

## **Flood: To The Sea. By James Phillips. Made by Slung Low.**

30 minutes of television set at the height of the great flood that destroys Hull. 3 people in the water struggling for survival. The tale of their fight to live. Part of a series of live and digital performances made by Slung Low, written by James Phillips called Flood.

Flood is produced by Hull UK City of Culture 2017 and Slung Low.

### **Summary**

Gloriana predicted the floods long before they came to Hull. Now at the height of the floods she finds herself in the water surrounded by those struggling to survive. Can she keep them, and herself, alive?

### **140 characters Twitter Summary**

Gloriana predicted the floods. Now at their height she's in the water surrounded by others struggling to survive. Can she save any of them?

### **Flood: Project Overview**

**Flood** is the story of what happened when the world was destroyed, and how the people who still lived tried to make it new again.

**Flood** is a vast story set in a future present Hull. It will be played in 2017, in Hull.

**Flood** is a 4 Part Epic in different mediums, with each part enriching and linking to every other but where you can fall in love with each section as a stand-alone piece.

Flood is part of a continuing series of political contemporary renderings of classic stories. They are theatre adventures set in a future present British dystopia. They are stories which use what might be in order to try to illuminate what currently is.

**Camelot: The Shining City** was a radical use of the Arthur myth set in a disunited British Kingdom when a young orphan woman became a self-proclaimed new Arthur to lead a fundamentalist English revolution.

**The White Whale** was a new version of Moby Dick, staged on a floating, fire laden platform. It was an exploration of religious and environmental violence and was performed in the borough of Leeds where 3 of the 7/7 bombers came from.

Made by Slung Low, all are written by James Phillips and made by the core creative team of Slung Low members: Lucy Hind, Heather Fenoughty, David Farley and Matt Angove.

These are the 4 parts of **Flood**-

**Part One: Prologue: "From the Sea"**

A short film introducing a world. A Fishing Captain, from Hull, makes an unusual catch. Pulling up nets from the deep sea he finds a single net empty of all fish. Instead, nestled within a hundred migrant's orange life jackets, there lies curled a naked girl, heavily tattooed, her hands bandaged. The situation an enigma. He tenderly begins to unwrap the bandaged hands. A letter fresh tattooed and still bleeding is visible on each revealed finger.

G.L.O.R.I.A.N.A.

And the dead girl sits up. Vomiting out water. Reaching for him. Alive.

**Part Two: "Abundance"**

A live play, performed for 5 nights during Easter 2017, in which we witness the end of the world.

Gloriana, the girl who doesn't know her own name and is so known simply by her tattoos, begins in a Migrant Detention Centre in our City by the Sea. She sees visions. She dreams of the end of the world, of a city sinking. She escapes and becomes an emblem of the protest movement sweeping through the city. And it starts to rain. And it doesn't stop.

**Part Three: "To the Sea"**

A 30 minute piece of live television, in which survivors of the cataclysm search for a place of greater safety. A stand-alone dramatic moment.

**Part Four: "New World"**

A live play with a cast of 100, performed for 5 nights in October 2017, in repertoire with Part One: "Abundance".

3 tiny islands have survived the devastation. 3 types of new society are being formed, one led by Gloriana. 3 ways to restart the world.

And then the islands go to war.

### Part 3: To The Sea, Treatment

#### *Opening teaser:*

*The sea seen wide.*

*A girl sitting cross legged and unnaturally elegant on a slender piece of wood, floating. The rain vast and heavy. The girl is covered in tattoos. She's wearing one of those migrant life jackets. Her face, turning to us, in anticipation. Her name is Gloriana, close up now, she speaks to you:*

*Gloriana        You think the rain is done to you  
                      You think the rain is separate  
                      But you too are liquid.  
                      Which means you too may not be fixed  
                      You too are liquid: which means you can change.*

*Now we see clips from our first live show "Abundance", mixed with video of floods, of social collapse, then footage from the Prologue: a tiny sense of the history that has brought us to now.*

*Gloriana        This is the way the world ends  
                      This is the way the world ended  
                      This is when we saw progress was a myth  
                      This is when it all sank-*

*She smiles.*

*Perhaps.*

*She stands, balletic on the wooden plank. She undoes her migrant life jacket. And without looking she throws it out into the sea. As it lands a hand comes crashing up from beneath the water. A woman dragging herself to the surface, to life, to light.*

*Titles-*

**"To The Sea"** is a journey. The journey from a destroyed land in search of a place of greater safety. A refugee's journey.

Here are beats of physical action, within the five act structure chosen for the 30 minute drama.

*i.*

Rain pouring down on the flooded land.

A tall pylon, slanted and slipping, stands at the edge of the seascape. Jack, 30's, in the water near the sinking pylon.

The water is rising. The pylon crackling. Jack screaming for help as the water pulls him closer to the crackling pylon.

Now we see Gloriana in the water. She is pushing-swimming the woman who grabbed her flung lifejacket and who now lies precarious on the little wooden board: Zeina, 20's.

"Swim away from the pylon," Gloriana shouts.

As the water reaches the top of the pylon there is an explosion of sparks.

Silence.

They survived.

Gloriana (to Jack) Take the edge of the wood.

Jack swims to the tiny platform. He grabs it, and Zeina nearly slides into the water.

They tread water. Without help they're dead.

Jack I'm tired. Too tired.

Gloriana I know you. You worked at the camp.

Zeina The camp?

Gloriana Detention centre.

Jack (indicating Zeina) Where's she from?

Gloriana From?

Jack English?

Gloriana She's from the sea.

Now the sound of rushing water and bubbles start to appear just in front of them. Zeina afraid.

Zeina Shark?

Gloriana (Smiles) No shark.

A big bang like an underwater explosion and one last bubble and a large object floats to the surface. It is recognizably a static caravan.

Gloriana Come on.

They swim to the caravan and tentatively climb on board.

Now a frantic balancing act: a dumb show in which the three stand on the floating caravan and strive to keep it both level and floating. They manage it, eventually. Lull.

ii.

Zeina looks out.

Zeina There's a body in the water.

POV the caravan: a body in a Lifeboat volunteer uniform heading towards the caravan.

Jack It might have a phone.

Gloriana looks out over the wide empty sea, catches Zeina's eye.

Zeina            Going to phone a friend?

They form a human chain to balance the caravan and reach out and eventually grasp the body.

Gloriana        Whistle, there's a whistle round the neck-

They seek to pull the body onto the caravan, but the extra weight tips the vehicle dangerously and it starts to sink. Gloriana slipping into the water pulls the whistle from the corpse and lets it go, finds a knife too in the belt. Throws them back to Jack on the caravan. She struggles back, breathing heavily.

Now a car, its nose beneath the waves, drifting towards the caravan. The current quickening. The car now ten feet from the caravan.

Gloriana        Listen.

A bang from inside the boot of the car.

Zeina            There's someone in there.

Gloriana slips from the caravan into the water, swims to the car. Pounds on the boot, unable to open it. Zeina swims out a few feet from the caravan, stops, afraid. Jack remains.

Gloriana        *(to Jack on the caravan)* I need something to break the glass. Jack! The knife.  
Jack!

Jack turns away.

Jack            We can only float with three. You know that.

Gloriana pounds harder on the boot of the car. An answering thump from within, weakening now.

Zeina            They're drowning.

The thumps quietening to silence now.

Gloriana swims back to the caravan, lets the car go. She attacks Jack, beats the shit out of him, is a heartbeat from tearing out his throat with her teeth.

Silence, the sound of their breathing.

Zeina            *(a statement)* We'll die here won't we.

*iii.*

The rain at its heaviest now. Sheeting down.

Now Jack sees something silhouetted through gloom. Stands, uneasy. He turns back to the women. Now he's certain.

"It's a boat."

Gloriana silent, head to one side, an animal taste testing air and finding it not fit for purpose.

"It's one of the trawlers that took people"

Zeina looks up," Took people?"

“For money,” Jack standing now,” they paid to find a new country, safe country”

And it is a fishing trawler, and it is coming towards them. High sides, impossible to see inside from the low position of the three.

And Jack will stand and shriek and promise every penny in his pocket, every promise in his soul for the trawler to take him. And the trawler will stop. And the camera will follow Jack as he tries to scramble up the side, will overtake him and rise over the crested side of the ship and look down and see a hundred exhausted dying people crammed so close so tight they can only stand up, covered in each other’s piss and tears. In the centre, dead eyes, stands the Captain who raised Gloriana from the deeps in the Prologue.

POV Captain: Gloriana, who has scrambled to stand next to Jack.

“Did you take their money?”

The Captain is silent. Far away.

Gloriana turns away.

“Jack, come back to us,” she says, “the ship: it is sinking.”

But Jack is transfixed, held in the spiders’ web. He does not step back.

The ship sinks. Jack goes down with it.

*iv.*

Now Gloriana and Zeina lie on the top of the floating caravan

Zeina            I know it’s sinking

Gloriana        Yes.

Zeina            But you’re not afraid, are you?

Gloriana        Never been afraid of the water.

Zeina            Talk to me.

Zeina’s hand reaching for Gloriana’s. The tattooed fingers now concealed by another’s hands. And Gloriana speaks. Tells her stories of the sea. Of how the sea calls to you, its siren song.

The water lapping at their feet now. The caravan almost submerged.

Now Zeina’s hand releasing Gloriana’s.

Zeina            We’re not both going to make it.

And Zeina slips off the caravan, into the sea, swims away.

Gloriana watching her, a tiny figure disappearing into the vastness of the flood.

Lost.

v.

Gloriana lies back on the caravan, the water approaching her body now, a tattooed filthy Ophelia.

Time passing. Gloriana looks out across the waves.

Sees whale spouts, twenty feet away.

Smiles.

More spouts.

Gloriana.      This is the way our world ends

                    If our world must end

                    This is the way-

The distant sound of a helicopter.

Gloriana raises her head. A searchlight out to sea.

She smiles. Stands. Blows her whistle. Useless, throws it away. Which rocks the caravan further: nearly beneath the waves now.

She dives through the sky light window into the body of the caravan, disappearing. She bursts back holding a small propane bottle and an old fashioned long handle oven starter and a kitchen knife. She cuts through the plastic tubing on the end of the bottle.

Gloriana      This is the way the world ends

                    With a bang not a whimper-

She opens up the propane and sets fire to it. A small explosion. Gloriana knocked back, nearly falling in to the water. But there is fire: a steady, terrifying, 10 inch burst of flame coming from the bottle. She raises it above her head.

The helicopter seemingly disappeared, the search light lost. The caravan sinking beneath the waves. The propane flare still blowing.

Gloriana closes her eyes.

The roar of the helicopter. The water smashing with the downdraft. And then the search light. Sweeping around and finally settling on her.

Gloriana raises her hands to the light.

Blackout.

## **A TV Collaboration**

Mark Catley has been working with the company as Executive Producer on Flood: To the Sea. Mark is a long-time theatre collaborator of Slung Low's and is an experienced TV writer and Executive Producer for the BBC. Most recently he was Exec Producer on the 30th anniversary episode of Casualty broadcast in August 2016.

Steve Hughes has had a number of really useful conversations with Slung Low Artistic Director Alan Lane and is the proposed TV director for this project. Steve is an experienced TV director working regularly for the BBC on Doctor Who, Midsomer Murders and Land Girls. Most recently he was the director on the action packed 30th Anniversary episode of Casualty.

Steve worked on that show with his regular Stunt Co-ordinator Julian Spencer. As well as his TV credits including The Night Manager Julian has a vast experience in film including much of Danny Boyle's past work.

The budget documents have been compiled with support from Wendy Wright, producer at the BBC.



## **Schedule**

(Relevant schedule points for the wider Flood project are in *italics*)

### **Early November.**

Decision.

Select then hire core team: TV Director first then DOP/Lighting Director, Stunt Co-ordinator, Line Producer.

### **Winter 2016.**

*Cast Gloriana.*

Start to identify and recruit camera team based on TV Director's suggestions, Screen England resource and Hull 17 contacts.. Confirm OB company.

*Draft script of Part 2.*

### **January 2017.**

Distribute Part 3 script and design and action plot.

*Part One (Prologue) Filming.*

### **February/March 2017.**

*Rehearsal and build for Part Two (including systems and infrastructure for Part 3).*

### **Early April 2017.**

*Perform Part Two (Live Show) in Victoria Dock.*

Invite Core TV team to Part Two.

### **End of April 2017.**

1 day's artistic planning: Theatre Director, TV director, DOP, Designer.

### **May 2017.**

Production meeting: TV Director, DOP, Line Producer, Core Theatre Creative Team. Go through schedule, go through crew breakdown, theatre/TV cross over.

### **June 2017.**

Fit-up/Technical rehearsals: 1 week. Set arrives in place, moving parts (sink and float rates and behaviours of new set, Part 3 specific special effects, pyro effects) tested. (*Substantial structural and infrastructure work will have been completed earlier with Part 2 rehearsals and build*)

Theatre rehearsals: 2 weeks. (agreed initial camera and lighting positions pre-rehearsals)

**June 2017. Final week.**

TV Director and DOP in theatre rehearsals: 2 days (Monday/Tuesday)

Stunt Co-ordinator: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday.

Camera Department: 2 days rehearsal prep (Tuesday/Wednesday)

OB truck: Rig Wednesday, tech Wednesday evening.

Thursday: Dress (evening)

Friday: Dress (evening)

Saturday: Show.

Sunday: De-rig OB truck.

**October 2017.**

*Part 4 Performance in rep with all previous parts.*

**Notes.**

- Currently based on a 4 camera set-up.
- Liaise with OB company and Director on technical standards for previous show inserts.
- Whilst it is expected that the sets for Part 2 and 3 will be entirely different the site will be the same. As will large sections of the company infrastructure, technical support and logistical frameworks. This will be useful as it will have been play tested during Part 2 during a month of technical rehearsals and a week of public performances.
- There is no live audience for Part 3 on the live night. But residents, members of the people's theatre company performing Part 4 and other identified community groups will be invited to the dress rehearsals.

## Performance Site

Victoria Dock in Hull. A large contained piece of water (3m deep) in the middle of a housing estate in Hull. All the stages of Flood will be performed in and around the dock. The water providing the perfect mix of controllable environments to achieve the various challenges outlined in the treatment.

Engagement work with local community groups, residents and councillors have begun and the company are expected to move on to site in February 2017.

