

## NODYN Y CYFARWYDDWR

Mewn sioe lle'r ydwyf yn cyfarwyddo ac yn chwarae rhan Y Cyfarwyddwr (syniad hurt pwy oedd hwnna?) mae'n gallu bod yn anodd gwahanu'r gwirionedd o'r ffuglen. Fedra'i ddim dweud wrthoch chi'r funud hon ai fi sy'n ysgrifennu'r nodiadau rhaglen hyn neu fy alter ego. Beth sy'n glir i mi yw bod ni wedi dechrau'r broses hon o greu Meet Fred yn 2014, pan ymunodd y cwmni pypedau rhyfeddol hwnnw, Blind Summit, â ni i gynnal wythnos o weithdai hyfforddi ar gyfer ein myfyrwyr ag anableddau dysgu yn Academi'r De yng Nghaerdydd. Tyfodd yr hyn a welais dros y dyddiau hyfforddi yna yn hedyn a roddodd fod i Meet Fred.

Am ran helaeth o'r wythnos buom yn canolbwyntio ar bypedau clwt, digon tebyg i'r Fred byddwch yn cyfarfod heddiw. Mae Blind Summit yn arfer math o Bunraku (ffurf o bypedwaith sy'n tarddu o Japan), sy'n cael ei alw ganddyn nhw yn 'bypedwaith eithafol' yn sgil yr eithafion emosiwn y gall rhywun ei harchwilio gyda'r dull hwn.

Y sialens dros y chwe mis nesaf oedd hyfforddi ein actorion gydag anableddau dysgu i feithrin ymdeimlad tuag at y ffurf gymhleth iawn yma o bypedwaith. Fe ddysgw'n ni cryn dipyn am beth oedd yn bosib a beth oedd dim yn bosib i'w gneud gyda phyped, ac o hyn daeth dilyniannau a chymeriadau posib i'r amlwg. Darganfyddom ni hefyd fod pypedwaith yn grefft anodd dros ben i'w feistroli, ac i fod yn onest, yn hawdd iawn gwneud y peth yn boenus i'w wyllo!

Yn y pen draw fe wahoddon ni dri o'r myfyrwyr oedd wedi dangos addewid yn ystod y sesiynau hyn i ymuno â grŵp mwy canolbwyntiedig, am ddeuddydd o ymchwil a datblygu dwys. Yn ystod y cyfnod hwn buom yn archwilio ambell senario sy'n ymddangos yn y sioe heddiw, ond, yn hanfodol felly, dechreuodd cymeriad Fred ddod i'r amlwg – pyped oedd eisiau gwreiddio'i hyn yn llwyr i mewn i gymdeithas.

Tua'r amser hynny y gwelwyd y tebygrwydd clir yn y berthynas rhwng Fred a'i bypedwyr â'r ddibyniaeth a'r rhyngddibyniaeth sy'n bod ym mywydau bob dydd llawer o pobol gydag anabledd. Daeth y sioe Meet Fed i fod.

Drwy'r cyfnod datblygu hyn, roedd Martin, un o'n actorion sydd â Syndrom Down, yn ysu i weithio coesau Fred. Roeddwn innau hefyd yn ysu iddo i lwyddo, ond daeth pwynt pan oedd rhaid i mi dderbyn nad oedd o byth yn mynd i gyflawni'r cywreirinwydd a dealltwriaeth anadl a chyfathrebu hanfodol yn y cyfnod byr oedd ar gael i ni. Mae'n cymryd pypedwyr Bunraku Japaneaidd deg mlynedd i hyfforddi. Roedd gennym ni rhai diwrnodau yn unig! Mae Hijinx yn credu mewn castio i gryfderau'r unigolyn, roedd gweithio coesau'r pyped yn gadael Martin yn agored ac yn gwneud anghymwynas i'r cynhyrchiad. Yn naturiol, ac ar hap a damwain, cerfiai Martin ran ddelfrydol i'w hyn fel rheolwr llwyfan dan bwysa'r cynhyrchiad.

Er gwaetha'r hyn fyddai Fred o bosib yn ei ddweud, gallaf gadarnhau bod y prosiect cyfan wedi bod yn broses wirioneddol gydweithredol – daeth nifer o'r cysyniadau a chryn dipyn o'r geiriau y byddwch yn clywed heddiw yn unionyrchol o ddatganiadau byrfyfyr a wnaed nid yn unig gan y cast a welwch chi heddiw, ond hefyd gan artistiaid fu'n rhan o'r holl gamau'r ymchwil a datblygu. Hoffwn ddiolch i baw sydd wedi cyfrannu at greu'r sioe Meet Fred: Ellen Groves, Denni Dennis, Jon Dafydd-Kidd, Jonathan Dunn, Jessica Jones, a phawb yn Academi'r De, Hijinx.

**Gobeithio y gwnech chi ei mwynhau lawn gymaint ag y gwnaethom ninnau fwynhau ei chreu.**

**Ben Pettitt-Wade, Cyfarwyddwr**

### MARTIN VICK

This tour has been dedicated to the actor Martin Vick, who was part of Meet Fred's original cast and one of its devisers. Martin, a renowned clown performer who had Down's Syndrome, died in December 2016 following a stroke. His role has been taken on by his friend and fellow Academy actor, Gareth John. We have kept the character name 'Martin', in memory of our talented, kind and much-loved friend.

Cyflwynir y daith yma er cof am yr actor Martin Vick, oedd yn rhan o'r cast gwreiddiol ac yn un o ddyfeiswyr y sioe. Roedd gan Martin, oedd yn berfformiwr clown adnabyddus, Syndrom Down, a bu farw ym mis Rhagfyr 2016 yn dilyn strôc.

Mae ei rôl wedi e gymryd gan ei ffrind a'i gyd-fyfyrwr Academi Hijinx, Gareth John. Rydym wedi cadw 'Martin' fel enw'r cymeriad, er cof am ein ffrind caredig, talentog ac annwyl.



Hijinx create stunning theatre performed by actors with and without learning disabilities.

Mae Hijinx yn creu theatr trawiadol a gyflawnir gan actorion gydag anableddau dysgu ac eraill heb.

**hijinx.org.uk**

Taith llawn / Full tour dates:  
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Hijinx Theatre

#meetfred

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# Meet Fred

## CAST

The Director / Y Cyfarwyddwr  
Martin

Lucille / Maker

Jack

Puppeteer & Voice of 'Fred' /  
Pypedwr a llais Fred

Puppeteers / Pypedwyr

Gareth Clark  
Gareth John  
Lindsay Foster  
Iwan Jones

Nick Halliwell

Llŷr Williams  
Jennie Rawling

Puppetry Dramaturgs /  
Dramawriaeth Pypedwaith

Devising Cast / Cast Dyfeisiol

Tom Espina &  
Giulia Innocenti  
of/o Blind Summit

Dan McGowan  
Morgan Thomas  
Craig Quat  
Martin Vick  
Lindsay Foster  
Richard Newnham

## CREATIVE TEAM / TÎM CREADIGOL

Director / Cyfarwyddwr

Ben Pettitt-Wade

Lighting Designer / Dylynydd Goleuo

Ceri James

Production Manager /

Tomos Ayres

Rheolwr Cynhyrchu

Original Music /

Jonathan Dunn

Cerddoriaeth Gwreiddiol

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

In a show in which I am the director and have played The Director (whose stupid idea was that?) it is sometimes difficult to separate reality from fiction. I could not tell you at this moment whether this is me writing these programme notes, or my on stage alter ego. What I do know is that we started this process of creating Meet Fred in 2014 when the wonderful puppetry company Blind Summit joined us to run a week of training workshops for our learning disabled actors at our Cardiff Academy. What I observed on those days of training became the seed of Meet Fred.

For much of the week we focussed on cloth puppets, much like the Fred that you will meet today. Blind Summit practice a form of Bunraku (three man puppetry which originates from Japan) which they have coined 'extreme puppetry' because of the extremes of emotion which can be explored.

The challenge over the next six months was to train our Academy actors with learning disabilities to 'get a feel' for this very complex form of puppetry. We learned what could and couldn't be done with a puppet and from this sequences and characters began to emerge. We also discovered that puppet manipulation is an extremely difficult skill to master and, to be honest, it is very easy to make it very painful to watch!

In the end we invited three of the Academy actors who had shown promise during these initial sessions to join a more focussed group for two days of intensive research and development. During this time we explored a couple of scenarios which appear in the show today, but crucially the character of Fred began to emerge - a puppet who wanted

to be fully integrated into society. It was not until this point that the parallels became clear between the relationship between Fred and his puppeteers and that of dependence and interdependence that exists in the daily lives of many people with a disability. The show became Meet Fred.

During this time Martin, one of our performers with Down's Syndrome, was desperate to operate the legs of Fred. I was equally desperate for him to succeed, but there came a point when I had to accept that he was never going to achieve the necessary dexterity and understanding of breath and communication in the short time we had. It takes Japanese Bunraku puppeteers ten years to train. We had but a few days! Hijinx believes in casting to strength. Operating the legs was both exposing Martin and doing a disservice to the production. Quite naturally, and fortuitously, Martin carved out an ideal role for himself as my put upon stage manager.

Despite what Fred might say, I can confirm that the whole project has been a truly collaborative process. Many of the concepts and much of the text have come directly from improvisations undertaken not just by the cast you see today, but all the artists involved in the research and development process, including Tom Espina and Giulia Innocenti of Blind Summit, Ellen Groves, Denni Dennis, Jon Dafydd-Kidd, Jonathan Dunn, Jessica Jones and all of the students of Hijinx Cardiff Academy. I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the creation of Meet Fred.

**We hope you enjoy it as much as we enjoyed making it.**

**Ben Pettitt-Wade, Director**



We'd love to know what you think about Meet Fred, get in touch and let us know.

Byddem ni'n dwli clywed beth yw eich barn am Meet Fred, felly cysylltwch a gadewch i ni wybod.

