

Exeunt Magazine: <http://exeuntmagazine.com/reviews/600-people/>
Date: 19 November 2015
Author: Andrew Latimer

Cuckoo Review
Date: 18 November 2015
Author: Becky Betts
<http://review.cuckoowriters.com/theatre-review-600-people-northern-stage/>

The Reviews Hub
Date: 5 June 2016
Author: Paul Couch
<http://www.thereviewshub.com/pulse-festival-2016-third-angel-600-people/>

North East Theatre Guide
Date: 23 July 2016
<http://nomorepanicbutton.blogspot.co.uk/2016/07/preview-northern-stage-at-edinburgh.html>

Broadway Baby
<http://www.broadwaybaby.com/shows/600-people/715600>

The List
Date: 12 August 2016
Gareth K Vile interview with Alex Kelly for The List
<https://edinburghfestival.list.co.uk/article/83338-at-the-fringe-3-a-dramaturgical-guide-to-the-galaxy/>

North East Theatre Guide
Date: 19 August 2016
Author: Stephen Oliver
http://nomorepanicbutton.blogspot.co.uk/2016/08/edfringe-review-600-people_19.html

Total Theatre
Date: 20 August 2016
Author: Marigold Hughes

<http://totaltheatre.org.uk/third-angel-600-people/>

Broadway Baby
Date: 23 August 2016
Author: Jamie Robson
<http://www.broadwaybaby.com/shows/600-people/715600>

Three Weeks Edinburgh
Date: 26 August 2016
Author: Lucrezia Pollice
<http://www.threeweeksedinburgh.com/article/600-people-third-angel/>

The Stage
Date: 26 August 2016
Author: Natasha Tripney
<https://www.thestage.co.uk/reviews/2016/600-people-review-at-summerhall-edinburgh/>

The Guardian (mention in wider article)
Date: 26 August 2016
Author: Lyn Gardner
https://www.theguardian.com/stage/theatreblog/2016/aug/26/young-companies-ambition-edinburgh-fringe-festival?CMP=share_btn_tw

The List
Date: 1 September
Author: Elliot Roberts
<https://edinburghfestival.list.co.uk/article/84243-600-people/>

The Reviews Hub
Author: Rich Jevons
Date: 25 October 2018 (attended Live Art Bistro Leeds)
<https://www.thereviewshub.com/600-people-live-art-bistro-leeds/>

VoiceMag
Arts Award and work placement student review
Author: Charlie Foxhall
Date: 15 July 2019
<https://www.voicemag.uk/review/5768/600-people-theatre-review>

Third Angel
presents

600 People



"We step out of our solar system, into the universe, seeking only peace and friendship..."

So says the message from the human race on the Voyager spacecraft. But is there, y'know, anyone out there? Alex went to speak to an astrophysicist to find out. This is what he learned: Stellar Wobble. The Mirror Test. The Drake Equation. Fermi's Paradox. Capitalist chimps and murderous dolphins.

Somewhere between stand-up comedy and an astrophysics lecture, Third Angel brings you a simple show about huge ideas. 600 People explores the stories we tell in order to understand our place in the cosmos, that asks if there are extra terrestrials in our galaxy, that asks what it means to be human.

We said they were big ideas...

Friday 23rd March
7.30pm

Quarterhouse
Mill Bay
Folkestone
Kent CT20 1BN

Box office:
01303 760750
www.quarterhouse.co.uk
info@quarterhouse.co.uk

Book now, Pay What You Decide on
the night

Part of Futures: Utopia/Dystopia series

www.thirdangel.co.uk • @ThirdAngelUK • facebook.com/thirdangeluk

Originally commissioned for Northern Elements, a development programme funded by Arts Council England and managed by ARC, Stockton Arts Centre

Third Angel is an Associate Company of Sheffield Theatres



Design by danielfletcher.org



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ENGLAND**



"...engaging with the big issues
about how we live with a fierce
intelligence"
The Guardian

"...full of those whoaaaaaa
moments" Exeunt Magazine

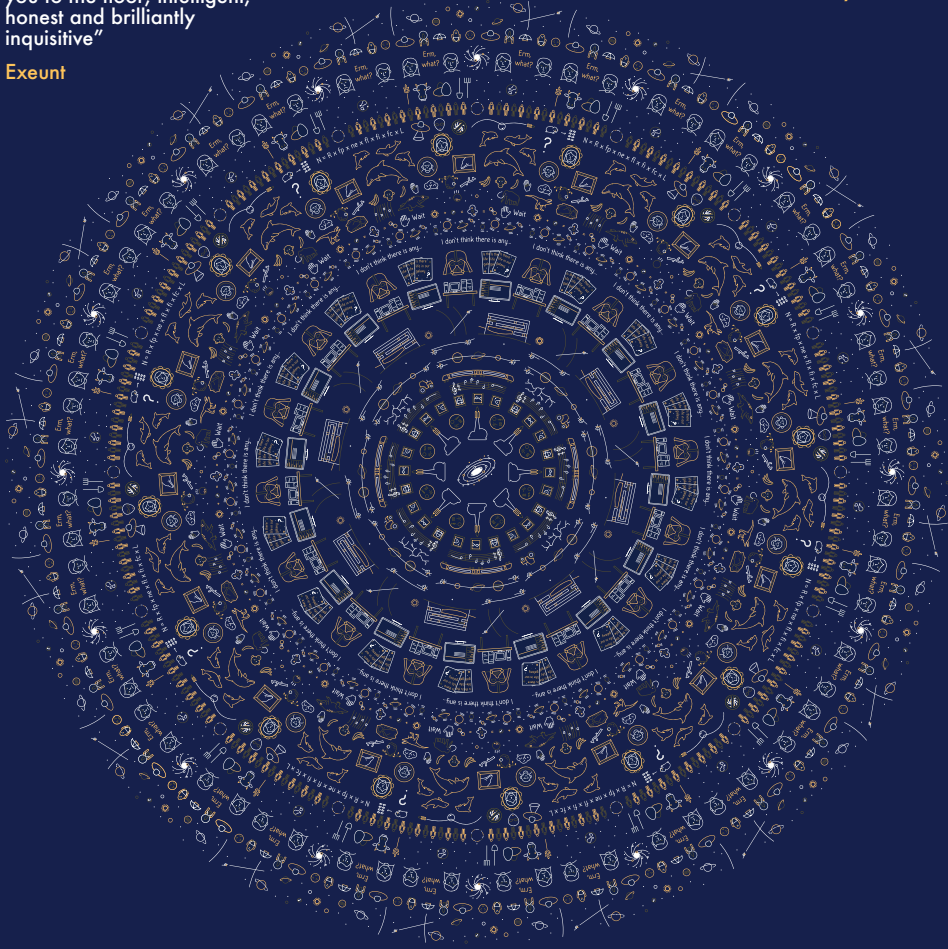
Written & performed by
Alexander Kelly
Inspired by conversations with
Dr Simon Goodwin
Directed by Rachael Walton

"packed full of those
whoaaaaaaa moments...
has the power to knock
you to the floor; intelligent,
honest and brilliantly
inquisitive"

Exeunt

"fascinating and thoughtful...
Loved it"

Lyn Gardner



Third Angel presents

600 People

Stand up meets astrophysics lecture in a
simple show about huge ideas

Saturday 1st December 2:30pm

Square Chapel
Arts Centre
Halifax

Box Office:
www.squarechapel.co.uk
01422 349 422



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Square Chapel Arts Centre



AUDIENCE RESPONSES

GG

Walking home looking up at the stars and suddenly feel very small in this big universe. Mind totally blown.

From Twitter

GG

left my brain fizzing.

GG

Absolutely amazing performance, never have I wanted to be an astrophysicist so badly.

66

Hi,

I came to see this talk a few years ago at the Edinburgh Festival with my children who were then in their early teens.

We are thoroughly enjoyed the show, talked about it for hours afterwards. They described it as astounding. What I had not realised was how much it impacted upon my middle daughter who is now 16. She has remembered quite a lot of it and brought it up to me today as a source of comfort in the face of existential angst.

She would love to see it again and also share it with other young people. Are there any plans to tour with the show again? Failing that is there anywhere to get a hold of a video recording?

From Anna Lloyd by email

GG

Hi

We saw 600 People at the BAC in October last year, it was great.

My 12 year old daughter's now doing a project for school on space exploration and we're trying to remember all the brilliant stuff. Course we didn't take notes. Is there any way to access the script / some of the detail from the argument to jog her memory?

From Robin Batt by email

GG

Mind blowing! It answers the questions that you ask while laying in bed at 3am. Definitely makes you think about what life is and how alone we are, how we seek the need to find something!

From audience response forms

GG

Brilliant, thought provoking, interesting, made me want to know more and it made me care about Voyager!

GG

Very interesting and thought-provoking. I had already thought about some of the content raised which made it a bit more personal. Some of the information was quite frightening and made me realise how little I know of what is happening.



Really engaging way of showing the science. What really struck me this time was the way that it flipped between the genetics and astrophysics, and the importance of stories - the relationship between storytelling and science feels crucial to the show.

From audience response forms



Informative and fun. Made me feel sad about a spacecraft being all alone.



A surprisingly emotional performance that was fascinating to watch, it may have convinced me to pursue a career in astrophysics.

GG

Very thought provoking. Feel the need to do further research. And why did the dolphins, all four of them, want to murder that particular dolphin?! Great talk - will be thinking about it for ages to come.

From audience response forms

GG

I love it! I learnt so much and it was all really relevant and interesting. I have never really considered space as an interesting subject before but have seen the show twice now!
Thank you

GG

Did a wonderful job of dramatising our way of viewing the universe, but through wonderful story reasserted the romance we feel for what's out in the universe in an extremely moving way. Make big ideas accessible so everyone could share in the sense of wonder.

GG

Absolutely brilliant! Exciting to hear open talks on the real potential of the human race and that life exists beyond what we usually consider. homo sapiens aren't the last word!

From audience response forms

GG

It was brilliant & inspiring. Interesting & exciting. I have now seen it 3 times as I wanted my friends to see it. Absolutely brilliant. Mind blowing. Still trying to retain 1/4 of the information in it. Really wonderful!

GG

Excellent. I expected a factual show and yet appreciated a thought provoking link about imagination and creativity. I nerdy physicist. Ta! A welcome distraction from Brexit.

GG

Very interesting and engaging. Made a very complex topic accessible and entertaining. I never thought science could be so emotional!

GG

Hugely eye-opening and clearly explained things I didn't understand before. Brilliant.

From audience response forms

Keywords:

Performance

Autobiography

Evolution

Faith

Belief

Astrophysics

Links:

<https://thirdangel.co.uk/shows-projects/600-people>

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WWW.LEEDSBECKETT.AC.UK/LARC

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