Ages and Stages:
The Place of Theatre in Representations and Recollections of Ageing
(2009-2012)

DRAMATIS PERSONAE
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THE SCENE: The Potteries, North Staffordshire – an area with a long industrial history.

PROLOGUE
A collaborative, interdisciplinary mixed method project which aims to explore: how age and ageing has been constructed, represented and understood in the New Victoria Theatre’s social documentaries from the 1960s to the present day; what part the theatre has played in constructing individual and community identities and in creating and preserving community memory; what the relationship is between older people’s involvement in the theatre and continuing social engagement in later life; and what the practical and policy implications are.

ACT ONE: STRAND 2
Recollections and Contemporary Representations of Ageing
In which we conduct a series of individual and group interviews with four groups of people who are now old but were: (i) sources for the Vic’s ground-breaking social documentaries; (ii) volunteers with the theatre; (iii) audience members throughout their lives; (iv) actors and others who made their lives in the area and continue to be part of the local community.

ACT TWO: STRAND 3
Performing and Re-presenting Ageing
In which material from Strands 1 and 2 is used to work with an intergenerational group of ‘actors’. Together, we will create and chart the evolution of a ‘new’ social documentary performance, an exhibition and a range of associated materials before taking them out into local schools and centres for older people.

EPILOGUE: Outputs
A new social documentary performance and associated exhibition; materials and workshops for arts practitioners, teachers and other individuals and organisations; policy guidance/policy briefs and policy workshops; an international, interdisciplinary conference on ‘Theatre, Ageing and Community Memory’; contributions to knowledge, theory and methodology; the training of postgraduate and postdoctoral scholars in interdisciplinary and collaborative ageing research.

Further information:
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