

Idle Discourse presents

# Tales from Star City

By Dan Dawes

**National Tour May-July 2020**

## About:

*Tales from Star City* tells the story of **Polina Semyenova**, a **female radio technician** who becomes embroiled in the brightest and darkest moments of the **Soviet space race**. Through this journey she realises her disenchantment with the great Communist dream, as its Utopian fantasies are corrupted into a nightmare of conspiracies.

Although a **one-woman show**, the production incorporates **voice-overs** and **animated projection** to create a powerfully evocative, humourous, and poignant piece.

The play first ran at **The Tabard Theatre**, Chiswick in February / March 2018, before transferring to **The King's Head**, Islington in March / April 2019 in a production backed by funds provided by **Arts Council England**. We are now arranging a national tour in collaboration with the **New Theatre Royal**, Portsmouth.



**Sample marketing text:**

The Soviet Union. 1967. The Space Race is at its height. One woman, Polina Semyenova, is at the centre of it all. She is the listener. Hidden away in the pithily named 'Closed Military Townlet No. 1', Polina looks back on her dreams of being part of the great Communist movement, during one of the most dramatic decades of the Cold War. Join Polina as she reaches for the stars, and journeys through some of the brightest and darkest moments of the Space Race.

**Audience:**

The piece has worked well for both traditional audiences, and non-traditional theatre-goers, particularly those with an interest in STEM subjects and in 20th century history. We believe that the piece fits particularly well in spaces in university cities and towns with a strong academic community. The London runs generated a great deal of interest from science and history groups, as well as being widely acclaimed by traditional theatre goers for its powerfully focused drama.

**Feedback:**

'Take all your preconceptions of a one-woman show and throw them in the bin. Laughed and cried and lost track of the time completely'... 'Another amazing evening of storytelling, with so much pathos!'... 'Bloody marvellous'... 'Really great storytelling'... 'Such an interesting show, so captivating!'... 'Unique and memorable'... 'Excellent performance...quite captivating'... 'Such an interesting story with great writing too, want to know more!'

**The press said:**

★★★★★ - Breaking the Fourth Wall  
'Bold and ambitious' - The Stage

**Technical requirements:**

**Set:** Projector and screen is required (or an open cyclorama) for the greatest technical effect, but it is possible to perform the piece without. Otherwise no set required.

The piece is flexible and can be

accommodated in almost any space, and has been performed in both end-on and in-the-round configurations.

**Sound:** A technician running QLab 4 will be provided, but good coverage is necessary, preferably with options to isolate individual speakers.

**Lighting:** No specials required, but capacity for projections is preferred.

**Get in:** On day of production, preferably six or seven hours prior to opening.



### **Running time and engagement periods:**

80 minutes. Interval optional. Single or two night engagements from late May to early July 2020.

### **Fees / Splits:**

To be discussed.

### **About Idle Discourse and Dan Dawes:**

Idle Discourse was founded in 2016 by Dan Dawes and Nina Flitman, inspired by Beckett's ironic call to action in *Waiting for Godot*: 'Let us not waste our time in idle discourse! Let us do something, while we have the chance!'

Recent productions include *Steel Tumbleweed* by Dan Dawes at The Courtyard Theatre ('A startlingly original piece of new writing and a thumping debut' - Londontheatre1), and *The Chainsaw Manicure* by Thomas Kett at The Tabard Theatre and the Churchill Theatre Bromley ('A wonderful mix of deathly humour and tension... Great cast, great script, great pace' - Chiswick Herald). Dan Dawes has also directed tours of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and *A*

*Midsummer Night's Dream* for the award-nominated touring company Immersion Theatre.

In 2018, Idle Discourse became the first English theatre company in over 200 years to perform at the Baroque Castle Theatre at Zamek Valtice, Czechia, presenting Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*. They will return with *Pericles* in 2019. The company has also been invited to perform at the international Theater Cluster festival in Lithuania, where they will present the new physical theatre piece *Axolotl*, written by Dan Dawes and choreographed by Sara Page.

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