



Actors Andrew Robson and Andrew McLeod

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Iconic theatre company presents **Without Us** at Live Theatre

A new play, which has been four years in the making, will make its highly anticipated debut performance next week at Live Theatre in Newcastle.

Without Us is a heart-warming play written and directed by award winning playwright [Steve Gilroy](#), Associate Professor of Theatre and Performance at Northumbria University.

It has been co-created by [The Lawnmowers Independent Theatre Company](#) in

collaboration with Murmur Theatre and actors Andrew McLeod and Andrew Robson and will be showcased at [Live Theatre](#) from 15-17 June.

The result of a remarkable four-year development process, *Without Us* explores the sacrifices parents make for their children and the journey of self-discovery for the main character, who has learning disabilities.

Inspiration for the play stemmed from the director's extensive association with The Lawnmowers Theatre Company, which specialises in working with people with learning difficulties.

Utilising company members' and their families' experiences as a starting point, *Without Us* delves into the challenges faced by this marginalised group, shedding light on their experiences.

The creative process faced significant challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, despite the setbacks, the production persevered, driven by the importance of the work and the powerful story it sought to tell.

The result is a performance featuring two talented actors who skilfully portray a vintage comedy double act, infusing the show with warmth, humour, and authenticity.

Steve Gilroy said: "We wanted *Without Us* to be a high-quality, entertaining, and engaging piece of theatre that resonates with all audiences, regardless of their background.

"It's not aimed solely at a learning-disabled audience, but we hope they can relate to and enjoy the play, finding glimpses of their own experiences within it.

"We take on these challenging issues without being overtly political, focusing instead on personal stories with universal themes."

Through its exploration of universal themes of self-discovery, identity, and the complex parent-child relationship, *Without Us* aims to raise awareness and promote inclusivity for individuals with learning disabilities within the wider theatre community and society as a whole.

By sharing the heartfelt struggles and triumphs of the characters, the play offers a fresh perspective that challenges preconceived notions and fosters empathy.

Jan Willem Van Den Bosch, Artistic Director, Lawnmowers Independent Theatre Company explains: “This is our second collaboration with Live Theatre and we’re delighted to be working together again.

“We hope that audiences will love *Without Us* as much as they did our previous production *Retake, Remake* which has performed across the North East and Yorkshire and is now set to embark on a London tour.”

Without Us will run from Thursday 15 to Saturday 17 June at Live Theatre in Newcastle. Tickets, which are £10, with concessions £6, can be booked through the [Live Theatre website](#).

Additionally, a post-show discussion will be held after the Saturday matinee, featuring Steve Gilroy, the performers, and Matt Hargrave, author of *Theatres of Learning Disability: Good, Bad or Plain Ugly*.

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