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DEUCE: A NEW BILINGUAL PODCAST DRAMA FROM THE BBC AUDIO AWARDS-SHORTLISTED CREATORS OF TREMOLO

Produced by **Illumine Theatre** in partnership with **Genomics Partnership Wales** and in conjunction with **Wales Gene Park**, *Deuce* is a podcast drama written by Cardiff-based playwright **Lisa Parry** and directed by **Zoë Waterman**, which explores hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM). Translated by **Branwen Davies**, there will be a Welsh and English version available to stream for free, to ensure a wide range of listeners can experience this powerful and thought-provoking production.

“Following on from the success of TREMOLO, Wales Gene Park is delighted to be working once again with Illumine Theatre to support their new collaboration, Deuce, with Genomics Partnership Wales. This exciting project brings together the arts and science as a way of engaging with the public about genetics and genomics and the important role they play in medicine, health and, ultimately, people’s lives.” **Dr Rhian Morgan, Wales Gene Park**

The 30-minute podcast tells the story of Alys, a teenage tennis player who collapses during the final of the Girls’ Junior Championship at Wimbledon. As first aiders realise she is in cardiac arrest, she is rushed to hospital, where she lies in a coma. Here, she is visited by her late father, Daf, a previous professional tennis player who Alys hopes to emulate.

The world as Alys knows it is then turned upside down when doctors diagnose her with hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM); a condition where the muscular wall of the heart becomes thickened and pumping blood around the body becomes more difficult. With renowned professional athletes like footballer Fabrice Muamba and basketballers Hank Gathers and Will Kimble famously diagnosed, the condition has frequently appeared in real-world headlines due to its potential impact. Not only does Alys understand that her diagnosis could spell the end of her own career, she realises that this inherited condition, caused by a fault in her genome, could have also been the cause of her father’s so-far unexplained death.

Lisa’s script, informed by the experience of experts in genetics and genomics, cardiologists and those living with hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, explores the life-changing impact of diagnosis on relationships, ambitions and mental health. As Alys leans on her father for support in coming to terms with the idea of returning to her body and to a life without professional tennis, she begins to understand that she must ultimately move beyond the grief she feels for him, while navigating a challenging new reality.

Lisa Parry said *“Researching this drama was an incredibly moving experience where people shared their stories. It feels right to tell this through audio, which is a really intimate form of storytelling where the listener conjures the images in their own mind. I love the fact people will be able to listen to it on their phones, wherever they are, and can’t wait to get into the rehearsal room.”*

“Genomics Partnership Wales is delighted to fund such an innovative project with Illumine Theatre. Our overall aim is to exploit the opportunities that genomics provides to improve healthcare and

wellbeing for our patients in Wales. Following the success of TREMOLO , we know that this creative approach helps the wider population understand the relevance and importance of genomics for individuals and families. This will be key as technology improves, and our understanding and application of genomics increases.” **Michaela John, Head of Programmes for GPW**

The Light In The Hall actress **Ella Peel** will play Alys. Ella has appeared in a range of productions both on screen and on stage and her credits include work with Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru, HBO, BBC Wales, Boom Cymru and BBC Radio Cymru.

Ella said *“I’m really excited to work on this project. Firstly the script is captivating, and each reading brings another layer of meaning and illuminates another theme which I’m really looking forward to explore in rehearsals. I was made to feel so welcome and relaxed at the audition that I left really wanting to work with these incredible creatives and I feel very lucky to have landed the role.”*

Actor and Theatre Director **Daniel Lloyd** will play Daf. Daniel’s work includes a number of productions for **Theatr Clwyd** and upcoming work on 4 Stories’ **Wet Look** for Blacklight/Channel 4. He is currently appearing in season 4 of SKY ONE’s **Brassic** and plays Mered in Roger William’s upcoming film **Y Sŵn** for S4C, directed by Lee Haven Jones.

Daniel said *“I am thrilled to be playing Daf in Deuce. For me, it’s a fascinating play about the painful cost of placing ambition and success above all else in life - even to the detriment of our health. Something that so much of us can relate to. It is a heartfelt discussion between a father and daughter, both of whom are forced to face their own mortality, their choices and priorities, their relationship, their shared traits - both good and bad and their regrets. What would we say to those we have loved and lost? It’s a great challenge to tackle a role like this and I’m so glad it’s being made available for both Welsh and English audiences to enjoy.”*

The commentators will be played by **Gareth John Bale**, who is known best for his starring role in stage show **Grav**, which he recently reprised in the BAFTA-winning screen version for S4C and **Mali Ann Rees** who has recently appeared in season 2 of **The Pact** for BBC One.

Actor and BAFTA-winning writer Mari Beard will play Alys’ mother **Bethan**. Mari has appeared in a number of TV and stage shows, radio programmes and podcasts.

Deuce will be recorded at Hoot Studios and edited by **Rhys Young**. The podcast will be released in May this year and will be available to listen to and download via several platforms including **Apple**, **Spotify** and **Anchor** as well as the GPW, WGP and Illumine Theatre’s **website**.

Notes to Editors:

Listings:

Cast:

Alys: Ella Peel

Daf: Daniel Lloyd

Bethan / Guest: Mari Beard

Commentator One: Gareth John Bale

Commentator Two: Mali Ann Rees

Writer: Lisa Parry

Director: Zoë Waterman

Sound editing and design: Rhys Young

Translator: Branwen Davies

Biogs:

Ella Peel

Ella is originally from Carmarthen and is bilingual, speaking both English and Welsh. She has appeared in a range of productions both on screen and onstage and her credits include work with Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru, HBO, BBC Wales and Boom Cymru. More recently, Ella starred in a radio production for BBC Radio Cymru and she is currently starring in Channel 4's winter drama **The Light In The Hall** alongside Iwan Rheon.

Daniel Lloyd

Daniel is originally from Rhosllannerchrugog and trained at East 15 Acting School, London. As an actor and director, Daniel's credits include Theatr Clwyd's **Robin Hood**, **Dick Whittington** and **The Taming of the Shrew**, SKY's **Honey** and Disney's **Muppets Most Wanted**. More recently, he shot 4 Stories' **Wet Look** for Blacklight/Channel 4 and is currently appearing in season 4 of SKY ONE's **Brassic**. He also plays Mered in Roger William's upcoming film **Y Sŵn** for S4C, directed by Lee Haven Jones.

Mari Beard

Mari is an actor, BAFTA -writer and director originally from Aberystwyth. Her credits include TV work with BBC Wales, Boom Cymru and Alpha Productions and stage productions with Sherman Theatre and the National Eisteddfod. Over the past year, she has appeared in many radio programmes and podcasts including **Tourist Trap : Stay at home special** and **Eye on Wales** for Radio Wales. Later this year, she will be acting in the film **Gwenhwyfar!** and appearing on BBC Radio Cymru's new panel show **Uffern iaith y nefoedd**.

Mari co-created, wrote and starred in the dark comedy/drama **Merched Parchus**, for which she received a BAFTA Cymru Nomination for Best Writer and recently debuted as a director for comedy film **Sit Bangor**.

Gareth John Bale

Welsh Speaker Gareth's TV credits include the leading role in the S4C film **Grav**, **The Indian Doctor**, **Requiem** and **Casualty** for the BBC. On stage, he has toured internationally with the highly-acclaimed one-man show **Grav** and is a regular with touring company Black Rat Theatre Company. Gareth is also a highly skilled voice artist and has voiced a wide range of commercial campaigns, documentaries and heritage audio guides.

Mali Ann Rees

After training at the East Acting 15 School in London, Mali has starred in productions for film, TV and theatre and has appeared at the Sherman Theatre, Theatre Clwyd and shows for S4C and BBC. Mari recently appeared as Megan in season 2 of **The Pact** for BBC One.

Lisa Parry

Lisa Parry is a Cardiff-based playwright. Her work includes: Tremolo (Illumine, Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru, WGP), The Order of the Object (Theatr Clwyd); The Merthyr Stigmatist (Sherman/Theatre Uncut, shortlisted for Theatre Uncut's inaugural Political Playwriting Award and published by Nick Hern Books); Lump (Dirty Protest/Paines Plough); Alex (The Miniaturists, Arcola); and 2023 (Chapter, with extracts later performed at the Barbican, London). Screenwriting includes Inside the Piano Shop (Hyperobject Studio, London), and her audio work includes Chocolate Orange Biscuits (Wireless Theatre Company).

Lisa is Co-director of Illumine Theatre and writer in residence at Theatr Clwyd. She has spoken extensively on various panels regarding feminism and theatre and also science and theatre, notably giving a talk for TEDx in Cardiff. She previously worked as a news journalist on regional and UK national titles.

Zoë Waterman

Zoë is co-director of Illumine Theatre and was the Associate Director of the New Vic Theatre 2018/19. She was the recipient of the New Wimbledon Theatre's Emerging Directors Award 2007. She received an MFA in Theatre Directing from Birkbeck College.

Her work in theatre includes: 2023 (Illumine Theatre); Table, Playhouse Creatures and The Kitchen Sink (The New Vic, Stoke-on-Trent); The Rubenstein Kiss, Amy's View and After Miss Julie (Nottingham Playhouse); Jack and the Beanstalk, Dick Whittington and Sleeping Beauty (Theatr Clwyd); The Rise and Fall of Little Voice, Remarkable Invisible, The Vertical Hour, Enlightenment and Shining City (Theatre by the Lake, Keswick); The Bogus Woman (Theatre by the Lake, Keswick and UK tour); Swan Song: An Evening of Music and Song (The Swan, RSC); Cinderella, Aladdin, Sleeping Beauty and Jack and the Beanstalk (Loughborough Town Hall); The Demand (Shooting Fish Theatre Company); Aladdin (The Capitol, Horsham); The Promise (New Wimbledon Theatre Studio); A Kind of Alaska (Edinburgh Fringe Festival).

Branwen Davies

Branwen is a playwright, theatre maker and dramaturg. She is a member of the Dirty Protest theatre company and Os Nad Nawr theatre company. Branwen was recently appointed by the Urdd to relaunch their youth theatre.

Rhys Young

Rhys has worked in the industry as a recording engineer, ADR recordist, sound designer, foley artist and dubbing mixer. Rhys also carries out Audio Description work for parent company CTV Sound Studios.

He's worked on a range of programmes & films for a wide variety of clients. He's also experienced in mixing commercials and corporate videos for clients including the Welsh Government, Sofa Sofa, HMRC, the NHS and Transport for Wales. He's also worked on several high-profile films and TV dramas as an ADR recordist.

Rhys is a fluent Welsh speaker.

Illumine Theatre

Illumine Theatre is a collaboration between Cardiff playwright Lisa Parry and award-winning director Zoë Waterman. Illumine makes theatre with new writing at its core, theatre which reveals stories hidden in plain sight – stories all around us that we are too busy to notice. Illumine aims to encourage debate, make theatre for everyone and reach out to overlooked audiences with our work.

Illumine was formed in 2016 after more than a decade of Lisa and Zoë working together intermittently on various projects, notably at Theatre503, the Arcola and Arch468. Its first production was 2023 at Chapter, critically hailed as 'stunning,' sections of which were later performed at the Barbican, London after the company was invited to take part in Fertility Fest. Illumine's registered company number is 12469151.

@illuminetheatre

www.illuminetheatre.org

Genomics Partnership Wales

Genomics Partnership Wales works in partnership with Welsh Government and other stakeholders, including the NHS, academia and patient/public groups to harness advances in the understanding and application of genomics to transform public health strategy and delivery of care.

Together we develop the skills of our existing workforce so that a modern generation of healthcare professionals may emerge with the capabilities to seize the opportunity for the people of Wales. A person-centred, joined-up approach enables us to create and take opportunities right across healthcare to deliver upon our ambitions to improve health, wellbeing and prosperity.

Central to all this is our Patient and Public Sounding Board, whose continual dedication and support in shaping the way genomics is being delivered now and into the future is invaluable to furthering the work of Genomics Partnership Wales.

@GenomicsWales @GenomegCymru

<https://genomicspartnership.wales>

Wales Gene Park

Established in 2002 and funded by Welsh Government through Health and Care Research Wales, Wales Gene Park supports, promotes, and undertakes medical genetic and genomic research, and works to ensure its translation for the benefit of patients and public in Wales and beyond.

WGP engages patients, public, schools and professionals to increase awareness and understanding of genetics and genomics. It facilitates wide participation and involvement in research and in the development of services and policy.

Tremolo

Tremolo is a podcast drama produced by Illumine Theatre in partnership with Wales Gene Park and Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru, supported by the Genetics Society. It tells the story of Harri - an 18 year old with his whole life ahead of him, only to discover his mother has been diagnosed with early onset familial Alzheimer's and that both he and his sister Gwenllian each have a 50 per cent chance of inheriting the disease. Should he take a test to find out?

Aimed primarily at audiences aged 16+, but available to everyone, **Tremolo** is available to listen to and download via platforms including **Spotify**, **iTunes** and **AM**. The drama is available in English and Welsh.

Tremolo has since been shortlisted twice in the [BBC Audio Drama Awards 2023](#), with Gareth Elis a finalist for the Marc Beeby Award for Best Debut Performance.

If you would like more information on the podcast please contact Rebecca Johnson, Rebecca.Johnson4@wales.nhs.uk or Lisa Parry lisa.illuminetheatre@gmail.com