

## Contra Marketing Pack 2020

### COMPANY CREDITS

Contra is written and performed by Laura Murphy and Directed by Ursula Martinez

The additional creative team is:

Nicole A'Court-Stuart - Producer, Company SM and Sound operator

Katie Davies - Lighting Design

Jen Roxburgh - Re-Lighting

Terry O'Connor - Early Stage Mentoring

Madeline McGowan - Choreographic Support

### ONLINE LINKS & CONTENT

Company Website <http://www.lauramurphy.co.uk/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/laumurphope>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lauramurphyperformance/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/lauramurphyropeweirdo/>

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/387072992>

### TOUR PACK

You can access the tour document here :

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AbR\\_m0aogdhri8YrKE80XB7HgQm0xnzl/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AbR_m0aogdhri8YrKE80XB7HgQm0xnzl/view?usp=sharing)

This includes basic tech info, audience quotes, press coverage, company bios and artistic information.

### SHOW COPY

#### Full:

Drawing from circus, stand-up and live art, Contra is a solo-cabaret of contradictions. Fierce, witty and uncompromising, this highly physical show interrogates personal, social and historical occupations of the female body and explores, literally, where such bodies are positioned and how we are meant to look at them. Expect scenes of nudity, aerial acrobatics, and explicit references to mythical reptiles and female sexuality.

Laura Murphy is a genre-defying queer performance maker from Bristol who makes text-driven and dynamic physical work about things that she thinks need to be talked about. Her work is cross-disciplinary fusion of theatre, live art, aerial choreography, dance and verbal explosions, which integrates intimacy and spectacle.

Laura is a CircusNext Laureate 2018-19 (circusnext is a European circus label supported by the European Union) and holds a PhD in Aerial performance as critical performance from the University of Sheffield.

#### Medium :

Drawing from circus, stand-up and live art, Contra is a solo-cabaret of contradictions. Fierce, witty and uncompromising, this highly physical show interrogates personal, social and historical occupations of the female body and explores, literally, where such bodies are positioned and how we are meant to look at them. Expect scenes of nudity, aerial acrobatics, and explicit references to mythical reptiles and female sexuality.

Short: Fierce, witty and uncompromising - Contra interrogates personal, social and historical occupations of the female body using a fusion of circus stand up and live art.

### PRESS QUOTES AND LINKS

"uncompromising full-frontal circus... Slyly funny and totally owned by performer Laura Murphy"  
- Lyn Gardner  
<https://twitter.com/lyngardner/status/1159942628684828673?s=20>

"a brilliantly knowing piece of full-frontal circus" - Lyn Gardner  
<https://stagedoorapp.com/lyn-gardner/london-bound-a-round-up-of-edinburgh-fringe-transfers?ia=248>

"...a blistering show blending standup, confessional and circus performance... kicking against the culture of female oppression."  
Jamie Dunn, Fest Magazine \*\*\*\*  
<https://www.fest-mag.com/edinburgh/theatre/review-contr>

"Contra is all the mess that is pushed down, only to spring back up, and that is precisely what makes the show so thrilling"  
- Lorna Irvine, The List \*\*\*\*  
<https://edinburghfestival.list.co.uk/article/110553-contr/>

"...writing and direction working hand-in-glove... Each punchline sends her up the rope, writhing and twisting, climbing high, higher, highest and hurtling to the ground."  
Dorothy Max Prior , Total Theatre  
<http://totaltheatre.org.uk/laura-murphy-contr/>

"Contra is a compelling physical performance. Laura Murphy's ability as a circus performer is mesmerising to watch, but it is the boldness and honesty in her words that makes Contra feel like a vital show."  
Steven Fraser, The Wee Review \*\*\*\*  
<https://theweereview.com/review/contr/>

"...a complex new form of solo theatre..."  
Joyce Macmillian , The Scotsman \*\*\*  
<https://www.scotsman.com/arts-and-culture/edinburgh-festivals/theatre-review-contr-summerhall-edinburgh-1-4979732>

"Entertaining and relatable as Contra is, it is also an intellectually rigorous piece of work"  
"For all it's cleverness, Contra gets to an emotional core in me...the show says 'you are not alone in this struggle'.."  
- Katharine Kavanagh, Circus Diaries  
<https://thecircusdiaries.com/2019/08/04/contr-by-laura-murphy/>

### AGE GUIDANCE

16+ Contains nudity, strong language and frank discussions of sex and the body

### SUPPORT CREDITS

Arts Council England, Jacksons Lane , Circus Next, Carre Magique, The Invisible Circus, Aurora Nova

### CIRCUS NEXT

Laura is a Circus Next Laureate for 2018-19 and Contra was produced with the support of the Circus Next Network - <https://www.circusnext.eu>. It is important that you mention Circus Next like this:

*"Laura Murphy is a circusnext Laureate 2018-2019, circusnext is a European circus label supported by the European Union. "*

Circus Next Logo can be accessed here:

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1yO3Mmxiqu68MucGab9Buhg-5FRuK\\_mdw](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1yO3Mmxiqu68MucGab9Buhg-5FRuK_mdw)

### PHOTOGRAPHY

Here are links to some high quality images:

Credit, darko škrobonja :

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C8ubalH-ZrtRw97yNKK\\_wkdHvZicHmSN/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C8ubalH-ZrtRw97yNKK_wkdHvZicHmSN/view?usp=sharing)

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1ZNQPSyOeO4uf8Ka7Ru-PWER1EsAGQyww>

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1m07ETnwCWCXokMSryDenRL2Yy2bT5sep>

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1o5I5qAyiBC1sLfexNj-e6n\\_bl8y63oXd](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1o5I5qAyiBC1sLfexNj-e6n_bl8y63oXd)

Credit, Francis Rodor :

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1HmQAb5OqQeuyNBq1zYhUz4LLk\\_9J60y](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1HmQAb5OqQeuyNBq1zYhUz4LLk_9J60y)

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1b0IT-Qj1ivf4CmijY8VDKadu8aGy59Y6>

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1nr8vHQuzMsErzOSyYTKZyyo-Kz-dSFr>

Credit, Milan Szytura:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1\\_cDcyfMlnMBg2vtwN549vNmJpTe8ZPrY/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_cDcyfMlnMBg2vtwN549vNmJpTe8ZPrY/view?usp=sharing)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JK017JtLyN02nsKKD--36WTvx88QKSfy/view?usp=sharing>

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1AQI1wPL2wRGbLBoN9G4U8UFfHOpXqbWX>

Credit, JP Montagne

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1d-2mhqEu9D-pCTc83glTGILPuKvOqTrT/view?usp=sharing>

### IMAGES FOR NIPPLE AVERSE PLATFORMS (without nudity)

Darko škrobonja Images:

This is our most popular image used in Edinburgh and at Jacksons Lane, there is a nipple but it is very subtle:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C8ubalH-ZrtRw97yNKK\\_wkdHvZicHmSN/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1C8ubalH-ZrtRw97yNKK_wkdHvZicHmSN/view)

This one can easily be cropped to take out a nipple:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1m07ETnwCWCXokMSryDenRL2Yy2bT5sep/view>

This one just has bum..

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o5l5qAyjBC1sLfexNj-e6n\\_bl8y63oXd/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o5l5qAyjBC1sLfexNj-e6n_bl8y63oXd/view)

Francis Rodor Images:

Next to no nipple at all, lots of cling film:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HmQAb5OqQeuyNBql1zYhUz4LLk\\_9J60y/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HmQAb5OqQeuyNBql1zYhUz4LLk_9J60y/view)

Same: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1b0IT-Qj1ivf4CmijY8VDKadu8aGy59Y6/view>

Milan Szytura Image:

Lots of cling film, no rope:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AQl1wPL2wRGbLBoN9G4U8UFfHOpxqbWX/view>

Red Rope:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JK017JtLyN02nsKKD--36WTvx88QKSfy/view?usp=sharing>

EXAMPLE PRESS RELEASE (2019)

*Laura Murphy presents...*

# Contra

**Performance artist Laura Murphy fuses aerial rope, stand up, theatre and live art in this groundbreaking, feminist solo-work.**

Written and performed by Laura Murphy |  
Directed by Ursula Martinez

Drawing from circus, stand-up and live art, Contra is a solo-cabaret of contradictions. Fierce, witty and uncompromising, this highly physical show interrogates personal, social and historical occupations of the female body and explores, literally, where such bodies are positioned and how we are meant to look at them. Expect scenes of nudity, aerial acrobatics, and explicit references to mythical reptiles and female sexuality.

Created in part as a contribution to the #metoo movement, Contra is an intervention into perceptions of gender, femininity, queerness & consent:



*"In Contra I use my body as a relatable starting point for discussing wider social issues, and use layers of humour, text and physicality to make the critical perspective more accessible. Bringing my naked body into the room puts social and political occupations of that body visually on the table for discussion: I embody Eve tempted and then let loose, billboard advertisements, pleasant faces, bodies packaged and consumed...you see vulnerability, a victim, a retaliator, a strong-woman acrobat and a feminist. In confronting my own experiences of these embodiments and particularly of gendered violence, I hope to inspire feelings of solidarity & encourage audiences to do the same" - Laura Murphy*

Fresh to the UK from a European tour, *Contra* is a highly physical, funny and thought-provoking work of contemporary performance. Laura's methodology involves asking her circus technique to serve the work rather than lead it, helping her to push the boundaries of what is expected from aerial work and what aerial disciplines are able to communicate within a theatrical context. Through lip sync, spoken text, dance and aerial rope choreography, Laura juxtaposes her autobiographical accounts with the voices of comedians, preachers, pop vocalists and strangers on public transport. Delivered with humour, honesty and poignancy, Laura shares stories of bodily functions, heartbreak and family discussions of lesbian sex. Beautifully surreal and comically astute, *Contra* unpicks the absurdity and contradictions of female identity in the present day.

Audience comments: *"...thought provoking, entertaining and progressive...unapologetic" | "Contra provides the pleasures of spectacle and deconstructs itself neatly in the process" | "... a radical overturning of conventional expectations of aerial performance and performers. "*

**Laura Murphy** is a genre-defying queer performance maker from Bristol who makes text-driven and dynamic physical work about things that she thinks need to be talked about. Her work is cross-disciplinary fusion of theatre, live art, aerial choreography, dance and verbal explosions, which integrates intimacy and spectacle. Laura is a CircusNext Laureate 2018-19 (European programme coordinated by Jeunes Talents Cirque Europe and supported by the European Union) and holds a PhD in Aerial work as critical performance from the University of Sheffield.

**Ursula Martinez** is a theatre maker (writer, performer and director). She co-directed the award-winning *Office Party*, and directed Victoria Melody's *Northern Soul*, Leah Shelton's *Bitch on Heat* and Lucy McCormick's *Triple Threat*. She is an original cast member of the Olivier Award-winning

contemporary circus/variety phenomena La Clique and La Soiree, and is an associate artist with performance provocateurs 'Duckie'. Martinez's solo shows include A Family Outing, My Stories, Your Emails, and Free Admission, in addition to Wild Bore an international collaboration with Adrienne Truscott (US) and Zoe Coombs Marr (Australia). For all her theatrical accolades, Martinez is probably most well known for pulling red hankies out of her vagina!

Credits:

Producer - Nicole A'Court Stuart

Lighting design - Katie Davies

Early Stage mentoring - Terry O'Connor

Choreographic support - Madeleine McGowan

*Supported by Arts Council England, CircusNext (Jeunes Talents Cirque Europe), Jacksons Lane and Carré Magique*

Trailer:

<https://vimeo.com/319031191>

Interview with Exeunt:

<http://exeuntmagazine.com/features/extraordinary-bodies-aerial-circus/>

Social media links:

[www.lauramurphy.co.uk](http://www.lauramurphy.co.uk)

<https://www.facebook.com/lauramurphyperformance/>

<https://www.instagram.com/lauramurphyropeweirdo/>

<https://twitter.com/laumurphrope>

Demonstration room, Summerhall

**Preview July 31st & 2nd August**

July 31st, August 2nd-11th (No show on 1st)

9.10pm (60 minutes)

July 31st PREVIEW **£5**

August 2nd PREVIEW **£8**

August 3rd-11th **£12/£10** (2for1 discount eligible)

*Presented in Association with Aurora Nova*

*Image by Darko Škrabonja*