**Making theatre in the midst of austerity:**

**A one-day symposium on theatre, poverty and inequality**

**Martin Harris Centre, University of Manchester, 4 November 2015**

**9am** Registration, with coffee and tea

**9.30 – 10.45** Welcome and keynote session 1: John McGrath & Reece Williams

**John McGrath – Artistic Director, Manchester International Festival (formerly founding Artistic Director, National Theatre Wales and Artistic Director, Contact Theatre, Manchester). ‘Another Country: Place, Poverty and National Theatre Wales’.**

**Reece Williams – Manchester based poet, peer mentor, workshop facilitator and theatre producer, working with Young Identity & Inna Voice Collectives**

**10.45 – 11.15** Break

**11.15 – 12.45** Parallel sessions 1

**12.45 – 2.15** Lunch (brownbag)

Accompanied by the launch of a free online resource on theatre, poverty and economic justice, with presentations by Janine Waters (Edge Theatre), Melodramatics (Octagon Theatre/Bolton at Home), and Amanda Dalton/Sarah Lovell (Royal Exchange Theatre)

**2.15 – 3.45** Parallel sessions 2

**3.45 – 4.15** Break

**4.15 – 5.30** Keynote session 2: Stella Duffy

Stella Duffy - Co-director of the Fun Palaces campaign, theatre-maker and writer. ‘There is No Austerity (of Brilliant People’.

With responses from Rachel Clements (Lecturer in Drama, University of Manchester) and Amanda Dalton (Director of Engagement, Royal Exchange Theatre)

**5.30 Close of symposium** Pre-performance refreshments, for those staying for the performance (soup and snacks), available from 5.30

**7pm *The House* –** a solo performance by Carran Waterfield (Triangle Theatre), followed by Q&A (running time one hour, plus Q&A)

**Parallel sessions 1 (morning, 11.15-12.45)**

**Session 1: Making and representing**

**Chair - Maggie Gale**

John Deeney, Manchester Metropolitan University

Powerhouses of spectacular precarity: the politics and poetics of poverty in recent Manchester drama and theatre

Kerrie Schaefer, Exeter University & Graham Jeffery, University of the West of Scotland

Theatres of hope? The politics and pragmatics of cultural practice in austerity's 'extreme economy’

Andy Smith, theatre-maker

YOU AND ME, HERE AND NOW: De-materialising the theatre to re-materialise the theatre

**Session 2: Theatre spaces and austerity**

**Chair – Steve Bottoms**

Lourdes Orozco, University of Leeds

Theatre in the Outskirts: The Holbeck Underground Ballroom, poverty and resilience

Claire Cochrane, Worcester University

Making theatre in the jaws of doom: austerity, artistry and Birmingham rep

Alice Borchi, Warwick University

Teatro Valle Occupato: protesting, occupying and making art in contemporary Italy

**Session 3: Identity, community, transformation**

**Chair - Jenny Hughes**

Matthew Elliott, Collective Encounters

Theatre for Change: Collective Encounters’ and the multitude of opposition

Selina Busby, Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London

Finding A Concrete Utopia In The Dystopia Of A ‘Sub’ City

Alison Jeffers, University of Manchester

Authority, authorship and authorisation: an analysis of the radical potential of community plays in Belfast

Matthew Knights, playwright

Who is poor? Popular and political theatre

**Parallel sessions 2 (afternoon, 2.15–3.45)**

**Session 4: Histories, communities and activism**

**Chair - Kate Dorney, V&A/University of Manchester**

Carry Gorney, artist and writer

Linking Lives: a participatory performance with migrants in a deprived area of Melbourne (1980)

Sian Rees, Goldsmiths, University of London

Don’t Keep Calm. Reclaiming austerity politics through theatre and folklore

Susan Croft, Unfinished Histories

"Turning reality up to the level of art": Experiments in urban living and alternative theatre in the 1970s - Dispatches from Camden Town and Kentish Town, London

**Session 5: Work, unemployment and making/makers**

**Chair - Alison Jeffers**

Matt Jennings, Ulster University

Just about coping’: precarity and resilience among applied theatre and community arts workers in Northern Ireland and Scotland

Naomi Alexander, Brighton People’s Theatre

Brighton People’s Theatre: a case study of artistic R&D

Sarah Bartley, Queen Mary, University of London

Hard Labour and Punitive Welfare: Aestheticising the Unemployed Body at Work

**www.manchester.ac.uk/poortheatres**

**@PoorTheatres #poortheatres**