

PRESS RELEASE: 4 April 2022



**Bus Regulation: The Musical
by Ellie Harrison**

**Sunday 24 April 2022, 2pm & 3pm
Centre for Contemporary Arts, 350 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G2 3JD**

FREE tickets available at: busregulation.eventbrite.com

Artist's new performance sheds light on today's expensive and fragmented transport system

Bus Regulation: The Musical by [Ellie Harrison](#) is inspired by the 1980s hit musical 'Starlight Express', and features performers on roller skates to re-enact the history of public transport provision in the Strathclyde region from the post-war period to the present day.

The performance is staged in collaboration with local public transport campaign [Get Glasgow Moving](#) in order to provoke discussion ahead of the local elections about the urgent need to re-regulate our region's bus network.

Glasgow-based artist and activist Ellie Harrison says: "I care passionately about improving public transport. It is vital for addressing the climate emergency and tackling chronic poverty and inequality across our region. I wanted to create a fun, family-friendly event to inspire others with this passion and that's when the childhood memory of watching *Starlight Express* popped into my head. Just as Andrew Lloyd Webber's famous musical uses performers on roller skates to portray trains, I'm working with local skaters to re-enact the lost history of Strathclyde's buses. This is

an important history, as it clearly shows that proper governance and regulation is vital for making public transport work in the interests of our region's people".

Beginning with the municipal ownership of buses in the 1960s, through the 1968 Transport Act which created the Greater Glasgow PTE and the Trans-Clyde integrated system in 1979, *Bus Regulation: The Musical* will take audiences into the chaos caused by bus de-regulation in 1986, the numerous mergers & takeovers of the 1990s that followed, right up to the fragmented and expensive system we're left with as a result. The Musical concludes with a celebration of Get Glasgow Moving's proposals to re-regulate our region's buses in order to create a world-class, fully-integrated and affordable public transport network fit for the 21st century.

Susan Galloway, volunteer campaigner with Get Glasgow Moving, says:

"*Bus Regulation: The Musical* could not have come at a better time for the campaign. We have been ramping up the pressure on all political parties in advance of the local elections on 5 May, to demand that they commit to using the new powers in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 to re-regulate our region's bus network, and to set up a new publicly-owned bus company for the region to provide us with the same great service people enjoy in Edinburgh on Lothian Buses. We hope the Musical will be a fun way of informing people about the integrated public transport system Strathclyde used to have in the 1970s and early 1980s, how this was robbed from us through the misguided policies of de-regulation and privatisation, as well as inspiring them to join our fight to get it back!"

The Strathclyde Musical builds on the success of Bus Regulation: The Musical (Greater Manchester) staged at Manchester Art Gallery in 2019 in collaboration with the Better Buses for Greater Manchester campaign. This paved the way for the Mayor's historic decision in March 2021 to proceed with re-regulating the region's bus network – the first UK city region to do so since 1986.

Bus Regulation: The Musical is produced by Emily Furneaux and stars Sharon Fraser as 'the Clippie' alongside skaters from Glasgow Roller Derby, Mean City Roller Derby and Sugar & Spin Skate Crew. It is supported by Creative Scotland, Hope Scott Trust, Climate Fringe and Take Me Somewhere.

**For further press information and to request images please contact:
Emily Furneaux on 07983 499 868 or emilytofurneaux@gmail.com**



Notes to editors

Ellie Harrison (b. London 1979) is an artist and activist based in Glasgow with a passion for public transport. In 2009 she founded Bring Back British Rail, the national campaign for the public ownership of our railways. She is one of the co-founders of Get Glasgow Moving – established by local people in 2016 to campaign for a world-class, fully-integrated and affordable public transport network for everyone in the region. In 2010, she became the first visual artist to publish an Environmental Policy. In 2016, she slashed her carbon footprint for transport to zero and made headlines with her ‘controversial’ project *The Glasgow Effect*, for which she refused to leave Glasgow’s city limits, or use any vehicles except her bike, for the whole calendar year. Her first book The Glasgow Effect: A Tale of Class, Capitalism & Carbon Footprint was inspired by the 2016 project and published by Luath Press in November 2019.

Sharon Fraser (b. Glasgow 1979) stars as ‘the Clippie’ in *Bus Regulation: The Musical*. Raised in Drumchapel in a working-class family, she has never owned a car and relies on public transport. As a recent graduate of the prestigious Contemporary Performance Practice course, at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, she feels there is an urgent need for the working-class voice to be heard. Her own performance work explores her political voice through autobiographical story-telling with a strong Glasgow dialect. She is currently studying a Masters in Journalism.