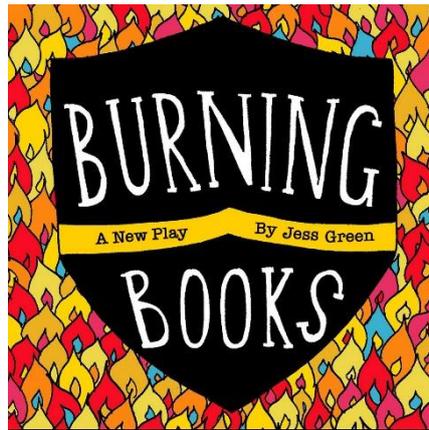


AFTER HITTING A NERVE WITH AN INTERNET VIRAL, POET JESS GREEN TAKES HER INFAMOUS BURNING BOOKS ON A UK TOUR



A powerful and humorous look at an education system buckling under government cuts and targets. A story of protest and the teachers who fight back. From the school librarian who took on Michael Gove....

Back in 2014, poet Jess Green hit a nerve when her YouTube post of the poem *Dear Mr Gove* became an overnight must-see. Over 300,000 views, one book, a UK tour and several festival performances later, the former school librarian is taking the stage play based on her hard-hitting poetry around the UK.

Dear Mr Gove instantly went viral among teachers disenchanted with the Coalition Government's education reforms, and Jess - herself from a family of teachers – found herself under the spotlight as an artist speaking up on behalf of the teachers she had seen first-hand being demoralised by unrealistic targets. Commissioned to write a piece for the National Union of Teachers, she said:

"After I posted the Gove poem online I received hundreds of emails from teachers. Many were rousing, angry calls to action and others, usually the ones that came in the middle of the night, were terribly sad. Emails that talked about impossible workloads, unreachable targets, pressure and worry and hopelessness." The daughter of a (very proud) Head teacher in Leicester, Jess has been delivering workshops to teachers and students alike for over five years now.

Funded by Arts Council England on its UK tour, the play poses the question: what should schools do when they are losing so many teachers? On Teach First student Kat's first day at Hurstville Community College, Nicky Morgan announces forced academisation for all state schools. Kat is ready for the picket line but her attempts to join the NUT are met with contempt by union stalwart Janine. The head teacher is invisible and the staff are more concerned about losing their staff room, disappearing books and a History teacher who hasn't been seen for weeks.



Jess has performed at Glastonbury, Latitude, Bestival and the Edinburgh Fringe. Her first collection, *Burning Books*, was shortlisted for the East Midlands Book Award and as a poetry and music show received 5* reviews at the Edinburgh Fringe and on its national tour.

The theatre adaptation of *Burning Books* was longlisted for the Bread & Roses Theatre Award in 2016 and performed to sell-out audiences at Curve Theatre in Leicester.

Jess's second poetry and music show, *A Self Help Guide To Being In Love With Jeremy Corbyn*, based around her second collection of the same name and performed with her band The Mischief Thieves, goes to the Edinburgh Fringe in 2018. Jess also runs Leicester poetry night *Find The Right Words*, which was shortlisted for Best Regular UK Poetry Event in the Saboteur Awards 2018.

"An internet sensation" – The Independent

"Green as struck a chord with exhausted teachers up and down the country" - The Guardian

"Grippingly inventive and immensely touching. Green's voice is urgent, important and immensely enjoyable; she deserves to be heard" – Broadway Baby

"Brilliant. Her words have certainly struck a chord with teachers" – Huffington Post

"A play that will ring true for every teacher in the country!" – National Union Teachers

"Somehow Jess manages to be hard hitting in a way that's so subtle you don't realise until the bruises come up" – Scroobius Pip

"It's brilliant! I loved it!" – Josie Long

***** Publicity requests to Natalie Cheary: Natalie.cheary@hotmail.co.uk / 07768 261526 *****

TOUR DATES

4 th – 7 th September	Alphabetti Theatre, Newcastle
8 th September	Rutland Museum Theatre, Leicestershire
11 th September	Merlin Theatre, Frome
14 th September	Bridport Arts Centre, Bridport
15 th September	Tom Thumb Theatre, Margate
18 th September	Old Joint Stock, Birmingham
21 st – 22 nd September	Derby Theatre, Derby
29 th September	Old Fire Station, Oxford
6 th October	Attenborough Arts Centre, Leicester
11 th October	John Peel Centre, Stowmarket
20 th October	Countesthorpe College Theatre, Leicestershire
23 rd November	Quorn Grange Hotel, Leicestershire

Burning Books is published by Burning Eye Books (2015).