



11 – 13 June

## 50 Voices for Malcolm X

Presented by Ujima Radio in association with Bristol Old Vic, with support from Voluntary Arts

**Marking a new and unique relationship between Bristol Old Vic and Ujima Radio, tickets are released today for a three night event, *50 Voices for Malcolm X*.**

Joining forces to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the assassination of civil rights leader Malcolm X in 1965 - and to celebrate 50 years of civil rights - ***50 Voices for Malcolm X*** will explore how social change affects us all.

Featuring 50 voices from local artistic and community groups, each voice will make a 5 minute creative piece, responding to the quest for change. Coming together over the course of three evenings, the voices come from varied Bristol communities such as the Misfits, Unity & Full Circle: St. Pauls' Youth and Family Project, and the Somali Media Group, along with contributions from six commissioned artists including a filmmaker, a musician, a dancer, a visual artist and two spoken word artists.

Respected community figures such as Roy Hackett, and political figures such as Marvin Rees, will also make an appearance, alongside professional artists from Breathing Fire Theatre Company and Knowle

West Media Centre.

This kaleidoscope of personal responses, recollections and brand new pieces of work marks the beginning of a unique relationship between Bristol Old Vic and Ujima Radio, supported by Voluntary Arts. The performances will see Bristol Old Vic Studio transformed into a cabaret space, inviting the audience to engage with the performers in an informal atmosphere. Ujima Radio will also broadcast features and interviews from this unique event. Organised quickly in response to the election season, **50 Voices...** responds creatively, and from the community, to capture a historic moment.

With local artists and communities given this platform for their voice, they will explore how social change can be effective, stand witness to what Malcolm achieved, and how the monumental change made by the civil rights movements of the 1960s still resonates today - around the world and in our own city.

The event will culminate on Saturday 13 June with a reading by Roger Griffith, Director of Ujima Radio, of Malcolm's most iconic speeches.

James Peries, Literary Associate, Bristol Old Vic said: "**50 Voices for Malcolm X** is about standing up and being heard, with local voices rising from amongst the audience to tell, sing, report, express or testify. It's a creative coming together of individual artists and community groups sharing the quest for social change, and finding new connections in the process - like this first ever partnership between Bristol Old Vic and Ujima Radio. It's a perfect example of theatre responding to events in such an immediate way – something that only this art form can achieve. It's especially poignant given Bristol's historical relationship to social change and protest."

Director of Ujima Radio, Roger Griffith said: "The performances and project will welcome some of the excellent and diverse talents from different parts of Bristol to the esteemed Bristol Old Vic stage for the first time. By using the theme of Malcolm X's life 50 years after his death through his reinvention and social activism, we also aim to educate audiences of the impact of using the arts as a way of building and strengthening communities in partnership."

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For more information please contact:

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### **Listings**

50 Voices for Malcolm X

Bristol Old Vic Studio

11-13 June

7pm

£6 (plus booking fee)

Box Office: 0117 987 7877 | [bristololdvic.org.uk/50voices](http://bristololdvic.org.uk/50voices)

### **Notes to Editors**

#### **About Bristol Old Vic**

Bristol Old Vic is gearing up towards its 250th anniversary celebrations and is half way through a transformation which will enhance the oldest and most beautiful playhouse in the country.

This next phase in Bristol Old Vic's refurbishment will see the transformation of its front of house spaces, which is being done by RIBA Stirling Prize winning architects Haworth Tompkins.

Having successfully been awarded major capital grants from Arts Council England and Bristol City Council, the Bristol Old Vic team are more than half-way through the second stage of fundraising for the project, following the much-acclaimed auditorium refurbishment in 2012.

Once complete, Bristolians will be able to enjoy the wide, open space of a new entrance foyer, lifts to all floors, more loos, a new Studio theatre, longer bars, and the return of Coopers' Hall to its original 18<sup>th</sup> century use as an events space for the city.

To make a donation, or to find out more about the fundraising campaign, please contact Kate Ryan:

[kryan@bristololdvic.org.uk](mailto:kryan@bristololdvic.org.uk)

#### **About Ujima Radio**

Ujima Radio CIC is an ambitious, wide-reaching social enterprise and broadcaster. It creates new ways to share information, improve employment and training opportunities and provides a platform for cultural and creative expression. Its broadcasting philosophy is to use radio, arts and media to bring together the diverse BAME communities and wider communities in Bristol and the region to celebrate cultural diversity and challenge inequality.

Since launching in 2008, the station has attracted over 350 volunteers, whilst it currently caters for over 100 volunteers in various capacities. Their listenership is growing, and has now reached over 24000 listeners every day.

#### **About Voluntary Arts**

Voluntary Arts works to promote and increase active participation in cultural activities across the UK and Republic of Ireland.

We work with policy makers, funders and politicians to improve the environment for everyone participating in the arts, and we provide information and training to the many thousands of groups and individuals who participate in the voluntary arts sector. This includes over 300 national and regional umbrella bodies, and through them, their

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member groups of local voluntary arts practitioners. Our support to individual groups, including Ujima Radio, is part of our Spirit of 2012 funded project focused on supported volunteering in the arts and the sustainability of volunteer led organisations.