**SUBSTANCE PANEL 07/12/17**

Panellists:

Kate West (hack & host)

Aisha Zia (Common Wealth theatre)

Gillian Nicol (a-n)

Leonie Higgins (eggs collective)

***How do artists talk about politics, place and gender?***

Artists often comment on the social and political landscapes but this becomes more apparent in times of austerity. Our political uncertainty in recent years has been spoken about a lot in the media - print and social, there has been reports issued and academic insight but what happens when artists use their skills to talk about it too. Can this have an effect? Can gender come into play within this conversation and will it change our sense of place?

**POLITICS**

Introductions - all four panelists describe how they talk about politics in their work.

Sub questions to intros;

1/ Do you feel that when there is a lot of political change that it makes for rich artistic content.

2/ Is there more of an urge to collaborate during political movements when artists bond over beliefs.

3/ Are you ever worried you alienate audiences making a strong political stance?

**GENDER**

With an all female line up and all panel members representing organisations with female directors it's important we talk about gender.

1/ does anyone feel this is not an important topic / is your gender considered or not in the the work you make, represent or talk about?

2/ if you are to comment on social, political and economic topics are you heard? Do you ever feel tokenistic? Or seen as a raving feminist?

3/ Do some women reach a stage in the arts where they feel pushed out, with little stability in terms of maternity pay and leave for freelancers plus unsociable long hours - is this the reason for a gender pay gap in the arts?

4/ the widely used hashtag #MeToo and the thousands of signatures by artists on the not-surprised letter is eye opening about abuse of power in the arts, are any of the panel members victims of this?

**PLACE**

1/ how much does where you live influence the work you make or represent?

2/ does the work we show to audiences change with the place in which we show it?

3/ all 4 organisations talk about elements of open dialog and interaction, how does this change from place to place? What can the we learn from this?