



Terra Nova Productions is the only dedicated intercultural theatre company on the island of Ireland.

Set up and run by professional immigrant artists with global experience, we are currently celebrating our 15<sup>th</sup> Birthday.



TERRA NOVA  
PRODUCTIONS

<https://www.terrano productions.net>

written and directed by Andrea Montgomery | design by Tracey Lindsay | lighting design by James McFetridge

"Amazing! Very gripping  
and emotionally charged"

audience member

"Brilliant acting, funny,  
tragic and fascinating"

audience member

# The Trumpet & The King

Touring Northern Ireland

Spring 2023



In the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, John Blanke, a young black musician of exceptional talent left the ancient city of Granada and made his way to the court of Henry VII of England.

There he forged a surprising musical bond with the child who would become the infamous Henry VIII.

The **Trumpet & The King** is a play set at the crux of history, where Islam meets Christianity, black meets white and talent meets power. It also owes much to its development in the religious and political crucible of modern post-conflict Northern Ireland. In the play we follow John Blanke, the first named black artist in British history, as he makes his way across the courts of Christian Europe to Tudor England.

*“Is it not written? Put not your faith in Princes...”*

John shines as the charismatic heart of the play, showcasing the compelling talent required to thrive in Tudor England as a foreigner and an infidel. He enchants Prince Henry with the stories, poetry and music of Al Andalus.

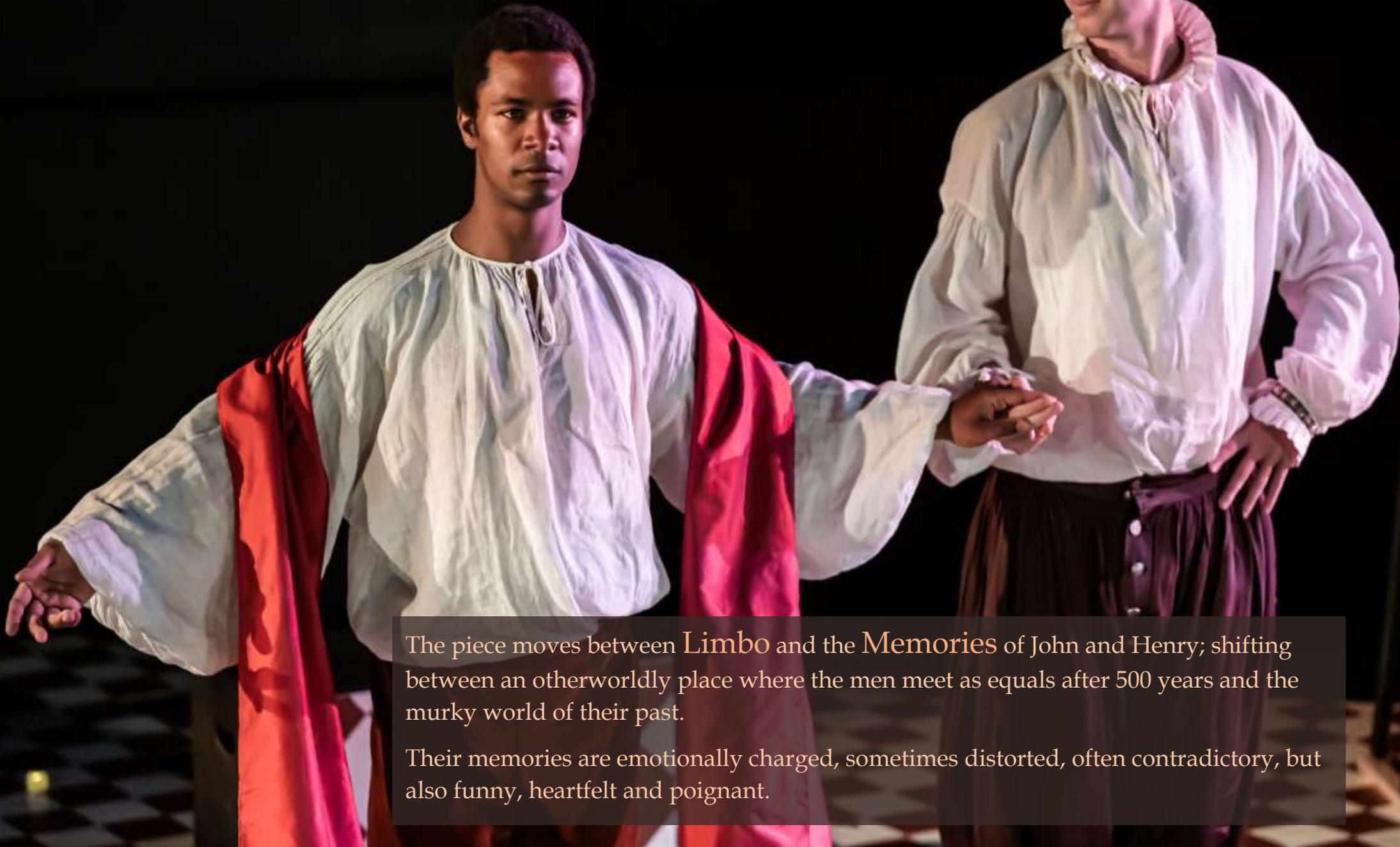
Henry moves us with the sweetness and the flaws of a damaged boy who will one day grow into a heartless autocrat.

It is a timely look at privilege, and the danger of absolute power.

But most of all **The Trumpet & The King** is a play about the longing to belong, about friendship across cultural and religious divides. And music. How art can give us hope of connection, communion and belonging.

*“I was so homesick there were tears standing in my eyes. But homesick for what? A feeling of belonging? The freedom to speak my feelings unchecked?”*

*The Trumpet & The King* is written for two actors, who play every character in every place, from the Alhambra in Spain to the throne room of the Tudor Court, from Katherine of Aragon to Henry VII.



The piece moves between *Limbo* and the *Memories* of John and Henry; shifting between an otherworldly place where the men meet as equals after 500 years and the murky world of their past.

Their memories are emotionally charged, sometimes distorted, often contradictory, but also funny, heartfelt and poignant.

And through it all runs **Music**, composed by Nick Boyle, with Renaissance trumpet played by Aaron Akugbo, and vocal music by over 60 singers from across Ireland and around the world.

Tracey Lindsay's **Set** which began as a conventional room in prototypes, now gives us a Tudor floor piled up with sheet music, suspended in endless space: as if Samuel Beckett sketched Wolf Hall.

Evocative **Lighting** by James McFetridge, who first came to prominence with [Stones in His Pockets](#), completes the world.



## What Audiences Said About Trumpet & King Prototype Performances



*I thought it was fantastic. It is essential that we challenge the 'white' history that we have been taught.*

*Incredible acting. Much more 'physical' than anticipated. I loved it.*

*Powerful authentic performances.*

*Brilliant portrayal by actors. Drew me in and I felt their passion & emotion.*

*Loved it!! Loved the sound and music. Very atmospheric.*

*Very compelling with a good balance of humour.*

*A really convincing and emotive performance.*

*Fantastic performances and great to hear John Blanke's story. I absolutely loved this play and would be more than happy to watch this as a final piece. Actors are perfect. Momentum, humour and staging. It's written in a way that, to me, demonstrates the emotions of the two men, irrespective of their positions and social relation.*

*What an incredible story! A really powerful piece: so deftly written, directed and performed. I am over the moon at the fact that this is coming out of Northern Ireland. As a parent of children of colour I am elated that these whitewashed histories are being challenged and redefined. Massive congratulations!!!"*

## Engagement

Three years of community engagement sustains **The Trumpet & the King**. As a partner with a mastery of intercultural community engagement, we have a lot to offer. We run great programmes to enhance our shows on tour. Our way of doing things has featured in academic publications from Melbourne to Galway, Lisbon to Hong Kong.



We bring an exceptional wealth of ethical intercultural practice to the table.



What's more, working with us is fun.

**The Trumpet & The King** has been developed over more than three years, using our intercultural ethical practice, right here in Northern Ireland.

Throughout autumn 2022 we're continuing R&D and community engagement, preparing for touring in Spring 2023.

What we bring to the table:

- A truly, deeply intercultural work of art, created using internationally recognised ethical practice
- A finely-honed, locally acclaimed production, backed by more than £120k of development and engagement to date
- Exceptional emerging multi-racial talent
- A willingness to develop engagement specific to your venue
- A global track record: Terra Nova has worked in Macau, Hong Kong, Greenland, Iran, France Egypt, Canada and all across the UK and Ireland

Northern Irish programmers, we hope to bring this unique work to your theatre!



Belfast  
City Council



LOTTERY FUNDED



Policing & Community  
Safety Partnership  
making Ards & North Down safer



COMMUNITY  
RELATIONS  
COUNCIL  
Share | Diversify | Interdependence



The Trumpet & The King is a timely show, with the potential to grow.  
It's lean, clever and topical; with extraordinary historic appeal, and was created right here in  
Northern Ireland.

To talk about booking this show  
contact  
[andrea@terrano productions.net](mailto:andrea@terrano productions.net)  
or 07958 916 984.

Great things begin when  
artists meet.

