

# TRAVFEST22

## Traverse Supporters Newsletter: Festival - 1

Welcome to the Traverse Festival 2022. We hope you've enjoyed the opening week as much as we have! Read on for a round-up of the first weeks' events, and a look ahead at all the Festival still to come! Next week, we are kicking the week off by launching MyTraverse, our new, interactive digital platform that will allow audiences to explore the Traverse's history in an engaging new way. Read on for the latest Traverse news & read all about this year's Travfest photographer!



(L-R: Gillian -Stage manager Wilf, Michael Dylan- Calvin in Wilf, Irene Allan- Thelma in Wilf, Amy Molloy- Kate in This is Paradise, Gareth Nicholls- Director Wilf, Neil John Gibson- Frank & other characters in Wilf, Eleanor White- Dramaturg for both productions, Katherine Nesbitt- Director This is Paradise, Hannah Gallardo-Parsons- Stage manager This is Paradise, photo by Connor O'Donnel)

## We're back!

To celebrate the long-awaited moment of the return of a full-scale festival, **Sarah McGillivray** has written and performed a **brand new poem, *Waking the Beast***, marking the return of the festivals to Edinburgh, but especially the Traverse. Follow Sarah through the streets of the capital as she finds her way to the festival's spiritual home and **[watch \*Waking the Beast\* here.](#)**

In celebrating 75 years of the Fringe in Edinburgh, the BBC released the story **of how a small Scottish arts festival that began in 1947 became a national institution that has seen new stars forged, careers made and dreams dashed**, available to view on BBC IPlayer. Told by the stars who first found fame at the Edinburgh Fringe, this is the inside story of what it takes to make a name here - from those who enjoyed overnight success to those who slogged for years to make it. Through their triumphs, favourite jokes and sometimes painful failures, we discover a hidden history of British comedy, revealing how the gags we find funny and the comedians we love reflect our changing culture. The Traverse, of course, is also featured in it! Dive into the Festival's history and watch *The Fringe, Fame, and Me* on BBC IPlayer [here](#).

At the Traverse, we currently have the majority of the press performances under our belt with 8 shows opening at the Traverse last weekend, including our 2 Traverse Theatre Company shows *Wilf* and *This is Paradise!* We couldn't be prouder on the lovely casts, crews, and creatives involved. Oh, and by the way, we've already managed to rake up:

## 🏆 2 FRINGE FIRST AWARDS (from The Scotsman)

Sonya Kelly's *The Last Return*

Tabby Lamb's *Happy Meal*



(*The Last Return* at the awards ceremony)



(*Happy Meal* at the awards ceremony)

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## Traverse 2 openings

### *Happy Meal* by Tabby Lamb (4-28 Aug)



(Sam Crerar & Allie Daniel in *Happy Meal*, photo by Lottie Amor)

Celebrating its world premiere at the Traverse over the weekend, *Happy Meal* explores sex, gender identity, but above all simple quest for human fulfilment that lies at the heart of many LGBTQ+ stories.

- ★★★★★ "Lamb's dialogue is delightfully rat-a-tat" ([Fest Mag](#))
- ★★★★★ "will leave your heart full" ([Theatre Scotland](#))
- ★★★★★ "a big-hearted plea for tolerance" ([The Guardian](#))
- ★★★★★ "a fresh, touching snapshot of lives in transition" ([The Times](#))
- ★★★★★ "Moreish and irresistible" ([The Stage](#))
- ★★★★★ "Allie Daniel and Sam Crerar are simply stunning" ([ScotsGayArts](#))
- ★★★★★ "There are countless plays about trans issues...I doubt there will be a better one than this" ([What's On Stage](#))
- ★★★★★ "precisely the voice of a generation" ([Reviews Hub](#))
- ★★★★★ "gorgeous performances from Allie Daniel and Sam Crerar" ([The Scotsman](#))

Haven't seen it yet? → [Book your tickets here!](#)

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### ***This is Paradise* by Michael John O'Neill (30 Jul- 28 Aug)**



( *This is Paradise* team photo L-R: Richard Bell, Eleanor White- Dramaturg, Michael John O'Neill -Writer, Katherine Nesbitt-Director, Amy Molloy – Performer, Dave Bailey, Hannah Gallardo-Parsons- Stage Manager)

Set in Belfast on 10 April 1998, the day when The Good Friday Agreement was signed, Kate is a woman entering her thirties, thrust back into the life of an ex-partner after a phone call regarding concerns for his welfare

★★★★★ "Storytelling in a pure form" ([Reviews Hub](#))

★★★★★ "a raw and unapologetically honest performance" ([All Edinburgh Theatre](#))

★★★★★ "she's capturing the writing's mixture of radiance, pain and tentative hopefulness" ([The Stage](#))

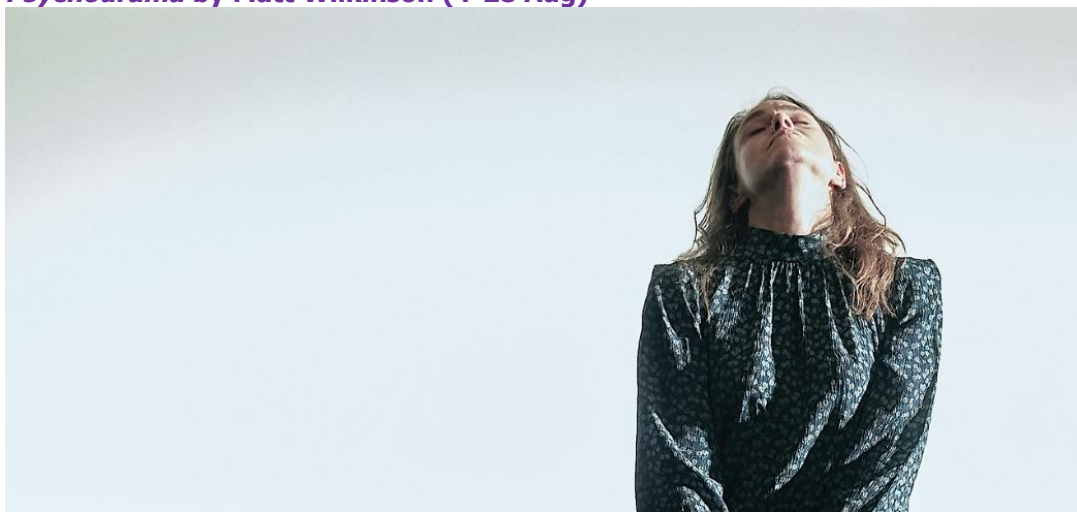
★★★★★ "spellbinding performance" (The [Times](#))

★★★★★ "Molloy...demands the audience's attention" ([North West End](#))

Book your tickets [here](#)!

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### ***Psychodrama* by Matt Wilkinson (4-28 Aug)**



(Emily Bruni in *Psychodrama* photo by The Other Richard)

While working on a stage version of Hitchcock's *Psycho*, a theatre director was murdered. The police are investigating and through their investigation, the story of the production, the director and the suspects, particularly the leading lady will emerge.

Traverse Theatre (Scotland) is a Limited Company (Registered Number SC 076037) and Scottish Charity (Registered Number SC 002368) with its Registered Office at 10 Cambridge Street, Edinburgh, Scotland, EH1 2ED.

★★★★★ "A must see show" ([Daily Business Magazine](#))  
★★★★★ "captivates and impresses throughout" ([The Guardian](#))  
★★★★★ "Emily Bruni knocks your socks off" ([North West End](#))

Book your tickets [here!](#)

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### ***Bloody Elle* By Lauryn Redding (4-28 Aug)**



(Lauryn Redding in Bloody Elle, photo by Lottie Amor)

Bloody Elle is a loud, proud love story is heart-warmingly honest and belly achingly funny. Stuffed full of those stomach-flipping-time-stopping moments that everyone will recognise and accompanied by songs.

★★★★★ "beautifully told tale" ([The Scotsman](#))  
★★★★★ "blisteringly magnificent" ([Reviews Hub](#))  
★★★★★ "electrifying, joyous and cathartic" ([The Wee Review](#))

[Book your tickets today](#) as they are going fast!

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## Traverse 1 openings



### **Wilf by James Ley (5-28 Aug)**

*"My story is about love. No, it's about loss. No, it's about love and loss and pain and loneliness. But it's funny".* This line is the perfect summary of an original and dark comedy, back at the Traverse during Travfest22 after a successful run in December last year and further development. Join Calvin on this unapologetic ride of self discovery!

★★★★★ "Wilf is unapologetic and defiant of expectation" ([Reviewshub](#))

★★★★ "Told with great panache" ([What's on Stage](#))

★★★★ "This sexual extravaganza is a journey of self-love and discovery, full of energy, style and just the right amount of pizzazz. " ([All Edinburgh Theatre](#))

★★★★ "a brilliant interpretation of a road movie for these shores" ([Fest Mag](#))

Book your tickets [here!](#)

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### **The Last Return by Sonya Kelly (4-28 Aug)**

Set in the returns queue of a theatre, *The Last Return* follows characters all desperate to snag a last-minute ticket to the final performance of a show. Sonya Kelly has crafted a shocking and very funny play, which will make you think twice about what high culture means in the world outside the theatre building, where there are more important wars, with more devastating consequences, bring fought on the borders of Europe....



★★★★★ "blisteringly funny, and so tightly written that barely a word feels out of place" ([The Arts Desk](#))

★★★★ "astonishingly original" ([WhatsOnStage](#))

★★★★ "Remarkably clever" ([Reviews Hub](#))

★★★★ "more absurd and surprising by the minute" ([Fest Mag](#))

Book your tickets [here!](#)

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### ***Exodus* by Uma Nada-Rajah**

Uma Nada-Rajah's political farce *Exodus* follows fictional home secretary Asiya Rao blinded by ambition on her way to success. We follow her on a journey as she attempts to win over the press and public opinion with her plan Project Womb, which seeks to shield the UK behind a wall of radiation...

★★★★ "very funny, and quite crazed" ([WhatsOnStage](#))

★★★ "delivered with a shameless boldness" ([The Stage](#))

★★★ "Sophie Steer ... delivers a masterpiece of an onstage diazepam trip" ([Fest Mag](#))

Book your tickets [here!](#)

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### ***Blood Harmony* by Matthew Bulgo, Jonnie Riordan & Jess Williams with music by The Staves**



Three sisters hunt through their recently deceased mothers' possessions, while unboxing and unpacking their relationships with her, each other, and themselves in Thickskin's new play with music, *Blood Harmony*. A beautiful and moving exploration of grief and love, underscored with music from The Staves.

★★★★ "a beautiful and moving exploration of grief and love" ([WhatsOnStage](#))

★★★ "excellent script" ([Fest Mag](#))

Book your tickets [here!](#)

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## ALOK



ALOK (they/them) is an internationally acclaimed writer, performer and public speaker. This is their new comedy and poetry show, which has completely sold out already!

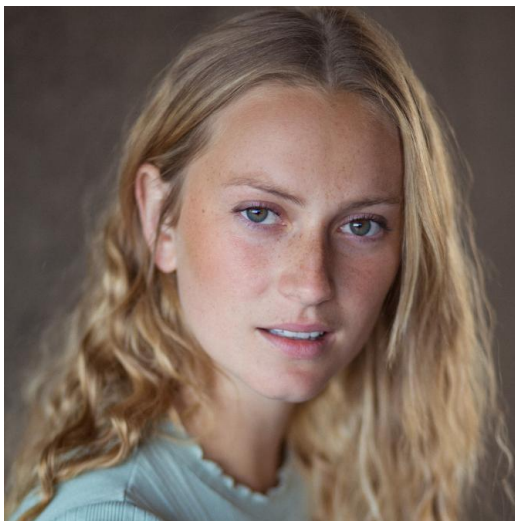
However, due to high demand, we've added two extra shows on Monday the 15<sup>th</sup> of August. Don't miss out and [book your tickets now!](#)

(photo by Lottie Amor)

★★★★ "Moving and evocative " ([The Stage](#))

★★★★ "ALOK's provocative and powerful call for a gender reset away from fear-driven transphobia is a sobering one" ([The Chortle](#))

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### Lottie Amor:

#### Meet the woman behind the camera!

Every year, Traverse Theatre does an open-call to become our Festival photographer, offering the selected person to work in-house with us, and have their pictures published in all big newspapers! This year, Lottie was selected.

#### Q: What inspired you to become a photographer?

*I first fell in love with photography when I realised how much art is in it; the pain, love, passion, anger, everything that you can see in photographs is something that is so visceral and truthful. I think I initially felt alienated by it because, unlike other art forms that I grew up doing all the time, painting, dancing, acting, photography seemed very technical. But when I started photographing for theatre I realised my two passions could come together in these beautiful bursts of energy and I've never looked back.*

#### Q: When did you first engage with the Edinburgh Festival and what attracted you about it?

*I've always known of the Edinburgh Fringe as an incredible hub of creativity with no bounds, but I only managed to visit for the first time in 2019 when I performed in a play here! It was so much fun and I vowed I'd be back every year, it's too good to miss!*

#### Q: Why the Traverse?

*The Traverse is such an innovative space and welcoming to absolutely everyone. New writing is, I think, one of the most important aspects of modern theatre because without it, what direction are we moving in? To be a part of a theatre that champions new voices, new ideas and welcomes it all with open arms is an utter delight.*



**Q: What shows are you planning to see this Festival?**

*Obviously, I'll be seeing every single thing on at the Traverse... but beyond that I'll be hunting down the best (and worst) new comedy sets, and, I love the escapism of Circus so I'll head to the circus hub. I'm particularly excited for Mary Beth Barone: Silly Little Girl, and Love Them To Death.*

**Q: What have you enjoyed the most of this gig so far, and are there more things you hope to experience while working with the Traverse?**

*I've learnt so much already working with the Traverse. With each shoot there are new lighting challenges or staging quirks to get my head around and ensure I can deliver the best shots for each show. I really just want to keep expanding on this and meet more of the incredible teams that each show brings.*

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**Coming up: Archive Drop-in & MyTraverse Launch!**

The Traverse turns 60 years new in 2023, and to mark the occasion we're launching MyTraverse, our exciting new digital space. There you can explore some of our most remarkable moments, acclaimed productions, insightful archive material, and get a glimpse into the spaces and work you don't usually see from your seat. And we can't tell our full story without the audiences who have been at our heart since day one. If you have tales to tell of your times at the Trav, or material connected to us that's languishing in a corner of your attic, we'd love to know! Join our archive drop in session to share your memories and memorabilia, or get a first look at this innovative project, where you can discover our history – and future – for yourself.

**2PM: ARCHIVE DROP IN**  
**4PM: MYTRAVERSE LAUNCH**  
**Free (but ticketed)**

Book your ticket [here!](#)

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**On behalf of all of us at the Traverse, we thank you for your continued support  
and for joining us during Travfest22.**

**With your help, we can keep these pages full of news and ensure  
the Traverse continues to be a trailblazing home for powerful, new theatre.  
Thank you.**

**Laura, Ellen, and Team Traverse**