

BREAKING CYCLES

THE DEVIL HAS QUENTIN'S HEART



MARKETING SUPPORT PACK

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TOURING AUTUMN 2009

OCTOBER

- 30 MANCHESTER
0161 274 0600
Contact
www.contact-theatre.org
- 31 MANCHESTER
0161 274 0600
Contact
www.contact-theatre.org

NOVEMBER

- 4 LONDON
0208 341 4421
Jackson's Lane
www.jacksonslane.org.uk
- 17 READING
0118 960 6060
South Street
www.readingarts.com/southstreet
- 18 READING
0118 960 6060
South Street
www.readingarts.com/southstreet
- 19 LONDON
0208 692 4446
The Albany
www.thealbany.org.uk
- 24 HEMEL HEMPSTEAD
0144 222 8091
Old Town Hall
www.oldtownhall.co.uk
- 26 LINCOLN
0844 888 4414
LPAC
www.lpac.co.uk
- 27 BIRMINGHAM
0121 236 4455
THE REP
www.birmingham-rep.co.uk
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0121 236 4455
THE REP
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BROCHURE / LEAFLET COPY

The Devil Has Quentin's Heart

Benji Reid returns to the stage with an explosive new production from Breaking Cycles. Riding on a roller coaster to redemption Benji performs a rich cocktail of guilt and fear, exploring the stark realism of substance abuse and fractured relationships.

The Devil Has Quentin's Heart - that was the price Quentin paid for success. He had it all riding high as an ultra-successful trader on Wall Street but betrayed and framed for fraud he discovers life in the underbelly of New York as an alcoholic living on the streets. He sees that greed knows no limits and makes one last wager to save his soul. This is the story told on his last day, in his last hour, before Satan comes banging at the door.

The Devil Has Quentin's Heart is a twisted, funky and perverse modern day tragedy that explodes the nature of performance, storytelling and dance.

Devised and Written By Benji Reid, Peadar Kirk and Ray Shell
Based on characters from the novel 'Iced' by Ray Shell
Directed By Peadar Kirk
Performed By Benji Reid
Musical Composition and Performance By Andrew Wong
Lighting Design By Paul Colley

BREAKING CYCLES HISTORY AND BACK GROUND

Formed by Benji Reid, BREAKING CYCLES is a Manchester based, artist led company dedicated to the creation and production of inclusive, highly energised, emotionally conflicting PHYSICAL THEATRE - crossing and challenging the boundaries of multi disciplined art forms.

Breaking Cycles is a national and international advocate for Hip Hop Theatre, playing a key role in its development as an art form, challenging, engaging and creating new audiences for theatre.

The company has successfully toured work in the UK and Internationally performing to sell out audiences at The Sydney Opera House, Australia, Toronto World Stage Festival, Canada, New York and Washington DC Hip Hop Theater Festivals, USA, Sadlers Wells, London and in The Cottesloe Theatre at The Royal National Theatre, London.

Benji Reid is a creative producer, deviser and director. In 2005 Benji received the NESTA Dreamtime Fellowship, awarded to prestigious artists for their outstanding achievements and continuing development and was nominated for the ART05 award for his work in the North West of England. Benji trained as a dancer with the Northern School of Contemporary Dance and as an actor with the internationally renowned Philippe Gaullier and Double Edge Theatre.

Benji's dance background includes; 1985 GLC Break-Dance Champions with Broken Glass Street Crew, European Body-Popping Champion and 2nd in the 1986 World Dance Championships. In 1989 Benji worked with the legendary Soul II Soul as the main dancer and co-choreographer for their world tour, appearing on the Arsino Hall show and playing at the Soul Train Awards.

In theatre Benji has worked widely with such highly regarded companies as the David Glass Ensemble, Trestle Theatre, Theatr Clwyd and Black Mime Theatre. It was with Black Mime Theatre that Benji first became interested in directing.

Benji has been creating Physical and Hip Hop Theatre for over ten years.

Solo work includes:

- 13Mics
- B Like Water
- The Pugilist
- The Holiday
- Styles 4 Free
- Paper Jackets
- 15 Seconds of Fame

Collaborative commissions include:

- Hip Hop musical 'Avalanche' for Nottingham Playhouse
- Co-directing Jonzi D's solo of 'Aeroplane Man'
- Devising and directing 'Life Of A B-Boy' for Spearfish and Funkstylerz UK
- Co-director and choreographer of hip-hop musical 'Slamdunk' with Felix Cross, Artistic Director of NITRO
- Director of Leo Kay's 'Mr Sole Abode'
- Director of Charlie Dark's 'Have Box Will Travel'
- Choreographer of Dansopolis for Yorkshire Dance
- Co-director of Hip Hop Commedia play with Michael Field at the New York Theatre Workshop for Playback Theater
- Choreographer of 'Seven', a hip hop adaptation of the Greek classic 'Seven Against Thebes'
- Directed by Steven Sapp, written by Will Power, with the University of Iowa
- Dramaturge for Nzi Dada
- Dramaturge for Marcus Hercules 'Different Perspectives'

PRESS QUOTES

“You’re never bored that you’ve only got Benji Reid for company because he has an exuberant variety of skills to keep you entertained” **Time Out, London**

“Truly multi talented artist” **The Voice**

“Visually, Benji Reid is one of the most stunning theatre artists on the scene today- the way he uses his body, voice and spirit to tell a story is truly a sight to see” **Will Power**

“... you’ll be hard pressed to find a performance as engaging and experimental as Benji Reid’s ...” **The Pulse**

“...one hell of an entertainer” **Now Magazine, Canada**

“Reid is far more than a top-class entertainer” **The Guardian**

“The star of the evening is Benji Reid” **The British Theatre Guide**

THE INSPIRATION BEHIND THE PRODUCTION

Statement From Benji Reid

The inspiration behind *The Devil Has Quentin's Heart* began in 1994 after reading *Iced*, authored by Ray Shell, a beautifully dark and rhythmic stream of consciousness that charts the diary of a crack addict. Our compassion for the hero is tested to the maximum as we are dragged through Americas under belly at the height of the crack epidemic.

I waited many years to approach Ray Shell about adapting his novel and eventually caught up with him in 2008. We debated whether the story of Cornelius the central character in *Iced* had the same relevance now as it did then because the crack epidemic was very much in the hip hop conscience in the late eighties and early nineties and the wider public became alerted to the plight of a crack addict because of the rise in gangland shootings. Would this story still have such a powerful impact now?

Not to be deterred I reread the novel and scoured each and every page. On page 155 we are introduced to Quentin Forest an homeless alcoholic who fights with the devil every night refusing to accept his heart back. Quentin is a tortured man who feels the word had dealt him a bad hand that he couldn't cash in, a man that feels he has been kicked to the gutter and left there to rot. Dwelling on his past success he roves the streets with a pocket full of cash and with a hand on a bottle. In here was a starting point, some thing about lost dreams, the devil, redemption and fathers. I got very excited by this short anecdote and commissioned Ray to write a first draft.

I enter in the first of four phases of rehearsals with Peader Kirk, the director for this project. Peader's background was not in storytelling but in time durational performances closer to live art than straight theatre. Peader possesses a keen eye for composition, structures and has a great analytical mind. I wanted a new and fresh approach to the way I created work and this is what I had in Peader Kirk. Peader and I spent many hours devising, debating and researching, taking our cue from the themes that populated Ray's script, we then deconstructed the script analysing each aspect of Quentin's world and experimenting on how to present them.

In Phase One we explored the language/themes and how they played off against each other. We also reworked the structure in attempt to develop a stronger, visual language. As a performer I wanted to develop Quentin's physicality and attitude to the world.

Phase Two and Three explored how music would impact on how the story and themes were presented. Working with a master DJ Andrew Wong (Master Wong aka Chengy) has been a dream - this is truly the first time I have felt the freedom to working with pre-recorded music. Andrew has found the soul of Quentin and presented this in a sonic landscape. I was overjoyed when the piece started to turn into a musical, well not so much a musical but a play where music plays a significant part of the world and story.

Phase Four, now having the piece as a whole, focused on fine-tuning and pushing the physicality. This phase included working with Lighting Designer Paul Colley and explored to the work of 1930 German Expressionism.

Human condition:

"I imagine standing at the end of the tunnel where the light emanates and waiting for the tortured souls to emerge I imagine them telling me stories of triumph and failure of transformation. I re-imagine them stories and tell them to you"

Benji Reid

PRESS RELEASE

COMPANY BIOGRAPHIES

RAY SHELL: DEVISER / WRITER

Ray Shell is author of the critically acclaimed best selling novel, Iced.

This extraordinary, immensely powerful debut novel takes the form of a diary written by Cornelius Washington, Jr. - a forty-four-year-old crack addict. The diary, a passionate and gripping stream-of-consciousness confession, captures the harsh realities of Cornelius's grim present and his vivid memories of a life that might have been. "A powerhouse."--Maya Angelou. Ray's short stories have been published by Serpents Tale and Penguin; he has written the plays Fredrick Avery Visits, WHITE FOLKS, Street Angles, BLACK THOUGHTS IN AN EARLY MOON and ICED; he has also published articles in the New York Times, The Voice and The Guardian; Ray is CEO for www.angel22.tv an internet television company and is working on a new novel AN EYE...A TOOTH.

PEADER KIRK: DEVISER / WRITER / DIRECTOR

After a career as a rock musician and actor Peader met Robert Lepage and made the transition to Direction. Peader worked with Lepage on the mud splattered "Midsummer Night's Dream" at the RNT and then created seminal performance club "Salon DeBug" – making a series of work within the London warehouse party scene. With Ruth Ben Tovim, Peader was awarded the first Young Vic Theatre Award in 1998 and devised the controversial "In Close Relation."

Since 2001 Peader has been Artistic Director of Mkultra Theatre Group, producing 14 pieces ranging from studio shows to large-scale interactive performance installations and durational work. The company's work has been seen extensively in the UK and Greece as well as International Festivals such as Teatro Europeo. With Mkultra, Peader creates intimate encounters between performers and audiences - delicate negotiations questioning how we meet another and the roles we play to get by. The work is often site responsive. Using a 'real' location as the base material, incorporating and developing its' physical & social architecture with

overlays of sound and object installation. The work seeks to rupture the surface of representation and actively re-negotiate the idea of liveness.

As a Director, Peader places musicality and physicality as central to the language of theatre. "Theatre's job is to help us make sense of how we live in the world, right now. To get a direct experience of another life, another being right there in the room with us."

ANDREW WONG aka MASTER WONG: MUSICAL COMPOSER AND PERFORMER

Andrew is a lecturer at the Technics DJ Academy in Manchester and a specialist DJ for clubs, bands and theatre companies. Andrew became involved with music and DJing in 1991. He turned his hand to producing in 1997 working with 'The Dust Junkys', 'Compound' and 'Parrish'. In 1999 Andrew founded 'Sample This', a fortnightly Jam Night with a difference at the Roadhouse in Manchester. The difference was a house band with a pair of turntables. Already an experienced DJ, the jam nights taught Andrew how to use the decks in working with live musicians. Boosting his reputation, 'Sample This' opened doors to do a lot of other local projects including undertaking the role as Musical Director for a Contact Theatre production. Following this Benji Reid was introduced to Andrew and subsequently he became involved in many Breaking Cycles projects including live DJing for the company's national and international touring productions.

CHRISTOPHER WHITWOOD: PRODUCTION/TECHNICAL MANAGER

Chris studied Music and Drama at Manchester University before training at LIPA and is now a freelance production manager. He has worked with companies such as Lip Service, Psappa, Creation Theatre Company, Quarantine, Music Theatre Wales, Birmingham Rep and Contact where he was also resident for 2 years. Chris has worked regularly with Breaking Cycles including *Clockwork* at the National Theatre, Process festivals in '06 and '08, and has toured nationally and internationally with their other work.

PAUL COLLEY: LIGHTING DESIGNER

NEEQUAYE DREPH: ARTIST (on stage portrait)

Visual Artist Neequaye Dreph started painting in the streets in 1985. He later went on to complete an Illustration degree at Portsmouth University in 1997. He was Initially inspired by 1980's British underground comics, German Expressionism and early New York Subway art. Today his work has evolved into larger than life figurative paintings and installations.

Dreph's images are beautiful, dark and powerful in their simplicity. Characterized by a subdued palette, his completed works are a mix of ink, spray paint, oil pastel and pencil, or emulsion and spray paint for outside work. A skilled draughtsman, Dreph describes his subjects as "Real people drawn from imagination, inspired by modern British living".

Dreph has painted in Central and South America, Africa and throughout Europe. He is currently focused on printmaking and working in 3d while still finding time to teach, travel and paint in the streets.

GENERAL MARKETING POINTS

Age Suitability Range 15+

Publicity

Breaking Cycles provides:

Print A5 flyers and A3 posters will be supplied as requested by your venue. Overprint is the responsibility of the venue.

Photos Available on disc or by email from the company.

Press Breaking Cycles is represented by:
The Works PR – 020 7940 4686
Regional Media / Venue Liaison Contact: Verity Walker
verity@theworkspr.com
National Media Contact: Judy Lipsey
judy@theworkspr.com

A press release and a sample direct mail letter is provided.

Benji Reid is happy to take part in press, radio and television interviews.

Target Markets

Hip Hop Theatre fans
Physical Theatre fans
Previous attendees of Benji Reid, live music and art,
contemporary theatre or physical theatre attendees
Contemporary dance attendees
Students of dance/theatre/music including relevant 6th form
school groups

Poster and Leaflet Mailing and Distribution must include

West Indian Eateries
Clubbing promoters
Record Shops
Clothes Shops

Selling points

Benji's reputation – the alchemist of physical theatre
Innovative and accessible work
Cross art form
Live music with DJ

Logos

Arts Council England, North West
PRS Foundation
The Works PR
makin projects

Supported by: Salford University
Contact Theatre, Manchester
Zion Arts Centre, Manchester

WEBSITE

www.breakingcycles.co.uk

www.breakingcycles.co.uk is a fantastic website featuring detailed information about Breaking Cycles and Benji Reid including past and current works, tour dates and community and education work.

The website is an immediate, fun and fast way for people to find out about Breaking Cycles and to see many images and video footage of the company in action.

It has relevance for potential audiences, journalists and leaders of community groups and teachers.

Do direct people to have a look and encourage all staff working on this performance to visit the site.

SAMPLE DIRECT MAIL LETTER – GENERAL

Dear Dance/Theatre Lover

Knowing you are an enthusiast of physical theatre/contemporary dance, we wanted to let you know that Benji Reid, the alchemist of movement based theatre, is bringing his hard-hitting, unmissable performance style to VENUE on DATE/S.

Benji Reid returns to the stage with **The Devil Has Quentin's Heart**, an explosive new production from Breaking Cycles. Accompanied by a live a DJ, Benji performs a rich cocktail of guilt and fear, riding on a roller coaster to redemption and exploring the stark realism of substance abuse and fractured relationships.

The Devil Has Quentin's Heart is a twisted, funky and perverse modern day tragedy that explodes the nature of performance, storytelling and dance.

Benji Reid is an experience not to be missed. He layers his exuberant variety of skills with contemporary vision and classic inspiration to bring you highly energised, emotionally conflicting theatre.

Ticket prices start at £ and can be purchased now by calling the box office on XXXXX.

We look forward to seeing you at VENUE for a fascinating evening.

Best wishes

VENUE MARKETING MANAGER or COMPANY
REPRESENTATIVE

BOX OFFICE INFORMATION

Box Office Briefing Sheet

Please circulate to the Box Office Manager and Staff

Performance The Devil Has Quentin's Heart
Company Breaking Cycles (Benji Reid)
What is it?

Age range 15+

Running time: 1 hr 15 minutes – no interval

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Lighting Design by Paul Colley

Production Manager / Technician - Chris Whitwood

Artwork and Onstage Portrait by Neequaye Dsane

Tour Booking - Mark Makin at makin projects

Thanks to:

Arts Council England, PRS Foundation, The Works PR, Salford University, Zion Arts, Contact Theatre

For information about Breaking Cycles visit

www.breakingcycles.co.uk

0161 237 1655