

# MORTAL FOOLS INFORMATION PACK

## About the company & our programmes:



### WHO WE ARE

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Mortal Fools is a theatre, drama and creative learning company, with people at its heart. We believe in the importance of positive connections between people: peers, communities and organisations.

We are a registered charity based in Prudhoe, Northumberland, with a core team of four and a team of 15 freelance associate artists that we work with regularly. We are a company of people who are passionate about creativity, theatre and drama. We use high quality, exciting and relevant arts experiences for the development and wellbeing of children and young people.

Our work uses dynamic theatre and drama to:

- ❖ **Build Understanding** – of people and of our world, building empathy and support for one another. For example, through last year's Youth Theatre production, *Brainstorm*, where a group of young actors explored the differences between adult and teenage brains, how this affects their lives and relationships, and shared their perspective with audiences.
- ❖ **Overcome Challenges** – by supporting people to try new things, build confidence, skills and resilience. For example, supporting young people with autism to build emotional literacy and resilience by connecting with characters and stories through the process of making a play.
- ❖ **Create Shared Experiences** – creating spaces and opportunities for people to come together. For example, beginning to build community pride by creating a temporary theatre in an area with low aspirations and deprivation.
- ❖ **Connect People** – bringing people together through all of the above, supporting stronger communities and tackling isolation. For example, in our adult skills training where people realise we're all struggling with the same things and together find new ways to tackle them.

### OUR PROGRAMMES

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**CREATIVES OF THE FUTURE** – a theatre-making strand which includes:

- Tyne Valley Youth Theatre, our flagship youth theatre where young people work as co-creators with professional theatre artists
- Professional theatre for young and family audiences
- Support, mentoring and training for early career artists, including producing their projects

We have secured significant funding to continue the development of this programme over the next 3 years. Some examples of the work this funding will help develop are: a Young People's Theatre Exchange, partnering with other community and professional venues across the North of England to share, develop and champion work made by young people; and a Young Programmers strand, which will see young people identify and programme visiting professional theatre companies into Prudhoe or the surrounding areas.

**FUTURE READY** – a strand which uses a theatre production process as the setting to support teenagers with special educational needs and disabilities to develop the skills, confidence and attributes they need to make a successful transition from school into adult life.

We are in the process of using this strand as the setting to develop a delivery practice model for work with children and young people in a range of settings.

**ADULT SKILLS TRAINING** – through this strand we work with organisations from across sectors in practical workshops using techniques from theatre practice and social sciences for skills development. We have a training partnership with Northern Stage in Newcastle called, *Drop The Act*, and in the last year have worked with clients including Virgin Money, Sintons Law, Newcastle University, Prudhoe Community High School and National Trust.

More information about our programmes and past projects can be found on our website:

[www.mortalfools.org.uk](http://www.mortalfools.org.uk)

## WHAT OUR PARTICIPANTS SAY ABOUT US

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*“You really feel listened to here. Everyone has a chance to put their ideas in. Every show we do would have been different if just one person wasn't there”*

*“Mortal Fools make performing FUN! Other groups forget that we perform for enjoyment, as well as wanting to show our audience what we are capable of. The reason our shows and projects are professional and high quality is because our directors and producers make it fun!”*

*“Mortal Fools has helped me develop trust in everyone in the group, and through that I've become more confident in opening up. Not many youth theatre groups feel as much like a family”*

*“I joined Tyne Valley Youth Theatre [Mortal Fools' Flagship Youth Theatre] more than 5 years ago. Before then I had very little self-confidence. I didn't know what my 'thing' was. I tried it out and I loved it. 5 years on and I'm in national youth theatre and about to be in a National Youth Music Theatre Production. It's just been the biggest help and I could ask for anything more.”*

## WHAT OUR FACILITATORS SAY ABOUT US

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*“Mortal Fools is a company that gives young professionals the chance to try new things and there is support throughout no matter what. It is a company that enables your skills to grow in the role”*

– **Craig Spence, Mortal Fools Production Manager**

*“I work with Mortal Fools because I completely admire what it does for people through the creative arts. There is something special in how much the people care about everything they do and the impact they can have. It's an amazing team to be part of - I've learnt so much, and found new levels of confidence in the work I do”* – **Sian Armstrong, Freelance Associate Artist**

*“I started working here because I love directing and making plays with young people. They are really exciting, creative, and will go with loads of new ideas and try new things. As soon as I got involved with a couple of projects, I just loved it. I loved how committed everybody was and I loved how different it was. It was a brand-new experience for me - making theatre like this, in church halls and all sorts of different performance spaces. It was great and then I just got more and more involved as the time went on”* – **Helen Ferguson, Mortal Fools Creative Producer**

*“This team is dynamic and expertise is shared. We are encouraged to grow in a personal and professional capacity. If you have a particular skill, it is nurtured and if you dare step outside of your comfort zone, you can and are supported”* – **Pippa Anderson, Freelance Adult Training Facilitator**