

## PILLAR POETRY - BRIEF / CALL OUT

An opportunity for Midlands based writers to take over the Shop Front Theatre pillars with poetry.



Colonial Woman by Shahnaz Akhter

### THEATRE ABSOLUTE

Theatre Absolute is a multi award winning theatre company founded by Julia Negus and Chris O’Connell in 1992.

In 2009 we founded the Shop Front Theatre in City Arcade, Coventry; a one time fish and chip shop restaurant (Fishy Moores), now a uniquely low-fi flexible theatre with a capacity of approx. 60 seats. The SFT is the only professional space of its kind in the UK.

We, as a company have a passion for developing the work of other writers and artists, demonstrated through the creation of both our **Writing Gym** and **@38** development programmes.

**Pillar Poetry** is our next opportunity working towards this goal, as part of our **Are We Where We Are** programme running through 2017 and 2018.

### ARE WE WHERE WE ARE?

Are We Where We Are? (AWWWA) is a two-year theatre project inspired by the work of the American novelist **Henry David Thoreau**, whose book ‘Walden: A Life In The Woods’ was published in 1854. In the book, Thoreau writes at one point: “We are not where we are, but in a false position”, and this became a stimulus for Theatre Absolute as we began to grapple with the notion that, here in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are arguably not where we are, but in fact, somewhere else.

It felt apt as the advanced societies we have created spin in seemingly daily chaos. It feels apt when, here, today, one considers the qualities and complexities of **justice, equality, race, citizenship, nationhood, isolation, inclusion**, the list goes on.

With these ideas in mind Are We Where We Are? becomes a question to our artists, to the audience, to the wider world. Just as Walden did, we are taking time to contemplate on how far we've come and how far we have left to go.

### **PILLAR POETRY**

Connecting to our 'Are We Where We Are?' programme we have begun to form **Pillar Poetry**, an opportunity taking over the pillars of the Shop Front Theatre with poetry through **6-17<sup>th</sup> Feb 2018**. We are looking for work to fill our pillars and add to the offer of the AWWWA programme.

#### **What We Are Looking For:**

- Short poems, no longer than 20 lines (they have to fit onto a pillar after all)
- Poems must respond to Theatre Absolute's 'Are We Where We Are' stimuli.
- Writers/Poets based anywhere in the East or West Midlands regions.
- Three poems will be selected following this open call.

#### **What We Offer:**

The Three Writers/Poems will receive:

- The three poems will be written onto the pillars of the Shop Front Theatre through **6-17<sup>th</sup> Feb** accompanying the run of Chris O'Connell's AWWWA performance of Choke.
- On **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> Feb** judges from local writing/poetry organisations will view the three selected poems on the pillars of the Shop Front and then award the first prize (We ask writers to be available in Coventry on this evening):
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Prize will receive a **£200** award for their poem.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize will both receive **£100** which should cover any travel costs and a small fee for your work.
- The opportunity to show your work in a new setting, to new audiences.
- Up to **two** complimentary tickets to Chris O'Connell's Choke on the 10<sup>th</sup> February.

#### **How to apply:**

Please send your poem (max 20 lines) on the form below to [paul@theatreabsolute.co.uk](mailto:paul@theatreabsolute.co.uk) before **5pm on Fri 26<sup>th</sup> Jan**. You should be informed of the decision by 5<sup>th</sup> Feb so we will be unable to accept late applications.

We look forward to reading your work.  
Chris O'Connell, Julia Negus and Paul O'Donnell,  
Theatre Absolute



@theatreabsolute



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**PILLAR POETRY: Are We Where We Are?**

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Post Code:**

**Phone Number:**

**Email Address:**

**Writer**

Please write a brief history of your relevant work to date below. (Max 100 words)

**Poetry**

Please insert your poem, responding to the Are We Where We Are stimuli below.

Note: The poems must be able to fit onto a pillar in the Shop Front Theatre so we recommend a maximum of 20 lines per poem.

**Are you available to attend the event on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 7.30pm-10pm:  
Yes/No**

Please send this form through to Paul at [paul@theatreabsolute.co.uk](mailto:paul@theatreabsolute.co.uk) before **5pm on Fri 26th Jan.** You should receive confirmation of your application before the 30<sup>th</sup> Jan.