**Fatherland**

**Introductory Notes**

Welcome to this introduction to ***Fatherland***, created by Frantic Assembly’s Scott Graham, Karl Hyde from Underworld and playwright Simon Stephens. It is directed by Scott Graham.

The audio-described performance is on Saturday 16 June at 7.30pm The introductory notes will start at 7.15pm. Please contact the box office for the time of the touch tour and to tell them you would like to attend. The performance lasts for 90 minutes, without an interval. Please note that during the performance there are very bright flashing lights – some of which shine out directly at the audience, and haze. The live audio description will be given by Ruth James and Alison Clarke.

Fatherland is collage of words, music and movement, animated by a 13-strong cast and a multitude of voices. It is a deeply personal portrait of 21st-century England at the crossroads of past, present and future, inspired by conversations with fathers and sons from the trio’s home towns in the heart of the country, exploring identity and masculinity.

When we enter the auditorium, the stage is open to us. The large space is empty except for a low rectangular platform that takes up almost the whole of the black stage floor. The platform is two feet high, with sloping edges, and seems to be made of rusty silvered metal, perforated with small round holes. At times the platform revolves with white light spilling out from underneath. White or golden lights also shine up from the platform floor, following or leading people as they move across it. At certain moments, a circular golden light projects up from the centre of the platform, illuminating people’s faces brightly from below.

The only other details against the black are two bands of three-feet high LED screens that curve across the entire black back wall, one above the other about three feet apart, like the edges of balconies. These glow a reddish orange, and each screen also contains a series of round circles of light which vary from stark white to an almost orange gold. From above, pillars of white light shine down through a smoky haze, and there are also side lights, which ensure the whole area is brightly lit, when needed. Yet more circular lights are placed low across the back wall, and shine directly into our eyes at moments.

There is no furniture, and most of the effects are achieved with light and swirling smoke or using the performers themselves, singly or in groups. However, embedded into the platform are two metal door frames, which can be swung up and locked into place or lifted out of the platform entirely. There is also a long metal ladder.

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Fatherland is created by Simon, Karl and Scott working in collaboration and devised from a series of interviews conducted by them on visits to their home towns. The interviews were conducted with men of differing ages who were invited to share their memories of their relationships with their fathers.

The stories they tell are performed in character by a large cast of male actors of varying ages. 10 of the actors perform as the different interviewees and story tellers while 3 of them take on the characters of Simon Stephens the writer, Karl Hyde the musician and Scott Graham the director.

**Scott,** co-author and director is played on stage by Declan Bennett. He is a tall figure, casually dressed in dark-blue jeans and a blue bomber jacket with a red collar which hangs open to show the red polo shirt he wears underneath. His jacket has blue stripes and he wears white striped trainers. Scott’s hair is receding and he has a strong jaw.

**Simon,**  co-author and writeris played by Nyasha Hatendi; he is a smart figure. He stands upright and his gaze is direct. Simon has dark skin and his dark hair is neatly cropped. He wears grey trousers, his plum coloured shirt is open at the neck and worn under a smart brown jacket. His polished shoes are also brown.

**Karl**, co-author and composer is Mark Arends. Mark is the most reticent of the three. He is a short, slight figure with tousled straw-coloured hair. Karl has a tendency to hold back until a musical solution is required. He wears pale blue jeans and a blue bomber jacket. Headphones are permanently hung around his neck unless they are clamped to his ears.

Among the men who provide their stories and memories, one steps into a different role. He is Luke, in his 20s with short dark hair. He wears jeans and a purple polo shirt. He is the first to share his story - nervous at first, he gains confidence and appears throughout the performance questioning the three constantly.

All the men in the performance wear everyday clothes, appropriate to their age and sometimes their occupation. They appear as interviewees, telling their stories and also as members of the ensemble who animate some of the stories and perform choreographed movement sequences accompanying them with chants. At times some of them wear a heavy overcoat or waterproof jacket. Sometimes one man is alone to tell his story, at others the three performance creators are silent observers or witnesses.

The number of performers is swelled towards the end by 20 more men in everyday clothes.

The music is very loud, so you may need to turn your headset up and down frequently during the show.

Fatherland is performed by, alphabetical order

Joseph Alessi

Mark Arends

Michael Begley

Declan Bennet

Luke Brown

James Doherty

Ankit Gir

Nyasha Hatendi

David Judge

Neil McCaul

Tachia Newall

Luke Rigg

Craig Stein

The Creative Team are

Scott Graham, Director and co- author

Karl Hyde, Composer and co-author

Simon Stephens, Composer and co-author

Jon Bausor, Designer

Lighting design is by Jon Clark

Mathew Herbert is co-composer and music producer

Eddie Kay Choreographer

Fatherland was commissioned and produced Lyric Hammersmith, Manchester International Festival, Frantic Assembly, the Royal Exchange Theatre and LIFT

Fatherland premiered at the Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester in July 2017 as part of Manchester International Festival before further performances in London at the Lyric Hammersith as part of LIFT 20018

**Cast and Creative Team**

Scott by Declan Bennett

Karl by Mark Arends

Simon by Nyasha Hatendi

Luke by Craig Stein

Alan is played by Joseph Alessi

Mel by Michael Begley

Steve by James Doherty

Daniel by David Judge

Graham by Neil McCaul

Craig by Tachia Newall

Jack (non-speaking role) by Luke Rigg

Martin (non-speaking role) by Luke Brown

Samir (non-speaking role) by Ankit Giri

The Choreographer is Eddie Kay

The Sound Designer is Ian Dickinson for Autograph Sound

The Music Producer and Co-Composer is Matthew Herbert

The Lighting Designer is Jon Clark

The Designer is Jon Bausor

The Co-Author and Writer is Simon Stephens

The Co-Author and Composer is Karl Hyde

The Co-Author and Director is Scott Graham