

Feel Me



Who do you care about and why?

About The Paper Birds

The Paper Birds is a devising theatre company, with a social and political agenda. We were founded in Leeds in 2003 by Co-Directors Jemma McDonnell and Kylie Perry. We are recognised as UK leaders in devised verbatim theatre. We're artists, investigators, entrepreneurs, educators. We pride ourselves on taking complex, multi-faceted subjects and making them accessible.

We believe wholeheartedly that the arts change lives and make society a better place to be. We make theatre using themes that feel important to us in the here and now and exist to create participatory theatre for social change.

We have an Artistic Programme and a Participation Programme and nurture both equally. Over the last 15 years we have carved out a reputation as leaders in the delivery of devised and verbatim theatre workshops in schools throughout the UK and increasingly internationally. Our Participation Programme is a core part of our identity and purpose as an organisation.

Feel Me

Feel Me asks, via your mobile phone, who and what you care about from the stories unfolding live on stage in front of you.

A stunning mixture of live performance, film, projection, dance and music, **Feel Me** explores the different lenses through which we are told, and connect to stories in the modern digital world.

Worlds unfold from backpacks, and tents are constructed and dismantled again, each scene and location temporary, like a transient teenager in search of safety, acceptance and a new place to call home. An interrogation of empathy, **Feel Me** asks what makes us 'feel' for another person, as we journey through landscapes and across borders, through weather storms and paperwork, changing seasons, endless queues and interviews.

Audience Experience Guidance

- **Feel Me** is suitable for ages 13 years +
- **Feel Me** includes integrated captions. If you require captions, we suggest you sit on the right side of the auditorium.
- The show contains mild strobing in the projections, loud noises and atmospheric haze.
- We use cameras in the show to stream what is happening in the auditorium on screens onstage, but this is not recorded or used outside of today's live performance.

Feel Me Cast & Creative Team 2024/25:

Writer & Director	Jemma McDonnell
Co-Director	Kylie Perry
Assistant Director	Shanice Sewell
Executive Producer	Charlotte Kalantari-Gregory
Producers	Emma Gaynor & Adele Souto
Performers	Beckie Callow, Klara Kaliger & El Solly
Designer	Imogen Melhuish
Sound & Music Design & Technical Manager	Fraser Owen
Film Director & Movement Consultant	Munya Muchati
Video Designer	Ben Glover
Video Associate	Bella Meyersohn
Video Programming Support	Andrew Crofts
Lighting Designer & Technical Consultant	Mat Spencer
Data Visualisation Coding Consultant	Kris Sum

With thanks to original Performers/Devisers Lil McGibbon, Daz Scott, Kiren Virdee & previous Producers Charlie Tapp & Katie Webster, who helped make the show what it is today.

About the Show's Interaction

You'll need your phone during **Feel Me**. Keep your phone on, but please put it on silent. At certain points during the performance, we'll ask the audience to interact via their phone. We'd love for everyone to take part in this, but it is optional and it won't affect your understanding of the show.

If you choose to take part, all answers are anonymous. You'll be asked questions about what you're watching, and how you feel.

Here is the QR Code you'll need to interact with today's show.

You can refresh your browser if your phone times out, and it won't impact your answers.



Content Warning

This performance contains scenes, images and interactive questions relating to the refugee experience that some people may find emotionally challenging or upsetting.

The Making of Feel Me

The Paper Birds feel wholeheartedly that the development and creation process for a new show is just as important and empowering as the final performance. **Feel Me** came out of **The School of Hope** – our digital, multi-artform project, for young creatives aged 13-25. **The School of Hope** encourages young people to be socially and politically engaged and aims to increase a sense of purpose, as well as levels of empathy. 9 Partner Organisations and around 75 young people from 5 countries engaged across Summer 2021, undertaking tasks, discussions, and activities, before creating their own artworks in response

To find out more about **The School of Hope** go to:
www.theschoolofhope.co.uk

We wanted young voices to be at the centre of **Feel Me**, so, working alongside our partners Theatre Centre, we put together a team of exceptional young artists all under the age of 30 to make up the creative team. We were excited to bring new artforms into the mix for this show using film, dance and interactive technology within the show.

21st Birthday Present – Ahhh you shouldn't have?!

The Paper Birds turned 21 back in February 2024 (Valentine's Day to be exact) and to celebrate our milestone we've created an anniversary t-shirt!

If you LOVE The Paper Birds and want to join our nest, why not treat yourself to one of our limited edition 21st tees? Your purchase will be directly supporting our work as a registered charity and allow us to continue to reach the thousands of young people who take part in our workshops and performances each year. Consider it a birthday present from you, to us!

You can buy your limited edition t-shirt by emailing Jus:
justine@thepaperbirds.com

The Paper Birds are:

Jemma McDonnell | Kylie Perry | Charlotte Kalantari-Gregory
Justine Watkins-Fife | Emma Gaynor | Georgie Coles
Gerry De Carlo | Adele Souto

The Paper Birds Trustees are:

Rose Abderabbani | Becky Dawson | Cristina Holst [Chair]
Susan Nimmo | Chinyere Ogbue | Lucy Parker | Jots Sehmbi
Chris Thorpe | Sarah Wall | Laura Woodward

www.thepaperbirds.com   

Feel Me was developed in consultation with a range of charities and academics. These included Empathy Artist Enni-Kukka Tuomala; Activist Ali Ghaderi of Babylon Migrants Project; Participatory Theatre Expert Professor Rosemary Kiltch (University of Essex); Senior Lecturer in Politics and International relations Dr Gemma Bird (University of Liverpool); and Senior Lecturer in Politics and International relations (Aston University) and Co-Director of the Centre for Migration and Forced Displacement Dr Jelena Obradovic-Wochnik.

We also collaborated with 5 Youth Steering Groups made up of young people aged 13-25 years, some of whom have lived experience in forced displacement. We're thrilled to have worked with young people from the New Wolsey's Youth Theatres (Ipswich), Sherborne Boys School (Dorset), Creative Youth Network (Bristol), Padepokan Seni Bagong Kussudiardja (Indonesia) and Babylon Migrants Project (London).

As we devised the show, the material was regularly shared with all these advisory groups for them to feedback and comment.

A documentary called **Navigate** about our process and the creation of **Feel Me**, including in-depth interviews with members of the creative team, is available to purchase at:
www.thepaperbirds.com/navigate

What Did You Think?

We'd love to hear your thoughts after the show. Please fill out a short feedback survey by scanning this QR Code. We'd also love to hear your thoughts and see your photos on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



Special Thanks

We are hugely grateful to:

Our funders **Arts Council England** and the **British Council International Collaboration** who make our work possible. **Rob Watt** and **Emma Rees** of **Theatre Centre**, who were integral to the development of the show and of our methodology in working with young creatives. **Ben Francombe**, who was an invaluable critical friend in the rehearsal room. **Doug Rintoul** and the team of **New Wolsey Theatre** for believing in our work. **Queen's Theatre Hornchurch** for supporting our rehearsal process. And everyone involved in **The School of Hope** and the development of **Feel Me**.

