

Robert
Softley
in association with
The Arches



"Strong, sexy"
Scotsman

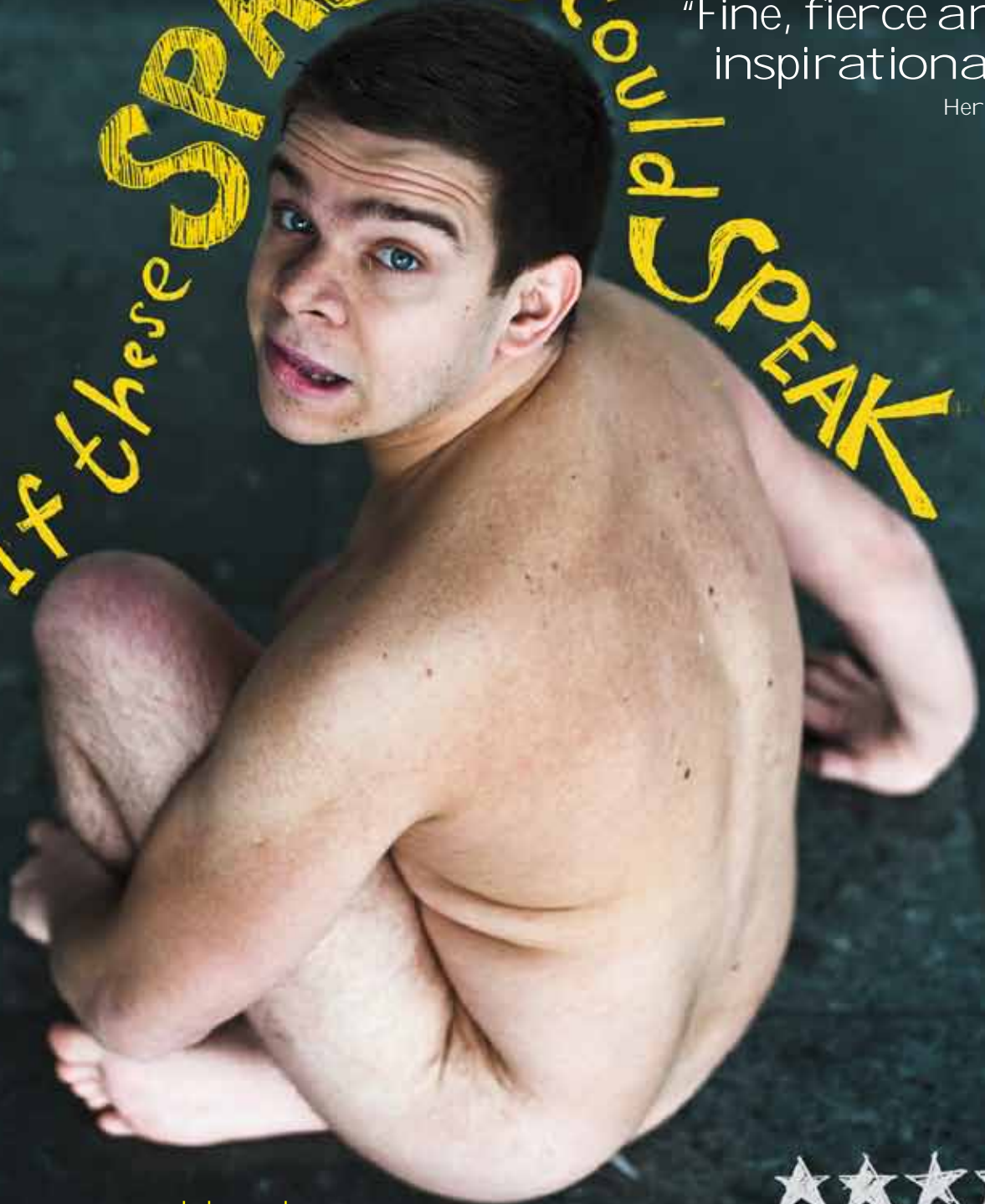


"Brilliantly
Funny"
Fest



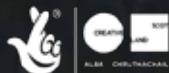
"Fine, fierce and
inspirational"
Herald

If these **SPASMS** could **SPEAK**



ifthesespasmscouldspeak.com

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LOTTERY FUNDED



"a fine performer, full of
humour, intelligence and
great stage presence"

List



If These Spasms Could Speak

by **Robert Softley**

Sell-out show: Behaviour festival, Arches, Glasgow 2012

Runner Up: Scottish Arts Club Award - Best Scottish Play 2013

Made In Scotland showcase, Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2013

About the show:

As disabled people, our bodies are central to how we exist in the world. They are the way others first judge us, the subject of medical diagnosis, and usually seen as the reason that we can't take part in society. And yet, they also carry with them volumes of stories about incidents, scrapes and calamities. Let us tell you how we perceive ourselves.

A new solo theatre work by disabled artist **Robert Softley**, co-creator of **National Theatre of Scotland's** *Girl X* ("Thrilling ... compelling ... radical ... complex" The Guardian ****)

A collection of funny, sad, touching and surprising narratives, gathered through interviews with disabled people. An engaging, highly humorous and interactive live art performance about disabled people that exposes a truth behind bodies that differ from the norm.

NB: A selection of **talks** and **workshops** can provide an accompaniment to the show on request.

Promotional Material:

Website

www.ifthesespasmscouldspeak.com

Vimeo production images and music

<http://vimeo.com/59241401>

App for iPad

Script and images



Press:

“Amid all the show’s complex mesh of thoughts and memories ... - and a strong, sexy sense of the sheer value and beauty of life, however physically difficult- it’s Softley’s own voice that sings most clearly ... Every fragment of his behaviour, after all -from crawling on stage to take up his place in the spotlight, to stripping off at the behest of a remembered nosy doctor- is transformed, made harder, made new by his physical limitations. And in celebrating his own life, he makes us see our own, with completely fresh eyes.”

★★★★ **The Scotsman**

“As Softley crawls onto the stage, there’s a roguish grin on his face, maybe because he knows his monologue, his very presence, is a challenge to how society still pigeon-holes the disabled- and it’s probably not as the kind of well-educated, successful writer/performer who now entertains us with personal anecdotes of a frank and sometimes horny nature. The man is a charmer. Good-looking, self-aware and a slyly witty raconteur ... his solo show is rendered wryly humorous. But it’s when he muses on his body’s condition ... that you truly appreciate Softley’s untrammelled passion for being alive in the moment- fine, fierce and inspirational.”

★★★★ **Herald**

“Heartwarming, funny and difficult by turns... an infectiously cheerful attitude.”

★★★★ **British Theatre Guide**

“A fine performer, full of humour, intelligence and great stage presence. Softley makes for an interesting and funny hour-long host, and everything he has to say is worth listening to and considering.”

★★★★ **List**

“Part sit-down comedy set, part educational workshop on dealing with the disabled, Robert Softley’s hour demystifies disability by redirecting our attention to the very typical human beings who happen to have disabilities.”

Stage

“A clever and charming script, a performance that is full of energy...a tremendous achievement.”

★★★★ **Broadway Baby**

“Brilliantly funny... it’s a pleasure to hear stories that are still often unspoken articulated so openly and so well.”

★★★★ **Fest**



The Company:

Writer/Performer	<i>Robert Softley</i>	Audio Description	<i>Christopher McKiddie</i>
Director	<i>Sam Rowe</i>	BSL interpretation	<i>Paul Belmonte</i>
Lighting Design	<i>Nich Smith</i>	Production Manager	<i>Gordon Nimmo Smith</i>
Musical Director	<i>Scott Twynholm</i>	Marketing & Press	<i>The Arches</i>
Music	<i>Scott Twynholm/Stuart David</i>	Producer	<i>LJ Findlay-Walsh</i>
Electric guitar	<i>Kjartan Olafsson</i>		
Photography	<i>Tommy Ga Ken Wan</i>		

Technical Specifications:

Scale	Small scale
Company size	4 on the road
Space	8ft x 6ft raised (60cm) staging - on rostrum to be provided by venue or company Suitable for horseshoe or end on seating Sound and lighting desk required and Basic Rig required If lighting pre rig, possible plans can be supplied
Props & Set	Projector (over 2500 lumens) 13amp plug to rear stage 1 LED baton and 2 LED floods to be rigged on arrival Cables for above Armchair Fake gun (can be toured in lockable case)
Set up/strike time	Four hours get in – assistance from venue tech required
Access provision	BSL interpretation, audio description and text support provided on hand held devise



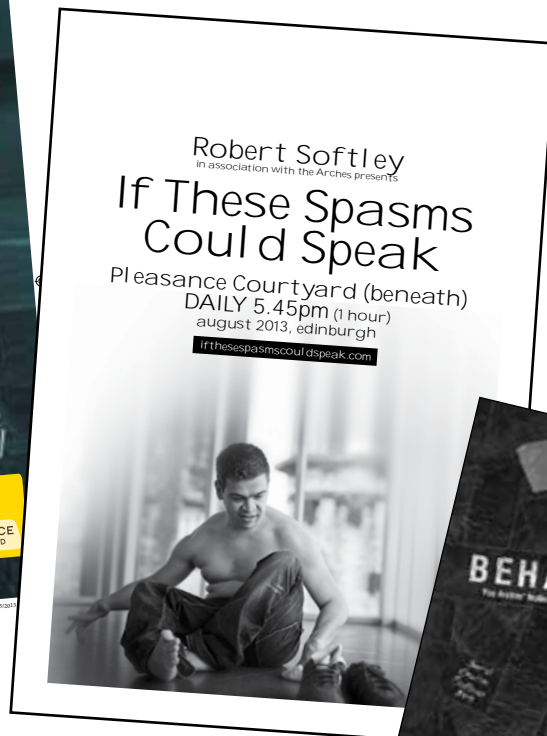
Biographies:

Robert Softley:

Robert Softley is an established figure in the Scottish arts scene, with over ten years of experience in diverse and varied roles – including disability rights activist, actor and performer, writer, artistic director and supporter and advocate of access to the arts for disabled people whether as artists or audiences. Robert's professional acting debut was with Theatre Workshop (Edinburgh) in 'Nothing Ever Burns Down By Itself' in 2002 and since then he has appeared in many productions – most recently instigating, co-writing and performing in 'Girl X' for the National Theatre of Scotland, directed by Pol Heyvaert of Belgium's Campo. In 2011 he was awarded and undertook a Creative Scotland residency which allowed him to develop 'If These Spasms Could Speak', which was initially presented at the Arches during Behaviour 2012. A graduate of Glasgow University with an MSc (Hons) in Business & Management, Robert's other role is as a director of flip – disability equality in the arts (www.flip.org.uk) which works across Scotland to support individuals and organisations in the arts sector. Robert is also an Artistic Director of Birds of Paradise Theatre Company, Scotland's touring company that promotes the work of disabled artists in partnership with non-disabled artists and mainstream theatre venues and companies

The Arches:

The Arches, one of Europe's leading cultural venues, is both an arts receiving and production house with an international reputation as an exciting hub of ground-breaking creativity. Housed within seven Grade A listed Victorian railway arches in Glasgow city centre, the venue presents a year-round programme of theatre, performance, dance, visual art, live music and club nights. The arts programming team employs calculated risk-taking in all of its creative decisions, nurturing emergent talent and rewarding bold approaches with a supportive environment for further innovation – showcased each autumn at *Arches LIVE*, a two week long celebration of new, Scottish, contemporary performance talent. Alongside local artists, the Arches presents world-class international artists and companies such as **The TEAM, Derevo, Ann Liv Young, Mammalian Diving Reflex, Ontroerend Goed, Akhe, Taylor Mac** and **Tim Crouch** in the venue as part of its annual *Behaviour* festival of live performance. The Arches regularly wins awards at the *Edinburgh Festival Fringe* and tours work internationally – in recent years this has included taking shows to New York, Spoleto Festival, Sao Paulo and the National Theatre and Barbican in London. www.thearches.co.uk



Availability:

Availability	November 2013 onwards (limited availability Sept - Oct)
Running Time	60 minutes, no interval
Description:	Theatre / Solo performance / Live Art
Language	English
Suitability	14+ (some strong sexual language)

Please contact:

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 Arches Arts Programme Producer
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 lj@thearches.co.uk

THE ARCHES



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