

Zoe Smith - Producer
BSc Biology (1st Year)

Previous Experience -
Assistant Directing: The Nether (NNT)



Has something that someone else has done ever changed your life in any way? Do they know how much of an impact, big or small, that they have had on you? You could be a big part of someone else's life and not even know it. I've always been one to think about how what I'm doing is impacting other people, and certainly when I forget to think about it I have hindsight.

From the first day I got to read the script I was impatient to hear the end; to find out how these troubled characters could get to a place where they could have a sense of peace with themselves and the world. My interest in the piece was helped by the fact that there was a character who shares my name-sake, I remember reading that at the beginning of the fringe season and knowing that I had to produce this show.

On that note, I am so thankful to Tom for taking a chance on me. It has been so much fun to work with you, thank you for letting me be creative and share your play. I can't thank the amazing cast enough, you've all worked so hard and really brought these characters to life. Laura, Jack, Maddy, and David, you were all a pleasure to work with. I cannot stress enough how proud I am of this production, every single person involved has brought their own ideas to the table and made this show what it is.

And finally, thank you to every student who let us display their poetry, it added a lovely extra dimension to our play that we would not have been able to achieve without your help.

Tom Heath - Director
MA Creative Writing (4th Year)

Previous Experience -
Directing: Hinged, Infirmity (NNT)
Producing: The Accrington Pals, Bottleneck,
Yours and Mine (NNT)



It seemed to take an absolute age to write this play. But it was never that simple. The play was called different names and had different characters and I could never really get it to a point I was happy with. It always seemed like I was trying so hard to write about something that what was coming out felt like nothing at all. I suppose that's ironically how it became 'Monarch'. It's not about grand story arcs or worthy subject matter. It's about that weird feeling you get when you recognise that the person next to you, who you've never met before in your life, has their own world. All of these people around you has their own ups and downs and their own small stories that make up the everyday but you'll never know them. Instead you move on, all the time waking up to a new day with whatever it is that you hope for or you're afraid of. Monarch is that feeling, and it's my own way of appreciating the scale of people. It's my way of appreciating the small things.

The cast have made this whole directing thing quite difficult for me because from day one they've been amazing. Not only are Laura, Jack, Maddy and David talented actors in their own right but they've each brought ideas to the table, shaping the characters in their own way so that when they go out on stage to perform this becomes more of a group project than the result of one person. Everyone in production has done the same – set, lighting, publicity – it's all been a mix of ideas and concepts that I'd never have had on my own and so I thank them not only for their work but their imagination. Finally, I have to thank my producer Zoe for being brilliant at what she does but also for being the most organised person I've ever met. She's made sure not only that this play happens, but that it became something we're all proud of and something we all hope you enjoy.