

# Stephen Joseph Award 2023

## Nomination form

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My name is Aida Haughton and I would like to Nominate New Vic Borderlines, an outreach department of the New Vic Theatre (Newcastle-under-Lyme) for the ABTT Stephen Joseph Award.

<https://www.newvictheatre.org.uk/education-and-community/borderlines/>

[Home - New Vic Theatre](#)

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

Here is my short statement which includes some of the feedback:

New Vic Borderlines uses theatre to help people find new and positive ways to understand themselves, their communities and their responsibilities. It challenges destructive and anti-social behaviour, builds self-awareness and self-worth and develops positive attitudes. Borderlines works with individuals, groups and communities facing challenges – social and economic disadvantage, young people at risk of offending, adults with learning difficulties, and others at risk of being marginalised.

What started as a 3-year project, thanks to its Director Susan Moffat, is now a 24-year old project that affects over 15k people a year. Over the years, our documentaries covered topics such as: Holocaust & genocide, arranged marriages, Carbon Net Zero, mental health, food poverty, consent, knife crime and many more.

Every play is taken to schools and community settings and accompanied with a workshop/forum theatre that enables audience to immerse themselves, ask questions and leave with better understanding of the matter. Borderlines works regionally, nationally and internationally and our work has been published in many academic journals. (please see links below). We also organise conferences, book launches, creative cafe's, networking events and much more.

***"Thank you for giving me my son back"***

Mother of a Borderlines participant

*"It was a lifeline to me, I couldn't wait for Wednesday's to come, made me happy....."*

Next Chapter participant

**Here is the second testament about our work:**

New Vic Borderlines has existed for over 20 years and has worked with thousands of people during this time. Borderlines takes its name from working with people who are at the borders of society. We have achieved this by working with many different partnership organisations to create pieces of the theatre that tell their stories and give them a space where they are able to have a voice and make a difference.

We have Young People's Theatre Company that gives young people the opportunity to continue working with us once a project has finished. We don't believe in hit and run projects; we always look for ways to for participants to be able to carry on the work they have started. We have created work that involves partners like the Police and Fire Services to help educate about the dangers of mobile phone use whilst driving, a project that reached nearly 10,000 young people.

We have also worked with public services on subjects like Domestic Violence, FGM, many community cohesion projects in the local area. We also partner with many universities on research projects, one of the most recent being a health project with Nottingham University. We have also worked with universities to developing the Cultural Animation Methodology, which is used across the world, including in Tsunami hit communities in Japan, on community health projects in the Philippines and mining communities in Kenya. New Vic Borderlines projects always start with a local community focus but have an impact across the globe."

Rachel Reddihough

## **Testimonials & other evidence:**

Here is a testament from one of our Next Chapter performance and conference participants, a project that ended with the premiere of our latest piece of documentary theatre on 10/10/23:

### **Service user:**

*"The first time I went to the Vic on a Wednesday, I was really nervous and wasn't sure what to expect.*

*It turns out I had nothing to be worried about. There were people there, like myself with mental health issues, service providers, and staff. Everyone was kind and welcoming, putting me instantly at ease. Each week, we sit and chat as well as playing games. Lots of laughing and just enjoying each others company. It's become my safe place, somewhere I can be myself and take the mask off that I normally wear around others so they can't see how much mental health affects me.*

*Everyone in the group and the amazing staff that work there have become my extended family. This experience has literally saved my life, and Wednesday has become the one day I look forward to. Six months ago, appearing in a play for world mental health day and telling my story in the play is something I would never have been able to do. But I'm doing it, and it's thanks to the group and staff that have given me the confidence to do it. I can't thank the group and staff enough for their kindness and support."*

Colin Hawkins

### **Service provider feedback:**

*"The Next Chapter has been a fantastic project for people with mental health. My role as a support worker involves supporting people with mental health back into the community and this project has been a great opportunity for me to get patients involved in. The patients I have brought along, have been nurtured by the New Vic staff and have achieved amazing results. Attending myself with patients, we have felt welcomed, respected, valued and comfortable. We were listened to and made to feel that our opinions mattered. My patients now see the group as a lifeline, something they look forward to each week. I hope this support continues as it has been of great benefit to my patients and I hope to bring many more patients along to help to build their confidence back into the community and to regain their trust in people,"*

Sandra Barlow

Audience member feedback posted on Facebook:

*"Today, on World Mental Health Day, I had the privilege of attending a performance titled 'The Next Chapter' at the New Vic theatre. This powerful production centered around mental health was performed by individuals with lived experiences. This ongoing project, led by [New Vic Borderlines](#) gathers every Wednesday to blend creativity, drama, and the creation of safe spaces.*

*The performance deeply resonated with me, shedding light on various aspects of mental health, including barriers to support, frustrations with services, funding issues, accessibility concerns, the impact of trauma, homelessness, and addiction, among many others. I even had the chance to partake in a sample of their weekly workshops, experiencing the creative wonder of cultural animation, which has left me inspired in my own creative endeavors. It was evident how transformative these sessions had been for the cast, forging a sense of safety and belonging akin to an extended family. Drama can be a profoundly impactful medium for exploring and sharing personal stories, and I'm grateful for the opportunity on World Mental Health Day to witness and hear these stories. [#WorldMentalHealthDay](#) [#drama](#) [#theatre](#) [#drama](#) [#therapy](#) [#dramatherapy](#) [#playtherapy](#) [#safespaces](#)*

*[#livedexperience](#) [#livedexperiencematters](#) [#stories](#) [#mentalhealth](#)*

*[#mentalhealthawareness](#) [#mentalhealthmatters](#) " - Louise Rogers - Integrative Psychotherapeutic Counsellor and Autism Clinical Specialist*

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[Borderlines - New Vic Theatre](#)

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

<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2022/dec/26/bosnian-war-stories-stage-my-thousand-year-old-land-susan-moffat-aida-haughton>

‘Planting seeds of peace’:

Bosnian war stories are brought to the stage

Susan Moffat and Aida Haughton explain how their play My Thousand Year Old Land was given a universal humanity by using raw, real-life testimony [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com)

<https://www.newvictheatre.org.uk/new-vic-borderlines-happy-and-glorious-project-extended-following-success-engaging-with-2000-local-people/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrAkFQYvq8ko2wu8OChGrZQ>

## NewVicBorderlines

New Vic Borderlines is the award-winning initiative using theatre in social contexts. It works regionally, nationally and internationally, and is acknowledged as a national model for the ways theatre can be used to work within the community.

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

Link to our YouTube channel:

[https://youtu.be/\\_l43ybINNzg](https://youtu.be/_l43ybINNzg)

Our Twitter account with all the latest info:

<https://twitter.com/NVBorderlines>

Our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/NVBorderlines/>