

# UCHENNO

## THE HEAD WRAP DIARIES



## Tour & Marketing Pack

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# UCHENNA

## THE HEAD WRAP DIARIES

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### ABOUT uchenna

[www.uchennadance.com](http://www.uchennadance.com)

Uchenna was founded by Vicki Igbokwe in 2009, today the company is led by Igbokwe as Creative Director & Joint CEO and Grace Okereke as Executive Producer & Joint CEO. Since its inception in 2009, Uchenna has grown from an informal explorative company to a tour de force within the dance sector.

The **company's overarching aim is to empower, entertain and educate through** dance in a diverse programme that includes the creation of dance theatre production experiences, coaching, dance based empowerment workshops and teaching in schools and institutions.

The Uchenna dance style fuses Waacking, Vogue and House with traditional African and Contemporary, creating a signatory aesthetic that simply is, Uchenna.

Uchenna is passionate about creating production experiences that:

- Enable audiences to see **themselves 'on stage' and have their stories told.**
- Build the confidence of audiences enabling them to believe in their potential.
- Nurture conversations amongst audiences from diverse backgrounds, building community cohesion.
- Welcome non-dance audiences/first timers to the theatre.

### **The company's professional repertoire includes:**

- [Hansel & Gretel](#) – A fearless dance adventure! The classic fairy tale gets a dance makeover.
- [The Head Wrap Diaries Fierce & Free](#) – A bigger and bolder reworking of the show.
- [The Head Wrap Diaries](#) – Mixing dance, theatre, and storytelling with a good dose of humour.
- [Our Mighty Groove](#) – An immersive-interactive dance theatre production that transports you to a New York underground House Club.

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### About the founder: Vicki Igbokwe

Vicki Igbokwe is the Founder, Creative Director & Joint CEO of Uchenna.

Independently, Vicki works as a Choreographer and Movement Director working in dance and theatre and as Coach and Facilitator working in the arts.

She is the Director of Empowerment at People Make It Work and won the 2020 **Women in Dance Award from AWA (Advancing Women's Aspirations with Dance)**, a charity dedicated to helping women and girls aspire to leadership roles through dance.

Her career highlights include a sponsorship deal with Nike (2005-2010) and work as a Mass Movement Choreographer on the London 2012 Summer Olympics, Sochi 2014 Olympic and Paralympic Games, Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and the Baku 2017 Islamic Solidarity Games.



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### The Head Wrap Diaries

Hair – worn long, worn short, worn wavy or in braids – is the subject of **The Head Wrap Diaries**, a **funny and uplifting dance theatre work by Uchenna Dance**. It's a show set in a hair salon about people, and their ongoing relationship with hair.

Mixing dance, theatre and storytelling with a good dose of humour, the performance venue is transformed into a Be-U-Tiful hair salon, with wig stands and chairs set around a performing space.

Audience members are welcomed by stylists Linda and Riyah who will take you on a hair journey that will have you laughing out loud, thinking about your own (and everyone else's!) **hair while you learn a thing or two about afro-hair**, straight from **the hairdresser's chair**.

This exciting dance theatre experience features a fabulously produced score by Ghanaian musician Kweku Aacht who provides a sizzling soundtrack of sounds from Afro house, folk and electronic dance music to jazz and Ghana gospel.

<b>Production Duration</b>	60min (no interval)
<b>No. Performers</b>	3 female performers
<b>Staging</b>	Traditional preferable but flexible to your space
<b>Audience</b>	Seated, with opportunity for two audience members to experience the show onstage as part of the hair salon

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### Wraparound Activity

The **Head Wrap Diaries** is an immersive dance theatre production in three parts; pre-show installation, dance theatre production and post-show Head Wrap Bar.

The **Pre-show installation** can include a combination of the following: Specially commissioned artwork, poetry, hair and head wrap displays and drinkable conditioning smoothies which promote healthy hair! The installation components are determined by the spaces available in your venue - to be agreed with the company.

The **Post-show Head Wrap Bar** is your opportunity to meet the company, share experiences, have a drink and learn and share different ways of tying head wraps. Bring your own piece of fabric or experiment with the ones provided. Explore your own personal style, create your own crown and learn a new skill.

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### Why

Starting off as a title back in 2014, shortly after Vicki Igbokwe began her natural hair journey, **The Head Wrap Diaries** explores “**women, beauty, hair and culture**”, told through the stories of three very different black women but the issues and messages are universal. Vicki created the production to empower all women to embrace and own their beauty; irrespective of how they choose to wear their hair. The inspiration came from the growing desire for natural hair and head wraps. The head wrap can cover up a bad hair day or it can complement the outfit you are wearing. At a past sharing – a showcase night – **a man said: ‘I’m white, I’m a man, I’m bald but I get it. I absolutely love it!’**

### What is a head wrap?

A head wrap is a cloth that is used to cover, wrap or tie around your head. It can be a scarf that you would tie around your neck, material handed down in your family, a bed sheet (cut to size), a sacred cloth or a fabric leftover. Men, women and children can, and do, wear head wraps. Anyone with hair, (no matter its texture), and those without hair, can wear one. They are a universal accessory worn by many, for many different reasons.

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### Participatory Experiences

Bespoke participatory experiences are available alongside the production. Fees start at £250 for up to half a day workshop, with reduced rates for rural touring.

### Dance Workshops, Residencies & Curtain Raisers

We can deliver workshops, residencies and curtain raisers creating a bespoke programme for the needs of your learners starting at 5 years+. Including (but not limited to) learning sections from the show, learning specific dance techniques, delivering a fun and empowering dance class, using the show as a stimulus to create individual or group work and developing a response to the show.

### Empowerment Sessions

These sessions are delivered through movement, conversation and head wrapping. Celebrating women and girls, creating a safe space for self-discovery and the opportunity to tap into your authentic self. We embrace the importance of head wraps to women, including religion, a bad hair day, fashion, protective styling and loss of hair. These sessions encourage participants to think Fierce, be Fabulous and live Free... building self-confidence, counteracting the trend of young girls and women developing self-esteem issues - allowing women to celebrate who they are, to see themselves positively and feel uplifted. We engage in a universal discussion, as hair and beauty affect women of all ages, races, hair types and religious backgrounds.

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### Marketing the show

#### Promotional Copy

##### What to expect

An uplifting blend of club styles fused with African and Contemporary dance, great music, a good dose of humour and HAIR stories!

##### Short copy

Three fierce, clever and witty female characters explore femininity, beauty, culture, and most importantly; hair in a fusion of House, Waacking, Vogue, African and contemporary dance.

##### Medium Copy

Hair – worn long, worn short, worn wavy or in braids – is the subject of **The Head Wrap Diaries**, a funny and uplifting dance theatre show by London based company Uchenna Dance. Blending club styles House, Waacking and Vogue with African and Contemporary Dance, **The Head Wrap Diaries** explores community, heritage, womanhood, friendship, and most importantly, hair.

##### Long copy

Three fierce, clever and witty female characters take us through stories of community, heritage, womanhood, friendship, and most importantly, hair. Set within a South London hair-salon called BE U Tiful, **The Head Wrap Diaries** gives you front row seats to watch, interact with and be immersed in a journey from childhood to the present day, told through a unique blend of House, Waacking and Vogue fused with African and Contemporary dance, accompanied by a specially commissioned soundtrack of Afro house, folk, electronic dance music, jazz and Ghana gospel. A pre-show art installation will get you in the mood while the post-show Head Wrap Bar is your opportunity to meet the company, share experiences, **have a drink and test out some head wrapping for yourself. Don't forget to bring your fabrics!**

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### Marketing the show Template Press Release

A theatre is to be transformed into a hair salon for a dance show.

A tour de force within the UK dance sector, Uchenna Dance will bring their show *The Head Wrap Diaries* to [Insert Venue], [Insert Location] on [Insert Date] as part of a national tour.

Mixing dance, theatre and storytelling with a good dose of humour, the performance venue is transformed into a hair salon, with wig stands and chairs set around a performing space.

Audience members are welcomed by stylists Linda and Riyah who will take you on a hair journey that will have you laughing out loud, thinking about your own (and everyone else's!) hair while you learn a thing or two about afro-hair, straight from the hairdresser's chair.

The show features a fabulously produced score by Ghanaian musician Kweku Aacht who provides a sizzling soundtrack of sounds from Afro house, folk and electronic dance music to jazz and Ghana gospel.

Vicki Igbokwe, Founder, Creative Director & Joint CEO of Uchenna is looking forward to bringing the show to [Insert Venue] on [Insert Dates].

The show, which uses Igbokwe's signatory blend of club styles House, Waacking and Vogue fused with African and Contemporary dance, has been criss-crossing the country since 6 October 2017.

Vicki Igbokwe said: "Touring *The Head Wrap Diaries* has been absolutely fabulous! We have been to a real mix of venues, from theatres to village halls, with truly diverse audiences and the response has been great, this show is a hit!

"The feedback and experience of sharing *The Head Wrap Diaries* alongside our wrap around (excuse the pun!) activities has really empowered me. I plan to keep touring the show for a few more years both nationally and internationally, and ultimately to develop the show into a musical.

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"Every time we share the show, we get to hang out with the audiences afterwards. Hearing how the show has touched them, the thought process they go through afterwards and ultimately how it has an impact on them moving forward is the reason why I do what I do."

*The Head Wrap Diaries* takes place at [Insert venue, Insert dates + Insert times]. Tickets are on sale now from [Insert venue name] box office priced [Insert price], by phone on [Insert phone number] or securely online at [Insert website].

\*The Head Wrap Diaries is supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England and partnerships with The Rural Touring Dance Initiative, The Place, Ged Matthews, The Albany, Bernie Grant Arts Centre and Trinity Laban.

ENDS

For media enquiries for interviews, hi-res photography, further information, press accreditation, review requests, comment or appearances, please contact Carol Ann Walters on 07780 703 600. If you would like to be added to **Uchenna's** press list please email [carol@cawpr.co.uk](mailto:carol@cawpr.co.uk) with your full name, email address, organisation and phone number.

About Uchenna

Uchenna was formed in London, UK in 2009 under the vision and leadership of Vicki **Igbokwe**. **The company's overarching aim is to empower**, entertain and educate through dance in a diverse programme which includes the creation of dance theatre production experiences, coaching, dance based empowerment workshops and teaching in further and higher education. The Uchenna dance style fuses Waacking, Vogue and House with traditional African and Contemporary, creating a signatory aesthetic that simply is, Uchenna. [www.uchennadance.com](http://www.uchennadance.com).

About [Insert your venue]

[Insert your boilerplate]

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### Marketing the show

Direct Mail Example

**don't miss**

performance dance

### THE HEAD WRAP DIARIES

[INSERT YOUR VENUE HERE]

[INSERT YOUR DATES HERE]

Presented by Vicki Igbokwe | Uchenna Dance

Three fierce, clever and witty female characters explore femininity, beauty, culture, and most importantly; hair in a fusion of House, Waacking, Vogue, African and contemporary dance.

[INSERT YOUR BOOKING DETAILS HERE]

*"A must-see entertaining and heart-warming event"* - CURLTURE UK

[On tour](#)

*Supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England and partnerships with The Rural Touring Dance Initiative, The Place, Ged Matthews, The Albany, Bernie Grant Arts Centre and Trinity Laban.*

need to know

For ages 5+

Dance workshops, residencies, curtain raisers and empowerment sessions are available.

Email [info@uchennadance.com](mailto:info@uchennadance.com)

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Hi-Res Images

[Click to download the images](#)

Photo Credit: Foteini Christofilopoulou



Video

[Click to see the Short Documentary](#)

[Click to see the Trailer](#)

To request video footage for your foyer or website, please email [info@uchennadance.com](mailto:info@uchennadance.com)

Social Media

[Twitter](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)

Hashtags

#uchennadance

#theheadwrapdiaries

Website

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### Critics & Audience Quotes

“An amusing and beautiful production celebrating the versatility of afro-hair and one of the best performances I have seen in a long time” – Dance in Devon

“Here is a work that is engaging, authentic, culturally rooted and beautifully danced” - Ian Abbott, Writing About Dance

“If you came prepared for a lecture, prepare to be disappointed. If you came for a party, prepare to get one” - The Reviews Hub

“A standing ovation worthy performance by Uchenna Dance. A-MAZING”  
-Gender In Dance

“As an entertaining night at the theatre, The Head Wrap Diaries certainly hit the spot” - Londondance.com

“The Head Wrap Diaries is a production that needs to be made with stories that need to be told” - Curlture UK

“The Head Wrap Diaries is a must watch” 4/5 – Theatre Full Stop

“...takes the emotions, politics and cultural significance that surround black hair and plait them into a funny, fierce, engaging and celebratory show” – Dance Tabs

“The Head Wrap Diaries takes the audience on a colourful and joyful hair journey”  
– London Student

“This production warms the heart and enlivens the soul. Catch the tour of The Head Wrap Diaries before it finishes” – Norwich Radical

“The Head Wrap Diaries has community, conversation and participation at its heart and proud Afro-vibes dancing in its soul” – Creative Tourist

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Some Press on The Head Wrap Diaries

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AFRICANWATCH

NIGERIAN WATCH 21  
9 - 22 Sept 2016

### THE ROOTS OF CAMPAIGNING CHOREOGRAPHER'S HOMAGE TO HAIR

Vicki Igbokwe has a real claim to fame, having been one of the choreographers that helped to create the opening ceremony for the London 2012 Olympic Games, writes Peter Cordwell.

Now after working on the winter Olympics in Russia and Commonwealth Games in Glasgow she makes a triumphant return to the capital with the Head Wrap Diaries.

In the show three fierce, clever and witty female characters take us through stories of community, heritage, womanhood and friendship through the prism of their hair.

Blending club styles such as House, Waacking and Vogue with African and Contemporary dance, the show reflects Vicki's - and many African heritage women's - complex relationship with their hair.



Explaining the inspiration for the show, Vicki says, "The inspiration came from the growing desire for natural hair and head wraps. The head wrap can cover up a bad hair day or it can complement the outfit I am wearing. At one of our sharings - a showcase night - a man came up to me and said: 'I'm white, I'm a man, I'm bald but I get it. I absolutely love it!' I just hugged this guy."

Up to 2014 Vicki had done "just about everything" with her hair. "I went through every single style. I had just got a new set of braids done and, as everyone knows, they take as long as going to Paris and back on the Eurostar. It was then that I decided to embrace my natural hair. I told my

friend the next time she saw me my braids would be gone.

"The next morning I chopped the braids off - just chop, chop, chop. So I sat there, 33 years old and about to set off on an amazing journey of exploration that inspired the show and realising there were women out there going through exactly the same thing.

"I see it all as a question of empowerment, whether that is watching a show or attending one-to-one workshop training. Movement for me is another form of communication to make people freer.

"There's a lot of self-sabotage out there with women asking who they



are and where they are going in life. There's pressure in society on women in all their relationships, at home, at work and with their partners. I want them to go and make the life that they want to live."

Vicki's campaigning style clearly comes from her own background. Her barrister father died when she was very young and at 14 she became the carer for her mother - formerly a Labour councillor in Kensal Green - until she passed away in 2009, and her three younger sisters.

That was also the year she set up Uchenna Dance, which "survived on love" and, in Vicki's case, on some teaching in colleges and universities. The Head Wrap Diaries is their first

sortie into the world of touring. Unsurprisingly, the audience will also be able to enjoy a multi-sensory experience at the pre-show bar installation.

"I wanted to make the show funny and uplifting. You're more likely to get your story across than with a serious political presentation," said Vicki. "I also think the world we are living in at the moment badly needs some laughter and lighter moments, allowing people to breathe easy for an hour or so."

The Head Wrap Diaries is at The Place in Easton, London, on September 19&20. For ticket information visit [uchennadance.com](http://uchennadance.com)

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### Box Office Information Sheet

#### What is the show about?

The show is set within a South London hair salon called BE U Tiful where three **female characters share their 'hair' stories, from childhood to the present day.** They tell stories of womanhood, community, friendship and heritage, dealing with issues femininity, beauty and culture, all which are intertwined with their experiences of hair.

#### What is the dance style?

Uchenna work in a unique blend of traditional dance styles- African and Contemporary dance, and fuse these with club styles – House, Waacking and Vogue.

#### What is the music like?

The show has a specially commissioned soundtrack of Afro house, folk, electronic dance music, jazz and Ghana gospel.

#### Who is the show suitable for?

Anyone from aged 5+. The show is inclusive to all – both female and male.

#### What is the running time?

60-minute show.

**Pre-show installation** (*images, head wrap displays, hair samples*) to welcome you into the world of 'hair', **specifically afro hair, so come along early to experience this.**

**Post-show Head Wrap Bar** - Bring your own fabric to try out head wrapping for yourself! (*Fabrics can be a scarf, any material or traditional wraps*).

#### Is there an interval?

No

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## Technical Information

- The company tours with its own Production Manager/ Lighting Technician.
- Minimum clear performance space is 8m x 8m or 6m x 6m for rural touring.
- Get in, ideally the day before the performance
- Set up, for Installation - ideally day before the performance and installed by the company
- Set up, for Installation for rural touring - day of performance and installed by the company.
- Set up, for Head Wrap Bar - day of performance and installed by the company.
- Five people on the road including Production Manager and Creative Director.

Further technical information can be provided on request.

## Fabric spec

- The minimum size for fabrics to use in workshops is an average modern sarong size (*approximately 168 cm x 112 cm*).

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### Credits and Creative Team

Supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England and partnerships with The Rural Touring Dance Initiative, The Place, Ged Matthews, The Albany, Bernie Grant Arts Centre and Trinity Laban.

#### Creative Team

Director, Choreographer and Co-Writer:	Vicki Igbokwe
Producer:	Grace Okereke
Writer:	Bola Agbaje
Assistant Choreographer & Rehearsal Director:	Ingrid Mackinnon
Performers & Creative Collaborators:	Natalie Bailey, Emmanuella Idris, Oluwatosin Omotosho, Shanelle Clemenson, Sitsofe Attah
Production Manager:	Anthony Osborne / David Salter / Salvatore Scollo
Lighting Design:	James Mackenzie
Assistant Producer & Rehearsal Assistant:	Viviana Rocha
Music Director & Composer:	Kweku Aacht
Scenography:	Original scenography design by Rajha Shakiry
Costume Director and Maker:	Jodie-Simone Howe
Dramaturgy:	Funmi Adewole
Film:	Anton Califano
Art Direction:	TM Studios
Photography:	Foteini Christofilopoulou, Tony Hay
PR & Marketing:	Carol Ann Walters PR
Design Team Central St Martins:	Fie Neo, Daniel Hall, Victoria Adebayo
Installation Contributors:	Curlture UK, Looks Like Me, Lesley Asare and Mikela Henry-Lowe

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