

# Simile



*A bold new performance created for young people by young people, and performed by **Highly Sprung** professionals*

**Highly Sprung** creates physical theatre performances which inspire children and young people to discover their talents and grow their voice. The work is pioneering, bold, playful and inclusive, with a tried and tested methodology which aims to lay the foundations for better futures for the young people who take part as audience members or as participants.

Blending poetry, physical theatre, dance and spoken word, ***Simile*** is **Highly Sprung's** new and topical exploration of identity and friendships aimed at audiences of 13-16 year olds. The full-length production for theatrical settings is inspired by a modern poetry anthology set for GCSE that explores themes of place, heritage, belonging and connection. ***Simile***'s narrative is set the night before three friends sit their English Literature exam, and underscores personal struggles with pervasive social media, from smartphone addiction to trolling and toxic masculinity. The piece is highly physical and dramatic, with a relatable storyline which weaves lines of published poetry into an original script and uses comedy to provide entry points to people new to theatre.





Performed by a professional team of physical theatre performers, ***Simile*** has been co-written by **Highly Sprung's** Artistic Director **Mark Worth** and Birmingham's poet laureate **Jasmine Gardosi** in collaboration with The Co-Creatives Group, a team of West-Midlands based young writers, producers, directors and choreographers aged 13-18. In the creation process, the group has used as their starting point the relevance of poetry to young people whose lives are spent on their phones. The result is both an authentic exploration of contemporary life and a warning to young people about the dangers of a shape-shifting techverse where trust and friendships are hard to navigate. Words from three poems from the AQA GCSE set text *Worlds and Lives* poetry anthology illuminate its themes and add depth to the production: Roger Robinson's *Portable Paradise*, which proposes the inner self as an internal refuge; *Homing* by Liz Berry which explores challenges around forging identity; and Percy B Shelley's political sonnet *England in 1819*.





**Highly Sprung** tours its own dance floor and lighting so that school halls and other non-theatre venues can host ***Simile*** as well as fully equipped theatres. Get in on-the-day-of the performance is standard, with optional educational workshops available the day before.

Performances of ***Simile*** are accompanied by workshops and talks which explore themes from the production, offer experiences in devising, choreography or play-making, and introduce participants to careers in the creative industry. Workshops can contribute to the GCSE curriculum in English Literature or the Performing Arts, support pastoral care, and respond to careers guidance programmes by meeting Gatsby Benchmarks 4 and 5.



# Booking Details

**Running time:** 60 minutes (no interval)  
**Number on stage:** 3  
**Number on the road:** 4  
**Get in:** 9am on day of performance with first show at 2pm

**UK touring fee:** £1500 for up to two performances

**Video trailer:** [Video Link](#)  
**Dress rehearsal:** [Video Link](#)  
**Video documentary:** [Anthology Project 2024](#)

**Technical requirements:** Minimum performance area 6m wide x 5m deep;  
Seating end-on or on three sides.  
Good quality sound system

**Company tours:** Dance floor and lighting (if required)

**Workshops (see below):** 2 ½ hour workshops day before show (£300)

**Contact:** Sarah Trist at Sarah Trist Dance Management Agency [stdma.com](http://stdma.com)  
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## **Accompanying Workshops (additional cost)**

### **Simile: Physical Theatre and Poetry Workshop**

This two-hour workshop from Highly Sprung offers students a practical and engaging way to explore the connections between poetry and performance. It is designed to accompany *Simile*, Highly Sprung's new performance for 13–18-year-olds, which combines physical theatre, dance, spoken word, and poetry to explore themes of self-discovery.

The workshop focuses on using movement as a tool to understand and respond to poetry, particularly poems from the GCSE *Worlds and Lives* anthology. Through guided exercises and ensemble work, students will explore how physical theatre techniques can support deeper comprehension of poetic language, imagery, and themes.

Workshop content includes:

- Physical interpretation of selected GCSE anthology poems
- Introduction to core physical theatre techniques used in *Simile*
- Creative devising tasks using poetry as stimulus
- Opportunities for group collaboration and individual expression

The session supports both English and Drama learning outcomes, encouraging analytical thinking alongside creative expression. No previous experience in performance is required.

This workshop can be delivered in schools or other educational settings and is suitable for Key Stage 4 students.

### **Introduction to Physical Theatre and Devising**

This workshop offers students a practical and creative introduction to physical theatre and devising techniques, drawing directly from Highly Sprung's distinctive performance methodology. Particularly suitable for GCSE and A-Level Drama groups, the session supports the early stages of devising modules or can stand alone as an introduction to physical theatre practice.

Working through Highly Sprung's 3 C approach — Contact, Chorus, and Characterisation — students will explore how to build meaning and tell stories through movement, ensemble work, and visual storytelling. The workshop encourages bold, imaginative choices and supports learners in developing confidence, collaboration, and creativity.

Workshop content includes:

- Introduction to Highly Sprung's approach to physical theatre
- Practical exploration of Contact, Chorus, and Characterisation
- Devising tasks based on the performance of *Simile*
- Ensemble-based exercises to encourage risk-taking and creative problem-solving

This session encourages an inclusive and energised learning environment where students develop both performance skills and the ability to generate original, physically driven work. It is ideal for groups preparing for devised performance assessments or looking to broaden their understanding of non-naturalistic theatre practice.

### **Simile: Drama, Identity and the Digital World**

This two-hour workshop uses physical theatre and drama techniques to support students in exploring key themes raised in *Simile*- Highly Sprung's powerful new production for 13–18-year-olds. Linking directly to



PSHE, wellbeing education and wider pastoral support, the session creates a safe, creative space for students to examine the pressures of modern life through a blend of practical activity and discussion.

Drawing from themes within the performance- including smartphone and social media addiction, trolling, toxic masculinity and online identity- the workshop encourages young people to reflect on how digital culture shapes their self-image, relationships, and mental health.

Workshop content includes:

- Drama and physical theatre exercises exploring identity, trust, and influence
- Group discussion around the emotional impact of digital life
- Creative tasks enabling students to express personal and collective experiences
- Reflective activities supporting emotional literacy and self-awareness

This workshop also helps students consider how literature and performance- including set texts for English Literature- can speak to real-life experiences, encouraging empathetic engagement and critical thinking.

Ideal for tutor groups, PSHE sessions or as enrichment for Drama and English departments, the workshop equips young people with tools for resilience, expression and connection in a fast-changing world.

### **Simile- Careers Insight Workshop**

A dynamic careers-focused workshop offered alongside the performance of *Simile*.

The workshop is designed to enhance learning through the opportunity to benefit from a real-world context- exploring professional careers in the creative industries.

The workshop offers students an opportunity to meet professional performers and industry creatives, giving them first-hand insight into how skills in performance making and critical thinking translate directly into rewarding career paths.

### **Gatsby Benchmark Alignment:**

**Benchmark 4:** The workshop explicitly links the English and drama curriculum to professional practice, showing students how their classroom learning can lead to real careers in performance, writing, design, and beyond.

**Benchmark 5:** Every student will take part in a meaningful, direct encounter with professionals, gaining valuable experience, inspiration, and guidance from those actively working in the arts.

### **The workshop will:**

- Develop students' confidence and communication skills.
- Broaden understanding of the creative industries and career routes.
- Embed careers learning into your curriculum in a meaningful and memorable way.
- Support your school's careers education programme with real impact.

This workshop is also an ideal part of your school's ongoing staff development, helping teachers embed careers connections into their everyday subject delivery, in line with Gatsby Benchmark 4.