

*free Lunch with the
StenchWench*



By Catherine Hoffmann

A humiliating scrap with growing up skint in flat broke Britain

Charting the drive for survival and fitting in, the *StenchWench* shares stories of growing up as one of the 'feral underclass' whilst precariously existing in Austerity Britain today. Cheap clothes, thrifty bread, cold baths, and debauched disadvantaged dancing are unleashed as she natters and sings about how to get by.

In a climate of Thatcher's Britain and unemployment she chronicles her itinerant childhood in the 70's and 80's. Now, fully fledged she strives to overcome the humiliation of 'lack' and celebrates our spirit of community and hope at a time of even more disparity between the privileged and the hard-up.

Expect a one-woman flea circus doled up with live songs, faded glory, austerity pants, a dead rat and the cooking of mouldy scones and hot chocolate.



Public trailer

<https://vimeo.com/174047457>

Excerpts for programmers

<https://vimeo.com/174049362>

'A cross between performance art, stand-up, a gig and a call to arms. A humorous and truly compelling performance.'

Desperate Optimists

'Catherine Hoffmann's *StenchWench* is a labour of love and hits a home run for the proletariat! If you like your shows raw, real and dipping with beauty, go see this one. It will not disappoint.'

Stacy Makishi, artist

'At once funny, touching and full of sadness, *StenchWench* focuses on a harsh hidden upbringing in the UK, marked out by class and abject poverty. Cath takes us on a journey through some very personal experiences in her childhood struggle for survival and the lengths society makes us go to appear 'normal'.'

Gill Lloyd, Co-Director Artsadmin

Catherine Hoffmann creates a mixture of staged pieces and interactive one-to-one performances across a range of contexts, including the independent circuit and with prestigious partners. She has created projects with **Home Live Art** for the last four years including for The National Theatre, Latitude and has recently made performances for festivals and venues including The National Portrait Gallery, Festival of Love at Southbank Centre, Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, Bethnal Green Working Men's Club, Buzzcut, Glasgow and Domestic II festival presented by Word of Warning in Manchester. In 2015 Catherine was invited to perform at BIOS in Athens for *Love Letters to a (Post) Europe*; a two-day event alongside 30 artists including Tim Etchells, Robin Deacon, Florence Peake, Brian Lobel and Kira O'Reilly.

She performs internationally with **Lundahl and Seidl** at The Wooran Foundation, Seoul, Korea, Noorederson festival, Holland, LIFT festival at The Royal Academy, London, Edinburgh Festival and Stuk, Belgium. Catherine also collaborates with **Florence Peake, Tom Marshman, Dickie Beau** in the House of Strange Loops and presented 'These Tender Alms' with Lesley Ewen for Spill festival in October 2016. Her video *TRAMP*, created as part of duo **Molly and Me** was selected for the Re.act Feminism 2 archive tour of European galleries in 2014-15.

www.cathhoffmann.com
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'Catherine Hoffmann is such a commanding presence. Her voice is full and gorgeous and the more bestial her performance becomes, the more thrillingly alive the work feels.'

This is Cabaret





The preview of ***Free Lunch with the StenchWench*** at Artsadmin, was at Toynbee Studios on Tuesday 14th June 2016. This came after a showing at Beyond Bloodlines festival at The Cockpit with Rosana Cade, Richard Dedomenici and Lucy Hutson and an early-stage sharing of the work at *Whose London Is It Anyway?*, a festival exploring the issues of the housing crisis and gentrification in London at Camden People's Theatre in 2015.

Free Lunch with the StenchWench is generously supported by Arts Council England, The Bike Shed, Exeter, Kingsley hall and Stanley Halls, Croydon.

Currently booking performances from Summer 2017 onwards.

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Creative team

Written and performed by **Catherine Hoffmann**

Lighting design by **Marty Langthorne**

Produced by **Laura Sweeney**

Press and PR by **Abstrakt PR**

Outside eye and dramaturgy by **Dickie Beau, Florence Peake and Katy Baird**

Technical requirements and performance notes

Lighting - minimum requirement of 8 Fresnels, 2 profiles,

1 hanging pendant (we provide), 2 floor stands, 1 lighting console

PA system with mic and stand

Board (1m x 2m) minimum used for a blackboard required

Portable hob is used for cooking (provided) - smoke alarms need to be deactivated

Liquid (hot chocolate) is spilt on the stage at the end

Shower or good washing facility needed for performer

A dead rat is used within the show.

On the road: 2 - performer and production manager

Workshops

In light of the EU referendum and the divisive political climate of the UK, alongside the show Catherine can also offer a discussion event around themes of austerity, sharing resources and giving voice to the marginalised. This can take place in an afternoon or an evening. Alternatively a workshop programme can be offered for a minimum of 0.5 day up to two days, exploring the themes of the show including looking at personal economics in a creative format for those who need to investigate their own sense of under-earning.

Contact

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