

DR NAOMI PAXTON

Job title

Knowledge Exchange Associate Fellow

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PROFILE

I am a researcher, performer and broadcaster, specialising in the professional theatre and performative propaganda of the Votes for Women movement.

After training at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and Goldsmiths College, University of London, I worked as a professional actor for a decade - performing in the West End and touring nationally and internationally - before starting my doctoral research, partially funded by Equity Charitable Trust, at the University of Manchester in 2011. Since completing my PhD in 2015, I have worked as Research Associate on the AHRC funded *Poor Theatres* project at the University of Manchester, as Cultural Engagement Fellow and Being Human Festival London Hub Convenor at the School of Advanced Study, University of London, as Research Assistant for the UK Parliament Vote 100 and University of Lincoln project *What Difference Did the War Make? World War One and Votes for Women*, and on many freelance academic projects for organisations including UK Parliament, Historic England, and Historic Royal Palaces.

In 2013 I launched my first edited collection of suffrage plays at the National Theatre, and in 2014 became one of the BBC Radio 3/AHRC New Generation Thinkers, which has brought opportunities to share my research on broadcast media as well as at live events including the Hay Festival and Latitude Festival. In 2018 my second edited collection of suffrage plays was launched at the National Theatre, and the first edition of my monograph was launched as part of the University of London's *Leading Women* celebrations.

I joined Central in 2019 as a Knowledge Exchange Fellow, and in that year was awarded a British Academy Rising Star Engagement Award to run the *Different Stages: Exploring public engagement for Drama and Theatre early career academics* project, and won the TaPRA Early Career Research Prize for my body of work on suffrage theatre. In 2020-21 I was seconded from Central as a Parliamentary Academic Fellow, and am a member of the Executive team of the [International Parliament Engagement Network](#). In 2021 I was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

I am a member of Equity and The Magic Circle, and perform professionally on the cabaret, variety, comedy and magic circuits as [Ada Campe](#). Ada came Top of the Bill at the 2018 Hackney Empire New Act of the Year Show (NATYS) and won the 2018 Leicester Square Theatre Old Comedian of the Year competition. Ada also won The Stand's Good Egg Award in 2019, was nominated for Best Variety Act at the 2019 Chortle Awards, and appeared on BBC Radio 4 Extra as part of the BBC New Comedy Award live heats in 2018. In 2022/3 Ada made her debut in pantomime as the baddie Queen Rat in *Dick Whittington* at The Theatre, Chipping Norton and was nominated for Best Newcomer in the UK Pantomime Association's 2023 Pantomime Awards.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Suffrage theatre and performance
- Performative propaganda in the suffrage movement
- Networks of suffragist and feminist activists in the twentieth century
- Public Engagement, especially in the arts and humanities
- Knowledge Exchange
- Cabaret, comedy, and magic

PHD SUPERVISION

I am currently supervising or interested in supervising doctoral projects in the areas of suffrage theatre, performative propaganda of the suffrage movement, theatre history and archives and feminist theatre networks in the twentieth century.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

Books

2024. *Plays and performance texts by women volume II: the politics of inequality*, co-edited with Maggie B. Gale. (Manchester: Manchester University Press)

2023. *The Edinburgh Companion to Modernism in Contemporary Theatre*, co-edited with Adrian Curtin, Nicholas Johnson and Claire Warden (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press)

2020. [Stage Rights! The Actresses' Franchise League, activism and politics 1908-1958](#). (Manchester: Manchester University Press)

2018. [The Methuen Drama Book of Suffrage Plays: Taking the Stage](#). (London: Bloomsbury)

2013. [The Methuen Drama Book of Suffrage Plays](#). (London: Bloomsbury)

Book chapters

2023. "'Your Great Adventure is to report her faithfully': the centring of women's voices and stories in suffrage theatre' in the *Routledge Companion to Literature and Feminism*. eds. Rachell Carroll and Fiona Tolan (London: Routledge)

2023. 'Suffrage on the Edwardian Stage' in the *Routledge Companion to British Women's Suffrage*. ed. Krista Cowman (London: Routledge)

2021. "'Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, join the Suffrage Dance?': Reframing *Alice in Wonderland* for Edwardian activists' in [Women's Suffrage in Word, Image, Music, Stage and Screen: The Making of a Movement](#). eds. Christopher Wiley and Lucy Ella Rose (London: Routledge)

2019. 'Suffragette Judy: Punch and Judy at Suffrage Fairs and Exhibitions in Edwardian London' in [Women and Puppetry: Critical and Historical Investigations](#). eds. Alissa Mello, Claudia Orenstein and Cariad Astles (London: Routledge)

2019. 'Very much alive and kicking: the Actresses' Franchise League from 1914-1928' in [Stage Women, 1900-50: Female theatre workers and professional practice](#). eds. Maggie B. Gale and Kate Dorney (Manchester: Manchester University Press)

Articles

2021. 'Early Stage Pioneers' in [50 Women in Theatre](#) (Richmond: Aurora Metro)

2018. '[Still Marching, Still Inspiring, Still Campaigning](#)', *Road to Equality*, Google Arts and Culture

2018. '[Beatrice Wright](#)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

2017. '[Actresses' Franchise League](#)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

2017. '[Inez Bensusan](#)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

EXTERNAL PRACTICE

Public Engagement

I have extensive experience of public engagement work and interdisciplinary collaboration in arts and humanities research and practice, in the heritage and museum sectors, in broadcast media and in performance. I was part of the NCCPE's Public Engagement Academy in 2016-17, am the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer for [The Magic Circle](#), an Associate Artist of feminist production hub [Scary Little Girls](#), and a mentor for [Arts Emergency](#).

Selected online content:

- 2022. (Host) *Sylvia Pankhurst: Art and Activism*, LSE Library
- 2021. (Presenter and co-producer) [Salon de la Vie season four](#), Scary Little Girls
- 2021. (Presenter) Mrs. Salmon, [Statues for the Unforgotten](#), Spare Tyre Theatre
- 2021. (Presenter and writer) [Was Christabel Pankhurst sawn in half onstage in 1921?](#) The Magic Circle Unlocked
- 2021. (Speaker) *My immense but co-ordinated Octopus Teacher: an ECR in COVID times takes inspiration from the AFL during WW1*, TaPRA ECR Keynote Lecture
- 2021. (Speaker) *Modernism and Performance*, Festival of Modernism
- 2021. (Speaker) *The Actresses' Franchise League*, London Historians Monthly Lecture
- 2020-21. (MC) *Museums Showoff*, [Museums Showoff](#)
- 2020-21. (Producer) *Suffrage play reading group on Zoom*
- 2020. (Producer and presenter) *Embrace the Base: Living Legacies of Greenham Women*, Being Human Festival and Greenham Women Everywhere
- 2020. (Presenter and writer) [Doing culture at home](#), British Academy Virtual Summer Showcase
- 2020. (Presenter and writer) *What can you do with a degree in Drama?* British Academy Virtual Summer Showcase schools programme

Selected broadcast experience:

- 2019-23 (Presenter) *Free Thinking*, BBC Radio 3
- 2021-23 (Presenter) *New Thinking* podcast, BBC Radio 3
- 2022 (Guest) *The Listening Service*, BBC Radio 3
- 2021 (Guest) *Woman's Hour*, BBC Radio 4
- 2021 (Guest) *BBC News*, BBC News
- 2014-20 (Guest) *Free Thinking*, BBC Radio 3
- 2019 (Guest) *Today programme*, BBC Radio 4
- 2019 (Presenter) *Judy Punches Up*, BBC Radio 3
- 2019 (Presenter) *Proms Plus*, BBC Radio 3
- 2017-19 (Presenter and writer) *Time Travellers*, BBC Radio 3

- 2018 (Guest) *The Week in Parliament*, BBC Radio 4
- 2018 (Guest) *The Lost World of the Suffragettes*, BBC World Service
- 2018 (Guest) *Sunrise*, Sky News
- 2018 (Presenter) *Making History*, BBC Radio 4
- 2018 (Guest) *The Suffragettes and the Actresses' Franchise League*, Dan Snow's History Hit podcast
- 2017 (Guest) *The Daily Politics*, BBC Two
- 2015 (Presenter) *Votes for Women! Yours for a Penny!* BBC Arts

Selected live event hosting:

- 2016-22. (MC) *Museums Showoff*, Museums Showoff, London
- 2018-22. (MC) *Being Human Festival launch*, Senate House, Foundling Museum, and Museum of the Home
- 2022. (MC) *Graduate School Showoff*, University of Westminster
- 2017-20. (MC) *Stand Up at the V&A*, V&A Museum
- 2019. (MC) *Dramatic Progress: Being Human*, Being Human Festival
- 2018-19. (MC) *HERlarious*, Funny Women
- 2018. (MC) *Stand Up for Suffrage*, LSE Library
- 2017. (MC) *Living Proust and the Belle Epoque*, Senate House

Selected talks, performances and panels:

- 2023. (Speaker) *Deeds with Words: the theatre and Votes for Women*, The Theatre Chipping Norton
- 2022. (Speaker) *Deeds with Words*, Mayven Festival, Cornwall, and Phoenix Arts Club
- 2022. (Speaker) *Deeds with Words and Music*, Primadonna Prize Event, Conway Hall
- 2021. (Speaker) *Alice's Adventures in Edwardian Activist Theatre*, V&A London
- 2018-21. (Speaker) [Beyond the Ballot MOOC](#), Royal Holloway, UK Parliament and Future Learn
- 2019. (Presenter) *Anti-Suffrage Waxworks*, British Academy Summer Showcase Late
- 2019. (Speaker) *Seeing is Believing Friday Late*, Wellcome Collection
- 2019. (Chair) *In Conversation: Behind the Scenes*, Foundling Museum
- 2019. (Panel member) *How do men write women?* Primadonna Festival
- 2019. (Performer) *A suffragette legacy: Kitty Marion*, Museum of London
- 2019. (Speaker) *Actresses' Franchise League*, Royal Academy of Music
- 2019. (Performer) *Mrs Noah*, Extinction Rebellion in Parliament Square
- 2018-19. (Producer and writer) *Leading Women interactive performances*, University of London
- 2018. (Activist in Residence) *Activism! Festival Hub*, Bloomsbury Festival UCL
- 2018 (Speaker) *Archives at Night*, National Archives
- 2018 (Speaker) *Make More Noise, Nevertheless She Persisted*, Barbican Cinema
- 2018 (Speaker) *Activism in the Archives*, National Theatre
- 2017. (Co-producer and writer) *Women and War: the West End and the Western Front*, Being Human Festival and Scary Little Girls
- 2017-18 (Panel member) *The Great War Debate*, Department of Education and Culture Media and Sport
- 2016. (Co-producer) *A Particular Theatre: Shakespeare, Suffragists and Soldiers*, Being Human Festival and Scary Little Girls
- 2016. (Co-producer and writer) *Stage Rights! A Living Literature Walk*, Scary Little Girls

Exhibitions and games:

- 2021. (Creator and developer) *Embrace the Base collaborative board game*, Greenham Women Everywhere
- 2018-19. (Exhibition curator) *Dramatic Progress: Votes for Women and the Edwardian Stage*, National Theatre
- 2018. (Exhibition curator) *What Difference Did the War Make? World War One and Votes for Women*, Vote 100, UK Parliament
- 2018. (Creator and writer) *Suffra-Greats! card game*, Clavis and Claustra

- 2018. (Exhibition contribution) *Rights for Women: London's Pioneers in their own words*, Senate House Library
- 2018. (Exhibition contribution) *Voice and Vote: Women's Place in Parliament*, Vote 100, UK Parliament
- 2018. (Exhibition contribution) *Votes for Women*, Museum of London
- 2018. (Creator and developer) *The Race to Equal Votes game*, EqualiTeas, UK Parliament

REGISTER OF INTEREST

Nothing to declare.