



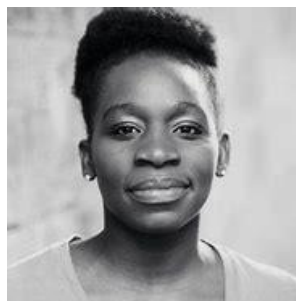
Traverse Supporters Newsletter: September

As we have left the sunny summer days behind us, our **Autumn-Winter Season** is in full swing. In this newsletter, we'll take you behind-the-scenes where future plays start during our **creative engagement** work, we will welcome our **newest members of the Traverse Team** and look at what's coming up next at the Traverse. This week also marks The Great Big Green Week, so we'll highlight some of **Traverse's green efforts**. Grab a hot drink to keep you warm in this rainy weather and enjoy the read!

Kick-off Creating Space

Traverse's new Creating Space Writers' Group- a initiative that recognises the need to create a safe, supportive, and inspiring environment for Scotland-based writers of the Global Majority to develop their work has officially kicked off. Developed in collaboration with Scottish BPOC Writers Network, we want to work together with artists to dig deeper into their artistic process and experiment with their craft in a supportive setting.

Over the next 10 weeks, acclaimed playwright Mariem Omari will guide the group through a series of online and in-person workshops covering the playwriting process, industry mentorship, and feedback on their writing. There also will be a range of exciting guest writers and artists, including guest facilitators Tawona Sithole, Apphia Campbell and Hannah Lavery.



At the culmination of the course, participants will have an opportunity to hear an extract of their writing read by actors, as well as receiving a bespoke one to one meeting with the Traverse Team.

The 2022 Creating Space writers are:

Valerie Andrews
Adam Buksh
Andrea Cabrera Luna
Neil Chue Hong
Sanjay Lago
Hannah Low
Garry Morris
Fin Ross Russell
Manjot Sumal
Jingling Wu

Coming up: Traverse Young Writers & Class Act

The Traverse Theatre is passionate about inspiring young people and connecting them to the arts. As ever, the Traverse will work together with Edinburgh schools (and beyond!) on Class Act, with more information regarding the participating schools soon. Robbie Gordon will lead the project supported by new Trav team member- Jennifer.

In the meantime, our Traverse Young Writers Autumn season is about to kick off again too. Traverse Young Writers is aimed at 18-25 year olds who are looking to develop their writing skills in a fun, supportive group setting. The course offers the opportunity to be part of a creative network, where aspiring playwrights can discuss, debate and create great new work.

This season of Traverse Young Writers will be led by professional playwright Douglas Maxwell. The ten-week course will examine and explore playwriting techniques and structures, culminating in a one-to-one feedback session with the Traverse Artistic team.



Spotlight on Green for The Great Big Green Week

The Great Big Green Week is the UK's celebration of community action to tackle climate change and protect, celebrated between the 24th September - 2nd October 2022. So, let's have a look at what's been happening behind-the-scenes at the Traverse.



* Traverse is an active member of the Green Arts Initiative; a proactive green arts network run by Creative Carbon Scotland. We are committed to engaging staff, audiences and stakeholders to embed sustainability at the heart of their decision-making processes and raise awareness of each individual's needed contribution towards achieving a carbon-neutral future. We have a dedicated Green Team with representatives of each department who meet regularly to ensure best practices.

* Last year, we introduced e-tickets. This has had a great impact on our carbon footprint. Yearly, we used to send around 5,900 tickets (2019), resulting in the release of 153,400g of CO₂. (Each postal order generates 26 grams of CO₂) and the envelopes create additional paper and plastic waste. We printed tickets for over 15,000 audience members yearly, compared to less than 400 in 2022 so far.

* This year, we continued to save on print. We had a very limited small run of flyers for Traverse Theatre Company shows, and from our partner companies only one show distributed flyers.

* We've been gradually changing over lighting in backstage areas to LED lighting, with over 90% now completed.

* Sustainability will form a major part of our design briefs in all areas including but not limited to lighting, set, costume, stage management and sound. Check out Becky Minto's explanation of how she designed with sustainability in mind for *Wilf* [here](#).

* As we are slowly reopening our bar, we have worked with local suppliers, offering local produce where we can. We've also introduced sustainable wines to our menu, including the [Seachange](#) selection, and [Let it Bee](#) wines. We also use reusable cups and wine gasses and all cups/cutlery/napkins are recyclable.

We are proud of what we have achieved so far, however, we remain aware of the long road ahead, climate emergency we are facing and the challenges we face. Should you wish more information regarding Traverse's Green Policies and Carbon Management Plan, please contact Laura, who is part of the Traverse's Green Team.

Welcome to the Traverse Team!

As could be read in our latest press release and [news story](#), the Traverse is delighted to welcome three new appointments to its Artistic & Creative Engagement team. **Mahri Reilly**, who joins the Traverse today from her position as Creative Director of Scottish Youth Theatre, takes the role of **Creative Engagement Producer**, with oversight of all creative engagement strands. Class Act activities will be led by **Robbie Gordon** as **Creative Producer - Class Act**, supported by **Jennifer Galt** as **Class Act Producing Assistant**, as the project moves into an exciting new phase nationally, and internationally. Robbie currently has his hands full as he is touring *549 Scots of the Spanish War*, which will be coming to the Traverse soon. In the meantime, I asked Mahri 5 questions to get to know her a little bit better.



Interview with Mahri

1. What inspired/inspires you to work in the cultural sector?

'I work in the cultural sector because I believe that art can change the world. I have a bohemian heart and an activist head... this is the only space I've found where the two can co-exist! I've been involved in theatre since childhood, it's been the one constant in my life. I remember in primary 7 writing, directing, designing, making and performing in my own version of Little Red Riding Hood with some pals I had roped in. I cast myself as the Wolf – of course!'

2. Did you ever see a performance that had a great impact on you? Which one and why?

'Too many to mention but the one that stays with me is by performance artist Franko B during the early 2000's at the National Review of Live Art at the Arches: FRANKO B: Aktion 398 (franko-b.com) I had never before experienced something so far out of my comfort zone that questioned everything I ever thought I knew about theatre/art/performance, and that connected me to the central core of humanity and tenderness.'

3. What are your biggest hopes for the theatre sector in Scotland?

'Big question. On a political level, a sector that is better resourced financially; that it is valued as something integral to human existence; that the sector becomes more equitable in terms of who can access it both as audience or as artist; that Scotland continues to make ground-breaking theatre experiences that platform and celebrate our unique creative culture far and wide.'

4. If you could commission someone to write a play about your life, who would this be and why?

'The writer would have to be someone who is unknown, someone who is yet to break through into the industry, someone that feels an affinity with the chapters of my life and is interested in sharing them with wider audiences. The director would have to be Baz Luhrmann as I love his epic, spectacle, joyous and fragile style of storytelling.'

5. Name 3 words to describe yourself.

'Passionate, empathetic, grounded and quietly fierce! (5 words?) ha!'

COMING UP NEXT:

Don't. Make. Tea. – Rob Drummond

WED 5 - SAT 8 OCT, 7.30PM



The near future. The benefits system has undergone a transformation. For the better? We shall see. Chris never wanted to end up here. She's a proud woman and hates asking for help but when her condition deteriorated she had no choice but to claim disability benefits.

Ralph believes in the new system. He knows it works. He knows it can work for Chris. He's here today, in her home, to assess her. To prove to her that there has been no mistake - she is fit and capable of working. Chris knows he is wrong. Knows her life will be over if his verdict stands. Can she persuade him to change his mind? And, if not, how far is she willing to go to save herself?

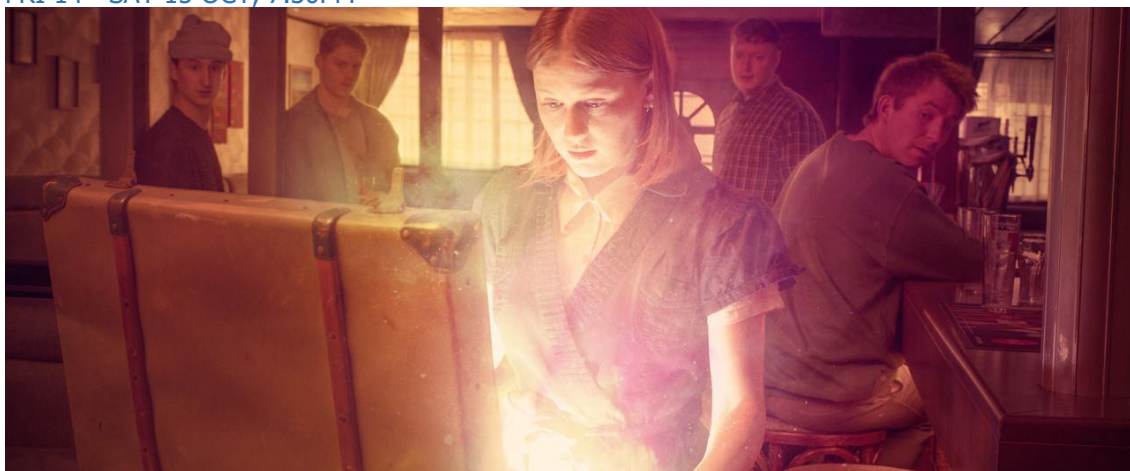
If you are capable of killing and disposing of a body, can you really call yourself disabled?

A riveting new dark comedy from Rob Drummond (*Bulletcatch*, *The Majority*) presented by Scotland's disability-led theatre company.

Book now [here](#).

549 Scots of the Spanish Civil War – Robbie Gordon & Jack Nurse

FRI 14 - SAT 15 OCT, 7.30PM



Comrades of the International Brigade: You can go proudly. You are history. You are legend.

1936. In villages, towns and cities across Scotland, 549 lives are gradually intertwining. People of contrasting backgrounds, ideologies and religions. Spurred on by their burning passion for equality and freedom, they will form the Scottish ranks of the Spanish Civil War's legendary International Brigade.

2022. The country is in crisis. In a small pub in Prestonpans, East Lothian, four millennials are told a story. The true story of four local miners who, 86 years ago, travelled from the streets of Prestonpans to the valleys of Spain.

They gave up everything that was familiar: for a land that was not; for a people they had never met; and for a cause they believed was right. 549, a play with songs and storytelling, is a timely insight into one of Scotland's almost forgotten conflicts.

[Book here.](#)

Apphia Campbell – Beyond Belief – Rehearsed-Reading

WED 13 OCT, 7.30PM



Unrest stirs in a tight-knit church community when allegations against their leader Wendell are made on an online video. Determined to minimise the video's reach and suppress the claims, Wendell's wife Katherine arrives at their daughter Tammy's home early from rehab, ready to convince Tammy to leave the organization and start over with her in a new town.

But Katherine finds herself faced with a community and family members whose dreams rely on the institution's success. And as Wendell's followers arrive for a pre-planned fundraising concert, she is pulled deeper into her past, and ever closer to the secrets she fought to keep buried.

Apphia Campbell's (*Black is the Colour of My Voice*, *Woke*) bold new play is a tangled morality tale influenced by the great American dramas. Full of soulful and live-stirring gospel singing, it tackles the pressing question of whether a whole community should pay for the sins of an individual - and if good work done can ever compensate for lives ruined on the way.

This rehearsed reading, directed by the Traverse's Artistic Director Gareth Nicholls (*Ulster American*, *Wilf*), and written during Apphia's IASH/Traverse Playwriting Fellowship, marks your first chance to experience this new work as it moves towards to a full production.

[Book Now!](#)

We would like to thank you all for your continued support of the Traverse Theatre. Thanks to your support, we can continue to discover, develop and showcase new stories and new writers.

Laura, Ellen, and Team Traverse

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