

Woman From Mars

A new play by Nicola Baldwin

Directed by Cat Robey

Online scratch performance of extracts plus Q&A

Hosted by UCL Centre for Outer Space Studies (COSS)

Introduced by Dr. David Jeevendrampillai, COSS Director

BECKY SIMON as Helen Sharman

PETER CLEMENTS as Sergei Krikalev

LYNDA ROOKE as Stella Shaw

Composer & sound designer **Louis Milner**

Russian language coaching **Shishkina Eugenia**

Thanks to Lucy Stagg, Albert Brenchat Aguilar.

In 1991, chemist Helen Sharman became the first British astronaut, when she joined the crew of Soyuz TM-12 to conduct experiments on Mir space station.

Dubbed *Girl From Mars* by British tabloids, Sharman was an industrial chemist at Mars Confectionary when she answered the call to space. She launched on 18 May 1991 with cosmonauts Sergei Krikalev and Anatoly Artsebarsky and returned to earth on 26 May with Viktor Afanasyey and Musa Manarov. While Krikalev and Artsebarsky remained on Mir the second Russian revolution happened, the Soviet Union, and its government-run space programme, ceased to exist.

Set on Helen Sharman's last day aboard Mir, reflecting upon her journey to get there, and the risks of returning home, the play is both a tribute to her achievements and a story about personal and global transformation, the chemistry of human life.

Since returning to Earth, Helen Sharman has directed her pioneering efforts towards education. In addition to numerous awards, she was recognised in the 2018 New Year Honours for services to Science and Technology Outreach.

In recognition of her encouragement of young children to study STEM, an online *Woman From Mars* drama will be created, with supporting activities in Science, PSHE and Drama.

Nicola has been supported by an MGCfutures bursary and Hospitalfield Interdisciplinary Residency to write the first draft, which has received ACE funding for R&D. We hope to work with producers /a theatre, towards a fully-fledged production in 2021 to coincide with 30th anniversary of Sharman's mission to Mir. We are very open to ideas around live/online/streamed production models.

First written as a short for Miniaturists at Arcola in April 2019.

Read [COSS blog about writing the first draft under lockdown](#).

The Company

Cat Robey DIRECTOR

Cat is Deputy Director at Jermyn Street Theatre. For Jermyn Street Theatre: *15 Heroines* (with Digital Theatre +); *In Praise of Love* (online); *The Tempest*, *Beckett Triple Bill*, *For Services Rendered* (associate director). Other directing includes: *Estimated Waiting Time* (Love Parks