

Jo Blake-Cave

Jo Blake Cave is a contemporary storyteller based in Northamptonshire, England. Her work includes performance storytelling for theatres, art centres and festivals; site-specific events that explore the stories of place and belonging; and traditional, informal storytelling sessions in libraries, museums, storytelling clubs, schools and a whole variety of venues. These performances range from simple retellings of stories to the interweaving of traditional narratives with multi-media and movement. Jo draws from an ever-expanding repertoire of international fairytales, epics and myths and enjoys both solo projects as well as collaborations with other artists, including poets, musicians, directors, and fellow storytellers. Jo's aim is to bring relevant, quality and imaginative tellings of ancient stories to contemporary audiences.

Since 2010, Jo has been Storyteller-in-Residence at the Royal & Derngate Theatre in Northampton, where she regularly performs, leads workshops and curates a bi-monthly storytelling night which has seen some of the best storytellers in the UK come to Northampton. Watch out for *Behind the Curtain*, Jo's commissioned backstage 'story-tour' of the historic Royal & Derngate



After being highly commended in the 2007 Young Storyteller of the Year Competition she has gone on to perform at several festivals, including Beyond the Border, Festival at the Edge, Litfest and Alden Biesen in Belgium – and then with the creation of her two premier pieces, *We are Pathmakers* and *The Smiling Fox*, she has performed at The Barbican, The Soho Theatre, and the Tristan Bates Theatre in London. In 2009 she was the youngest storyteller to be nominated for the prestigious Arts Foundation Fellowship Award. She is a Crick Crack Club recommended storyteller. In 2012, along with Clare Murphy and Dominic Kelly, Jo established a new storytelling company, Talking Skull Ensemble. TSE exists to interrogate and develop excellence in contemporary storytelling practice. In January the ensemble received an GftA Arts Council Award to develop their company practice. They will be touring their first ensemble performance in late 2013.

Jo is an Associate Lecturer on the BA Acting degree course at the University of Northampton, having gained a 1st class honours in Performing Arts at the University of Winchester and an MA with distinction in Dance Theatre from Laban. She is currently studying for a practice-based PhD in performance storytelling at the University of Chichester under the supervision of Professor Jane Bacon and Dr Ian Hornsby.

Her poetic performances weave together traditional tales, mythology, biography and autobiography, with a dynamic, expressive physicality. She is a warm and animated performer, and a keen interrogator of the art of performance storytelling.

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