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Close your eyes and listen - can you hear the difference between a male voice and a female one? Usually but not always. And what is the difference? Gender transition is more and more in the public view, with the emphasis on the body - but what about the voice? The voice is invisible and most of us think little about how we make it and what it reveals about us.

Director Polly Thomas and writer Alex Bulmer are midway through a performance development project about voice and gender identity. Thanks to Wellcome Trust funding, they have spent 18 months interviewing transgender people, their families and clinicians about the shift of voice in gender transition and how the world perceives them. Many transgender people talk about the voice being the final piece to fall into place - only when their voice became truly 'female' could friends and family remember to use the correct pronoun.

Sounds Like She features three transgender women and a speech therapist, specialising in working with transgender clients. Their thoughts and experiences about voice and how to express gender are meshed with Hush, a song written by award-winning writer Alex Bulmer from interviews with transgender women and composed/performed by celebrated musician Errollyn Wallen.

Sounds Like She is a creative fusion of real voices and music, combining into a challenging look at modern notions of voice and gender.

The participants

Krista Rayne Clarke

Kate O'Donnell is an award-winning transgender performer, activist, theatre and cabaret maker. She is the Artistic Director of Trans Creative, a newly formed trans-creative, trans-positive, trans-led theatre company based in Manchester supported with three years-worth of funding by Arts Council England's Elevate Fund.

Her previous work includes the award-winning autobiographical performance Big Girl's Blouse, which dealt with growing up as a boy in the 1970s when no-one knew what being transgender was, and several well received cabaret performances which have played at a number of venues and festivals nationally.

In the past 12 months Kate has performed in Boy Meets Girl (BBC) and Hush (a musical developed with Lift Festival and performed at The Royal Exchange) and co-created Mum, a short film directed by Anne-Marie O'Connor which premièred this September and will tour festivals across the next year.

"A Manchester Legend" - Timeout

"Tight, elegant and fearless" - Rachel Morris, Cosmopolitan

Winner of Be Proud Special Achievement Award - 2015

Winner of Brighton Fringe LGBTQ Award - 2015

Winner: LGBT Foundation Hero Award- 2015

Steph Holmes www.transsexualinfo.co.uk

I instigated and run Chrysalis Transsexual Support Groups based in Blackburn, Preston, Blackpool, Accrington and Darwen currently, which includes liaising with the police, Crown Prosecution Service, NHS, and many other bodies and charities, and also includes carrying out interventions with transsexual service users throughout the North West of England. We offer advice, support and advocacy, including accompanying them for visits to Gender Clinics, visits to doctors, problems with employers, et al., for pre- and post-transition, pre-op, post-op and non-op transsexuals of any gender and their supporters, family, and friends. We also support Intersex, Bi-gender, and GenderFluid people. We were runners-up in the National Diversity Awards 2016, Community Organisation Award for LGBT.

Dr Sean Pert is a speech and language therapist and senior lecturer at the University of Manchester. Sean has worked in partnership with the LGBT Foundation's Trans Programme to deliver voice and communication groups, involving students to ensure the needs of trans people are understood by the next generation of therapists.

www.transvoicetherapy.co.uk

Creative consultant - Alex Bulmer - www.alexbulmer.co.uk/

Composer and musical performer - Errollyn Wallen - www.errollynwallen.com

Producer, Polly Thomas - www.pollythomas.forufour.com

Sound designer and Executive Producer, Eloise Whitmore

Production co-ordinator, Sarah Kenny

A Naked Production for BBC Radio 3.