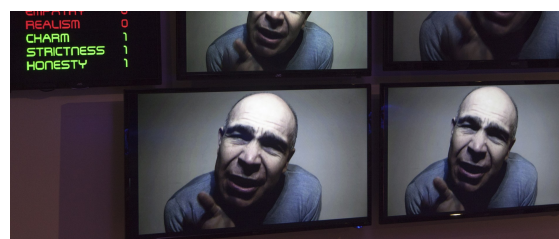




U N I V E R S I T Y



How do we care in the 21st Century? What can be automated and what needs a human touch? Inspired by University of Manchester research, Hidden is a site specific, immersive show over three floors, made with young carers and exploring the future of caring. It is an intimate experience which challenges people to decide what the future should look like.

Hidden began as a response to research published by The University of Manchester which found that young carers, whilst wanting and needing help and support, also asked to be recognised and valued for the ways in which they respond to problems, manage the demands of caring and have developed expertise in managing illness and disability.

It has a cast of professionals mixed with young carers and is led by Andrew McCain (Burmese

Theater Workshop) and Nicky Hargreaves (Guildhall). The world of Hidden draws influence from the writing of Philip K Dick and Isaac Asimov, as well as recent TV shows such as Westworld and Humans.

Audiences are cast as employees of a near-future medical company who must choose how best to use groundbreaking technology to transform the lives of people who care for others.

The project has been in development since autumn 2016, with an R&D period supported by The University of Manchester. The creative team has worked with over 50 young carers from across Greater Manchester to develop the show's concept, script, set design and most importantly, to construct a show that puts them at the centre of the debate with the power to challenge decisions being made on their behalf.

The idea for the work stemmed from an NIHR-funded piece of research looking at the clinical and cost effectiveness of interventions for children of parents with mental illness.

Qualitative research with young people at the start of this project

determined the outcome framework and priorities that children and young people were interested in. This work has since been published in [PLoSOne](#), and the full study is in the [NIHR journals library](#).

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Many children are formally recognised as young carers, but a large number are not - and these children remain invisible to services.

Contrary to much of the academic literature which explores the 'burden' of caring, children often talk about the pride and security they derive from being the one to look after their parents. These aspects of caring regularly feature in their narratives of the caring experience.

Researcher Dr Penny Bee”

Tweet

“Since this project we have undertaken other work with this population: most recently an NIHR funded trial where we are working in collaboration with NSPCC to develop a child-centred intervention for children living with parents with mental illness,” added Penny.

Hidden is the first major project at The Horsfall; a new creative venue for Manchester and part of 42nd Street, a Greater Manchester-based mental health charity working with young people aged 13-25. The Horsfall is leading the way in developing creative approaches to improving mental health and wellbeing with young people which includes opportunities to co-create work with professionals to be experienced by the wider public.

Simone Spray, Chief Executive for 42nd Street, said "Hidden is an ambitious production with young carers right at its heart, which is what The Horsfall and our new creative programme is all about; translating the experiences and stories of young people into powerful and engaging creative pieces that challenge and inspire new audiences."

Hidden is on until February 11th at The Horsfall, 87 Great Ancoats Street, Manchester. [Click here](#) for more information.

Further reading

[Study at The University of Manchester](#)

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