



## Femi Keeling

**CATEGORIES:** Uncategorized

**AGENT:** Nicky Lund

Femi Keeling is a British Caribbean playwright and theatre maker born in London, and based in Surrey.

Femi started her career performing flash fiction on London's spoken word scene before becoming the Dickens 2012 Young Writer in Residence in February 2012. In January 2016, Speaking Volumes named Femi as one of their 40 Stars of Black British Literature and in 2017 she featured in their brochure [Celebrating British Writers of Colour. The Achalasia Diaries](#), a documentary about the development of Femi's chronic illness and her decision to pursue her writing career, aired on BBC Radio 4 in June 2015 and was a selected BBC Radio 4 Highlight of the Week. Femi went on to host the BBC Radio 4 podcast, *Seriously*, from February to October 2016. Femi's solo theatre show, [How to Die of a Broken Heart](#), was developed with support from [Battersea Arts Centre](#) and [Talawa Theatre Company](#). Written and performed by Femi, and directed by Jerwood Directors Award recipient [Yael Shavit](#), [How to Die of a Broken Heart](#) toured various theatres across the UK, including Brighton Dome, Oxford Playhouse, and Soho Theatre. Her first full length play, [I Am Not There](#), was developed with support from [Talawa Theatre Company](#), Soho Theatre, and [The Carne Trust](#). A rehearsed reading of the play was featured at the Talawa Firsts Festival in June 2017. Femi is a 2017 alumna of the BBC Writers Room group London Voices and was a member of the [Orange Tree Theatre Writers Collective](#). She is also a voice over artist signed to agency [Another Tongue](#); her credits include Amazon, Red Bull and Nivea. Femi believes in the transformative power of the arts in criminal justice settings and sits on the Board of the [Koestler Arts](#).

### STAGE

#### **OL' PEOPLE PLACE (August 2019)**

Femi's latest play in development is set in a day centre for the elderly and tells the story of six men and women from various Caribbean islands, as they try to figure out how to inhabit the last days of their lives without losing the spirit of their best days.

#### **RISING (November 2018)**

[Rising](#) toured prisons and hostels in November 2018 and was featured at the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester as part of the One Voice Summit. There was also a special performance at City Hall, which was live streamed.

#### **I (NEVER) DID (August 2018)**

Femi's short play was selected for [Redgates Theatre's Gateways Summer 2018](#) which took place in August.

#### **TWICE (June 2018)**

Femi's short play about a mother and daughter reuniting after the daughter is taken into care was performed at Orange Tree Theatre in June 2018 as part of Uprising and was directed by Roy Alexander-Weise (recently appointed joint AD of Royal Exchange Theatre).

## **PRESENT TENSE (March 2018)**

Short play selected for Theatre 503's *Br'er Cotton* Rapid Write Response night in March 2018.

## **DISLOCATE (January 2017)**

A monologue about the impact of racial microaggressions featured at a Barbican Open Lab in January 2017. The work is set to tour as part of a project produced by Tian Glasgow in the Summer of 2018.

## **I AM NOT THERE (June 2016/June 2017)**

A short play commissioned by NitroBEAT and featured at a NitroBEAT Bites event at Soho Theatre in June 2016.

A full-length play was developed with the creative support of Soho Theatre and Talawa Theatre and financial support from The Carne Trust.

A rehearsed reading of *I Am Not There* featured at Talawa Firsts in June 2017, directed by Jane Fallowfield.

## **HOW TO DIE OF A BROKEN HEART (June 2016)**

*Also performer.* An autobiographical solo theatre show about heartbreak and the subsequent development of a chronic illness. Directed by Jerwood Award winning director, Yael Shavit, developed with support from Battersea Arts Centre and Talawa Theatre Company.

*How to Die of a Broken Heart* has toured to Soho Theatre, Brighton Dome, Southbank Centre, Battersea Arts Centre, Oxford Playhouse (Burton Taylor Studio), Warwick Arts Centre and Key Theatre in March 2018.

## **BOOKS**

### **HEAR ME NOW (November 2018)**

[Hear Me Now: Audition Monologues for Actors of Colour](https://www.oberonbooks.com/hear-me-now-audition-monologues-for-actors-of-colour.html) was published by Oberon in November 2018. Two monologues in the book are written by Femi: *My Father's Son* and *Naughty Boy*. (<https://www.oberonbooks.com/hear-me-now-audition-monologues-for-actors-of-colour.html>.)

## **NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS**

### **Orange Tree Theatre Writers Collective 2018**

Former member of the Orange Tree Theatre Writers Collective. The programme ran from February to July 2018.

### **BBC Writers Room (October 2017 – January 2018)**

A member of the BBC Writers Room group *London Voices*.