



## **Audio Drama to wash your hands to?** The 20 second “micro-drama” and First ever Micro Drama Award

As the UK was hit by the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, there were vociferant proclamations over the importance of “washing your hands”. Or rather washing your hands frequently and properly. Regardless of its real and unknown place in the measures to prevent the spread of the corona virus, hand-washing was at least something we could all do. It anyway reasserted the importance of good quality personal hygiene. So it may just be a habit that is here to stay.

We were reminded to wash our hands for at least 20 seconds. In the UK, it was recommended to sing the rhyme *“Happy Birthday to you”* twice through. I would love to know what was suggested as a timer in other countries? Very soon we learned two things: first that *“Happy Birthday to you”* gets really, really boring when sung twice through, and secondly that 20 seconds is after all rather longer than you thought...

For me, one of the joys of radio & audio drama in other countries has been the discovery of the “short-form” drama. Dramas of less than 7 minutes, a darling of international festivals was almost unheard of here in the UK, where for example the BBC finds it apparently impossible to timetable in its very fixed schedules. Occasionally this has included the shortest of dramas; just a few seconds. And having learned just how long 20 seconds hand-washing can feel, we have decided this year to explore collaborating on “micro-dramas”: dramas to wash your hands to; a special creative core to this year’s UK International Audio Drama Festival.

Let’s find out:

- Can we make great drama of exactly 20 seconds?
- How do we make great drama of exactly 20 seconds?
- What are the distinguishing features of great drama of exactly 20 seconds?
- How might we benefit from working collaborative and remotely around the world?

We are proposing that audio creatives anywhere around the world work together remotely to:

- Generate ideas, themes, approaches
- Write one or more micro scripts
- Record the dramas either with our actors in the UK or your own anywhere in the world
- Edit - individually or collaboratively
- Present the final work at the end of the festival

We will provide:

- A guided forum for quick growing collaborative partnerships (a bit like dried yeast)
- English speaking actors in home studios ready to record the work
- A festival presentation of beautiful 20 second audio drama
- The micro-award prize

You need to:

- Sound out your writers, directors, producers
- Begin to imagine what's possible
- Register on Eventbrite to take part – registration link will be available on the website ([www.radiodramafestival.org.uk](http://www.radiodramafestival.org.uk))

How it will work

- Mornings will be protected time for on and offline collaboration for you to make one or a slate of works with at least one collaborator ideally from another country
- Monday morning will open with a facilitated open space online event to explore topics and partners
- Tuesday morning will offer further facilitation to develop ideas and formalise roles
- Mornings the rest of the week are available to make the work; we have actors on hand to record work; you will need to undertake your own edit
- Friday will include a showcase of finished work and an award (£500) presented at the awards ceremony that evening.

*We are also working on a liquid soap dispenser that really will play 20 second audio dramas to hold your attention whilst you wash your hands and will tell you when you can stop.*

Jonathan Banatvala

Artistic Director