



Traverse Supporters Newsletter: November

Welcome to you November Newsletter! As our Autumn programme and creative engagement activities, there are some recent updates on various programming activities during December. Rather than adding another production into the December offering, we are concentrating our resources and energies into maximising our activity in 2023- our 60th anniversary year. Instead, at a time of cripplingly high costs, in collaboration with EPAD (Edinburgh Performing Arts Development,) we are handing over Traverse 1 and the Bar to local Edinburgh artists on a free-to-use basis on dates between 5-23 December. We hope this will help alleviate a bit financial pressure on some companies, and allow them breathing room to develop their work in an artistic environment. Cosy up with a cuppa, and read on about what's been going on at the Traverse, and what's coming up next!

BEHIND THE SCENES

Debi – FST bursary



A REFLECTION FROM DEBI PIRIE - FEDERATION OF SCOTTISH THEATRE ASSISTANT DIRECTORS BURSARY

'Getting artists and audiences together to share ideas, ambitions and aspirations is at the heart of what we do at the Traverse. And through the FST Assistant Director Bursary, Debi became an invaluable member of the team, helping to push forward the development of two plays (with songs!) as we move towards full production. Her insights, questions, comments and reflections became a crucial part of our artistic process and I hope she gained as much learning from her two weeks with us as we did from having her on the team.'

- Gareth Nicholls, Traverse Theatre Artistic Director

DEBI'S REFLECTION ON THE PROCESS:

I first approached Gareth about partnering for the FST Assistant Director Bursary after Lucy Mason from EPAD [Edinburgh Performing Arts Development] helped me set up a meeting with that goal in mind.

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The Traverse offered me a place assisting on two separate research and development projects that each culminated in a rehearsed reading with an audience. This bursary was all about professional development, so prepare yourself to read those terms a lot!

Both new plays had music heavily integrated into them, and were by two of the most exciting women creating work in the UK right now, with direction led by Gareth Nicholls. First was Isobel McArthur's *Grand Opera House Hotel*, which gave us a farcical mystery that becomes a hilarious and touching Opera exploring the opposition of isolation and sanitisation with music, love and humanity.

The second project was Apphia Campbell's new untitled play, surrounding a tight-knit church community that combines the big, complex narratives of a classic American play with Gospel and soul music. Both sessions of development culminated in rehearsed readings that included some of the music from each.

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Both readings went extremely well and I was in awe of how much could be achieved in such a short amount of time despite battling COVID, train strikes and photo-shoots! I feel I achieved the objectives I had going into the bursary partnership and it was tremendously encouraging to know that high quality work can be swiftly achieved in rehearsal rooms that are also nurturing, open and warm.

Read Debi's full reflection of her time at the Traverse [here!](#)



Class Act Edinburgh



Class Act has gained ground over the last 30 years, and the pandemic forged ahead change to an elevated digital model with in-person facilitation. This approach - established in consultation with the teachers- allowed us to work more responsively to individual schools' needs. Through Class Act, young people are supported to enact positive, tangible change in their lives – a legacy that will support them, and our society in years to come.

Within this iteration of Class Act Autumn we are working with City of Edinburgh Council schools; Craigmount High School, Craigroyston High School, Tynecastle High School, Trinity High School as well as Intercultural Youth Scotland. We're working with these five groups, to support young people to unleash their creativity and unique voice. The dynamic, new, creative work they make will be premiered by the Traverse in 2023. Each group has a dedicated facilitator who will work with them to realise their creative ideas alongside a programme of digital tasks by guest artists who work with writing as part of their practice.

The facilitators of this Class Act iteration in Edinburgh are:

James Ley (<i>Wilf, Love Song to Lavender Menace</i>)	- Tynecastle High School
Michael John O'Neill (<i>This is Paradise</i>)	- Craigmount High School
Fiona MacKinnon (<i>Summer Heart, AD Meet Me At Dawn</i>)	- Trinity High School
Nell O'Hara (<i>AD 549: Scots of the Spanish Civil War</i>)	- Craigroyston High School
Sara Shaarawi (<i>Niqabi Ninja, Sister Radio</i>)	- Intercultural Youth Scotland

Stay tuned for more Class Act news to follow shortly!

Creating Space

The first iteration of our brand new Creating Space Writers' Group has now come to an end. The initiative, developed in collaboration with Scottish BPOC Writers Network, invited Scotland-based writers of the Global Majority aged 18+, with a new play idea to create a safe, supportive, and inspiring environment for writers of the Global Majority to develop their work.

Over 10 weeks, acclaimed playwright Mariem Omari will guided them through a series of online and in-person workshops with a range of exciting guest artists covering the playwriting process, industry mentorship, and feedback on their writing. The group culminated in a sharing of their writing. These readings saw a coming together of warmth, feedback and support of each other's work, and a celebration of their prospective writing journeys. We can't wait to see what comes next from this talent bunch!



Imagining Artificial Life: breaking through the screen



What if the world's most successful writer was an AI bot? How have storytelling and myth shaped our attitudes to robots? Should we worry about biases in the algorithms that read and write our lives?

Humanity has long relied on stories to imagine and understand complex new technologies, but now the tantalising prospect seems to be emerging of technology telling us new stories. Yet the risk remains that these breakthroughs are replicating all the old biases and prejudices, hidden (or not) beneath a gleaming white case.

Organised by IASH (The Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the University of Edinburgh), a panel of artists and researchers explored singularities, new technologies and the blurred boundaries between art and the digital world. Speakers included artist Beverley Hood, playwright Oliver Emanuel, human-robot interaction expert Mark Paterson and digital culture expert Melissa Terras.

It certainly gave us a lot to think about at the Traverse!

This event was part of the Being Human festival, the UK's national festival of the humanities. For further information please see beinghumanfestival.org.

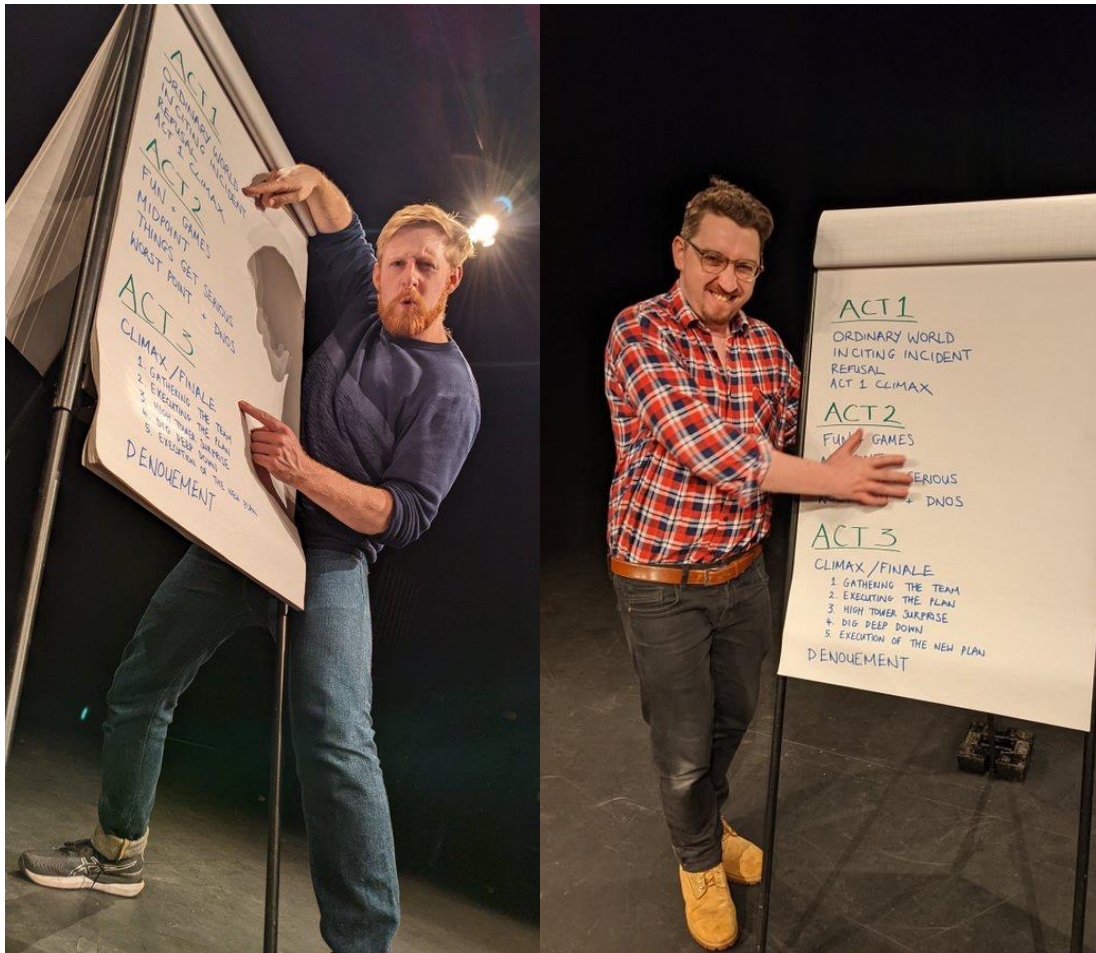
Filming of a brand-new digital workshop series



Curious who is hiding in the blur and what they are up to?

Traverse Theatre (Scotland) is a Limited Company (Registered Number SC076037) and Scottish Charity (Registered Number SC002368) with its Registered Office at 10 Cambridge Street, Edinburgh, Scotland, EH1 2ED.

Surprise! It is our epic writers' duo Michael Patrick and Oisín Kearney (*My Left Nut*, *The Alternative*, current IASH fellows)!



Joining Meghan Tyler's [Anyone Can Write A Play](#), and Laurie Motherwell's [How to Build Your Voice](#), we will add yet another free digital writing workshop series to our digital suite to help you get your creative juices flowing.

In this new series, *Building Blocks: How to Structure your Story*, Michael Patrick and Oisín Kearney will guide you through the building blocks of structure to take your story to the next level. Having gathered their skills and knowledge from an array of workshops similar to this and know first-hand the struggle of reworking a script, they are here to divulge their techniques to writing a great story.

By breaking down the elements of ACTS, SCENES, TIME, PLACE, and the HERO'S JOURNEY, you'll be more equipped than ever before to put pen to paper and tell the world your story.

Each episode will be uploaded to YouTube (captioned) weekly and will be hosted on this page. There's no signup required, so check back over the next four weeks, from Wed 24 Nov, to catch the latest episode.

COMING UP
THIS NOVEMBER

CELL OUTS by Ella Church and Harriet Troup



THU 24 - SAT 26 NOV, 8PM

A dark comedy written and performed by two ex-prison officers, as they stare down the injustices of the UK prison system.

'A fascinating multi-character piece' - The Guardian

[LEARN MORE](#)

DON'T. MAKE. TEA. (ONLINE) by Rob Drummond

WED 23 - SAT 26 NOV



An opportunity to watch Birds of Paradise's hit production online following the company's tour de force return to live theatre in October.

★★★★

'A real hit which should be widely seen and enjoyed' North West End

Watch it [here!](#)

Giving Tuesday 2022

Tue 29 NOV



On the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, people around the world will come together to celebrate and support meaningful causes for Giving Tuesday on the 29th of November. At the Traverse Theatre, we are approaching almost six decades as a leading arts force and agent for change. We believe that theatre has the power to change lives. If you agree, let's come together and help us to tell the best of contemporary and relevant stories from a diversity of voices.

[Start your own fundraising page](#) to rally friends and family to help celebrate Traverse's 60th anniversary. Thank you for being a part of this movement. By joining forces to give generously, we can make huge strides for theatre in Scotland and beyond.

Mark your calendars, spread the word, and stay tuned for more details!

THIS DECEMBER:

4PLAY by Katy Nixon. Mikey Burnett, Andrea McKenzie & Ruairaidh Murray



THU 1 - FRI 2 DEC, 7:30PM

Previously sold out, new date added!

Four new scripts written by four Edinburgh playwrights. A chance to experience unique, fresh exciting work as it makes its way to the stage for the first time.

LEARN MORE & [BOOK HERE.](#)

***ONCE UPON A SNOWSTORM* by Richard Johnson, adapted by Jo Timmins**

FRI 9 - FRI 23 DEC



A gentle winter tale for young audiences aged 5-8 and their families, based on the beautiful illustration story book by Richard Johnson.

A father and son live an isolated life in the woods. When one day a howling snowstorm separates them, the boy falls asleep in the shelter of the trees. When he awakes, he is surrounded by some inquisitive woodland creatures – are they friends or are they foe?

Book your tickets [here!](#)

FREE REHEARSAL SPACE & CO-WORKING AT THE TRAV DURING DECEMBER



We are offering free rehearsal spaces for Edinburgh artists in December. If you know anyone who needs time for R&D, a room to rehearse, or want to work towards a sharing of a piece in development, there is space available in Traverse 1 and in the Traverse bar on Mondays - Fridays from 5 - 23 December. Offers of space, which will be selected at random, will be this week.

We will also be offering co-working space on selected mornings and afternoons in the Traverse Bar during Dec. Plug in your laptop, log on to the Wi-Fi, share space and connect with other local independent artists and collaborators. Dates and times will be announced at the end of November, so keep an eye on our website and social channels for more information.

Traverse Theatre Artistic Director, Gareth Nicholls, and Creative Engagement Producer, Mahri Reilly said:

"During a time when the cost of living is rising to crippling high levels, it feels important for the Traverse to do what we can to provide artists with the tools they need to create the new and important work which will add the meaning, comfort and entertainment to our lives which we all still need so much. So, this December, alongside presenting Once Upon A Snowstorm with Lyra, we're delighted to hand over Traverse 1 and the Trav Bar to local Edinburgh artists on a free-to-use basis for them to unleash their creativity and imaginations, and further their work. Alongside our partners at EPAD, we can't wait to see what's developed, and hope to meet some exciting new artists."

Class Act Ukraine-Russia

Russia's current attack on Ukraine has caused millions to flee both Russia and Ukraine. Amongst them, playwright Mikhail Durnenkov, - who was part of Class Act Ukraine a couple of years ago -, is currently seeking refuge in Finland under the temporary protection scheme. The National Theatre of Finland are currently working with Mikhail, using the Class Act format to work with a number of Russian and Ukrainian refugees to bring young people, all of whom are living with the consequences of the war in different ways, together. As we yearly with our Class Act in Edinburgh, the young people will write short plays which will be performed live in Helsinki on the 3rd of December. A Traverse representative will travel to Finland to watch the final performance, so stay tuned for more info.

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