

## PRESS RELEASE

Joe Leather presents:

# Wasteman

A one-person comedy play based on the life story of a drag queen bin man

Written by Joe Leather | Directed by Kat Bond

“An irresistible, uplifting, Northern drag odyssey” ★★★★★ *To-Do List London*

“A show that you cannot help but fall in love with” ★★★★★ *BroadwayWorld*

“Wittily crafted...musically deft” ★★★★★ *The Telegraph (on The Lost Musical Works of Willy Shakes)*

@leathermyjoe | #VAULTWasteman | [www.joeleather.co.uk](http://www.joeleather.co.uk)

Based on writer Joe Leather's real-life experiences working as a Refuse Loader during lockdown, this one-person comedic play is a love letter to both hard-working Northerners and gender euphoria through monologue, music, and drag. During the pandemic, Joe applied for every job available; when the jewellery shop he was supposed to work at closed on his first day, he realised that a career that would not be halted due to lockdown was refuse collection. Around the same time, he turned his experience as a performer into a drag persona to amuse his friends on Zoom. And so, his journey from bin man to drag queen began. Wasteman has enjoyed sell-out runs at the Camden Fringe and the Vault Festival, was an Offie finalist for 'Best Show at the Camden Fringe' 2022 and was just nominated for a Standing Ovation Award with London Pub Theatres.

From stacking up the wheelie bins to entering a drag contest in his quest to be named 'Miss Stoke', a bin man swaps steel-toed boots for stilettos to chase his dream of becoming a drag queen. Living in a small Northern town with his anti-woke boyfriend, the plot begins as their relationship ends. As he makes something fabulous in the most un-fabulous of situations, expect triple threat talent, dramatic flair, and stiff hamstrings while he prepares for the competition in just four weeks. There are no limits to what he will do for the crown, from wearing fishnet tights under his uniform, to practicing the splits on his lunch break, but can he overcome the ghosts of his past?

**Joe Leather said** “As a young person born in Bolton, I didn't get to see any stories about where I was from. And as a young *queer* person from a land far beyond Greater London, stories about towns and lives like mine were non-existent. For this reason, I am over the moon to be bringing Wasteman back to London and the VAULT Festival. I believe that stories about gender expression are particularly necessary in the current climate and wrote the majority of the play while working as a council bin-man in lockdown. The piece fuses my passions for monologue, character-comedy, drag, musical theatre, and unusual day jobs. I hope it will send a message to LGBTQIA+ and working-class people from all over the country that their stories deserve to be told too.”

Joe Leather (he/they) is an Offie-nominated writer and performer. Acting credits include *Jersey Boys* (International Tour), *Oklahoma!* (Gordon Craig) and *Sleep No More* (Punchdrunk, Shanghai). TV credits include *Britain's Got Talent* and *The Last Leg*. Their previous musical, *The Lost Works of Willy Shakes* was one of the Telegraph's '20 Must-see Shows of the Edinburgh Fringe 2019'. Joe has also provided script and lyrics to touring UK Drag Show *Queenz*.

**Running Time: 60 mins | Suitable for ages 15+**

### Company information

**Directed by Kat Bond**

**Written by Joe Leather**

**Music by Harry Franceschi**

**Set design by Joe Leather**

**Sound design by Chazz Redhead**

**Cast :** Joe Leather