

# Spring

*A new play by Laura Atherton*



It's time to boost the soil  
to replenish  
to give the life source  
the nutrients it needs  
to feed in  
in the hope that when spring comes  
when spring eventually comes  
there will be a place for new growth  
new life.

# *When your future falls away, how far can you be pushed before you break?*

*Freya and Aaron are moving into their first house. They did it, they managed to get onto the property ladder! Things were going to plan for their future, until they miscarried the weekend before moving in. Set in their new garden (which needs a lot of work) over three consecutive springs, Spring follows the couple as they navigate loss, fertility challenges and an overgrown piece of land.*

*Will they be able to get pregnant again? What lengths will they need to go to? Will they and their relationship survive?*

*Spring is a two-hander that links the turbulence of pregnancy loss and infertility fears with climate anxiety to ask what happens when the future we assumed was ours is taken away?*

lost

unknown

out of season

tired, tentative, taut

awake, alert, awake, alert

I search for

the seed

my seed

germinating

unfurling

unfurled.

The cold creeps up: Toes, heels, ankles

The cold sets in: Head, heart.

Themes: fertility, miscarriage, climate anxiety, environment.

# Style and references:

*The play uses poetic interludes and movement alongside naturalistic scenes. Inspired by nature, motivated by the urgency of the climate crisis and driven by the painful experience of infertility and fertility treatment.*



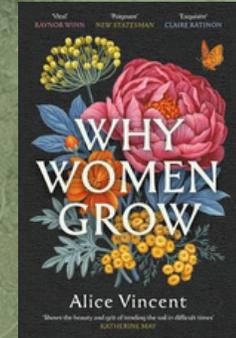
The language of Caryl Churchill's *The Skriker*:  
“Drought rout out and about turn off. Sunburn sunbeam in your eye socket to him.”



*The integration of memoir and nature and naturalistic and expressionistic scenes in *The Outrun* (film)*  
“A little melody starts and merges with the sound of the crashing waves, Rona starts moving her whole body now. It becomes a full body experience and it seems as if all the forces of nature are obeying her.”



The thematics of *Yerma*:  
“A young woman is driven to the unthinkable by her desperate desire to have a child.”



The nature writing of Alice Vincent :  
“Without winter, there is no spring: dormancy allows things to reflect and recharge; it offers a vital pause.”

*Freya: You know I was terrified of getting pregnant when I was young. School taught me to be scared of it. What they didn't teach me was about the ovulation window, about the changes to your body during the menstrual cycle, about how to get pregnant when you do want to. Until we started trying to have a baby, I didn't even know how my own body worked. I call myself a feminist but, but I didn't even take the time to understand my own body.*

*And now my body's not doing what it should, not doing what I have, consciously and unconsciously, understood female bodies to have been built for. It's refusing its nature.*

*And I am really fucking angry.*

# The Creative Team



Laura Atherton is a writer from Wigan with a distinction in Scriptwriting from Manchester School of Writing. A long term associate practitioner with NPO imitating the dog, she is an experienced theatre maker. Obsessed with her garden and frightened about the climate and nature crisis, she's written Spring as an exploration of these through the lens of difficulty in conceiving, an experience that shook her.

**Anna Marshall is a successful Northern theatre director with a distinction MFA in directing from Birkbeck. Co-founder of theatre company Bric-à-Brac, she has worked in the West End, for the National Theatre and toured internationally. Anna brings a sensitivity in her directing and a deep concern for women's stories.**



Bridget Fiske is a multi-faceted choreographer and director based in Manchester who creates cutting edge movement. Her work with Belarus Free Theatre is iconic, impactful and absorbing. She is a sensitive thoughtful maker who'll bring commitment, theatrical power and dedication to the work.

**Tricia Coleman is a multi art form Manchester producer. Most recently working as Executive Producer with Factory international, she's hugely experienced and brings discipline, thoughtfulness and creativity to her producing.**



Rory Howson is a sound designer based near Wigan. An established sound designer and long time collaborator with imitating the dog, Rory is highly skilled at designing in the rehearsal room offering vision, aural detail and creating atmosphere. A real team player, he will develop a detailed soundtrack alongside the directors.

**Ting Huang is a costume and set designer with a distinction MA from Central Saint Martin's where she now works as a Visiting Practitioner. Having worked for organisations such as The Place, imitating the dog and Nicosia Municipal Theatre, she offers a clean, contemporary and innovative design style and excels in working collaboratively.**



Natasha Cottrill is a Wigan born actor and writer whose work includes 'The Welkin' at the National Theatre, 'I, Joan' at the Globe and her recent self-penned show '(God Save My) Northern Soul' at The Park Theatre. Natasha is a trained actor and dancer and will bring a grace and inquisitiveness to the character of Freya as well as being an excellent collaborator to workshop the play which she's already been supporting through early drafts.

**Morgan Bailey is a Manchester based established actor having performed in 'Heart of Darkness', 'Night of the Living Dead' and 'All Blood Runs Red' with imitating the dog, the last of which he co-wrote. A generous, wholehearted actor he brings a wide range of experience of developing shows and writing his own scripts as well as collaboration skills that add to every rehearsal room.**



fertilitynetworkuk

# Research & partnerships

Spring is based on lived experience and engages with personal interviews, the research of Fertility Network UK and the work of Dr Sofia Gameiro.

Supported by The Old Courts, Wigan, the project is offering scriptwriting and nature workshops in collaboration with the theatre and Give it a Grow Wigan as well as connecting with local colleges and the network of Arts Emergency.

Mentoring will come from NPO imitating the dog and renowned playwright, Simon Stephens.

