

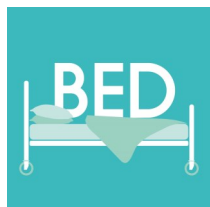
**Introducing**



**A powerful, new touring street theatre performance  
From Entelechy Arts.**



*'...is this a story,  
is this real,  
or are you here for  
a reason?'*



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**





*'When I saw the first bed:  
how did she get there?  
I was worried about her.  
But its very interesting.  
Everyone stopped.  
Everyone stopping and  
looking.'*

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## **Audiences inadvertently encounter BED on their high streets.**

BED appears in shopping streets and areas where there is a density of pedestrians. It is central to the work that audiences are not invited or informed but happen on the work by chance.

There are two beds in the BED performance. In one, the older woman engages and interacts with passersby who are drawn into fragments of her story by helping her manage the day to day paraphernalia of her life: passing her objects tucked into the bed pockets, helping with hard to open bottles of water. Through these small invited acts of kindness, her stories are told. In the second bed there is no direct interaction between performer and passersby. The performer listens to comments and questions from people around the BED and spontaneously weaves these into a narrative of her character's history, which is delivered in a whispered stream of consciousness.



*'You explore many things with it don't you. Cos its quite dramatic when you see somebody lying on a bed in the high street. What's that all about? It gets people thinking!'*

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## **28.5 % of the EU population aged 65 are living alone\***

Bed has been co-designed by a group of emerging older artists (in their 70s and 80s) from south east London to explore loneliness and social isolation which are huge issues being faced by the older population in Britain and developed countries.

Audiences who pause and witness the performance are able to catch fragments of narrative from the older performer. This provides glimpses into the day to day preoccupations of so many hidden and invisible lives.

\*[Europstat](#)



*'I started to ask her some questions because I wasn't really sure... it's quite intriguing ... is this a story, is this real, or are you here for a reason?'*

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## **In summer 2016 - 34K people experienced BED**

BED was recently cited by François Matarasso at a Tandem Exchange conference in Berlin in September 2016:

*'This is powerful, challenging theatre that often produces strong feelings in the people who stop. In using theatre to bring some of our loneliest and most vulnerable fellow-citizens into the centre of urban life, 'Bed' makes transformative connections between people.'*

François Matarasso at a Tandem Exchange conference in Berlin in September 2016



*'I love old people. I was very close to my gran. It gives people a chance to talk to old people. You just ignore them don't you. Just go walking past.'*

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## What audiences say about BED

*'Well I've been seeing her all day and thought it's an extremely powerful image. Straight away you get the idea of what it's about. Often with street theatre you feel you need to ask questions to understand. This is really powerful. I just saw somebody go and get her a cup of coffee. Just seeing that gesture from afar, not even having to talk to her, that image, that's all people need. A bit of human connection, a bit of kindness and compassion, someone buying you a coffee and that's a really strong message that comes out of it. I think it's a fantastic project.'* Audience member Winchester

*'Well it's upsetting. There are a lot of people who are in that position and they are perhaps not visible and by having this interactive artwork on the high street it makes that visible to people. It brings it onto the high street in a way that you can't ignore. And in that sense it's both a very successful artwork and distressing when you interact with it.'* Audience Member



*'I thought that she'd  
been abandoned.  
When I first saw it  
I genuinely thought  
that somebody had  
abandoned her there'*

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## How BED was created

BED created an extraordinary opportunity to co-design a live performance work with a group of emerging older artists from Entelechy's Elders performance company working with (formerly) isolated older participants from Entelechy and the Albany's co-produced Meet Me at the Albany programme. Participants shared their firsthand experiences of loneliness and isolation and the characters for BED were created through these conversations.

Through knitting a blanket for the BED and collating objects like a photograph, a folded scrap of paper, a pill box, a narrative was created and the performers developed and honed techniques as the tour developed.



## BED can travel...

**We can travel to your city or town with BED to be part of a Festival or a community event.**

Contact details for further information:

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### About Entelechy Arts

Entelechy has been making great art for over 25 years and continues to develop and manage programmes of work that promote cultural and social cohesion. Every year the company produces numerous high quality arts activities and large-scale performance events. Entelechy is particularly skilled in creating work that builds bridges between groups of people and individuals who lead parallel and unconnected lives, often in the same neighbourhoods. This includes older people from diverse communities, young people, people with learning disabilities and people from different cultural and social backgrounds.

### BED Video Links

[vimeo.com/172937460](https://vimeo.com/172937460)

[vimeo.com/166791894](https://vimeo.com/166791894)

[vimeo.com/109555176](https://vimeo.com/109555176)

**[entelechyarts.org.uk](https://entelechyarts.org.uk)**

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