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Contact: press@traverse.co.uk



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Traverse Theatre announces Spring 2026 season and new IASH/Traverse Creative Fellow



Scotland's engine room of new writing reveals its Spring programme alongside the announcement of playwright Jack MacGregor as the 2026 IASH/Traverse Creative Fellow

The Traverse Theatre, Scotland's National New Writing Company, today announces its Spring 2026 programme, a season celebrating home-grown performance, bold collaborations and the power of theatre to ask urgent questions of the world around us. From raw new voices to award-winning revivals, the programme showcases artists who are reimagining form, exploring identity and connection, and holding up a mirror to society with courage and creativity. Linda Crooks, CEO of Traverse stated;

“Our Spring season celebrates the extraordinary range of artists shaping new writing in Scotland today, from first-time playwrights to internationally acclaimed voices, and reminds us how powerful theatre can be in helping us see ourselves and each other more clearly.”

The Traverse is also delighted to announce that **playwright Jack MacGregor** has been selected as the **2026 IASH/Traverse Creative Fellow**, continuing a long-running partnership with the University of Edinburgh’s Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities (IASH).

Founded in 1969, IASH promotes interdisciplinary research in the arts, humanities and social sciences, providing an international and autonomous space for discussion and debate. Since its foundation, more than 1,500 scholars from 70 countries have held Institute fellowships, with playwrights such as **Femi Fatoba**, **David Harrower**, **Rona Munro** and **Jo Clifford** among those who have developed work while in residence. IASH and the Traverse have collaborated since 2010, with recent commissions including *Still* by **Frances Poet** and *Variant* by **Peter Arnott**.

Professor **Lesley McAra**, Director of IASH, said:

“We treasure our long-running relationship with the Traverse Theatre. The brilliant writers who visit us each year enrich our community both through their commitment to creating bold new work for Scotland, and through the novel ideas and creative methods that they exchange with scholars from around the world. Jack joins a host of playwrights-in-residence who have together changed the face of Scottish theatre over the past five decades. We are proud to have him as part of our community in 2026 and look forward to helping him develop his new play.”

FULL SPRING PROGRAMME 2026

The Traverse will present its new commission, [*GUSH*](#) (Fri 10 – Sat 25 Apr) by **Jess Brodie** in April. Exploring self-identity, sexuality and the tension between compromise and sacrifice, *GUSH* considers what it means to discover what we want and dare to ask for it. The production will be directed by **Becky Hope Palmer** who has previously worked with the Traverse on *Letters To Our Future Government* and *Breakfast Plays: The Future Is [...]*. The development of *GUSH* has been supported by the Traverse through our First Looks programme, which included a public reading back in April 2025.

Jess Brodie, writer of *GUSH*, said:

“I’m so excited to be bringing my debut play GUSH to the Traverse. Having grown up in Edinburgh, it feels surreal to see my work on a stage I know so well. The team have been so supportive throughout the play’s development, and I can’t wait to share it with audiences.”

[*The Class Act Edinburgh Showcase*](#) (Wed 4 – Thu 5 Mar) is also back; a staple of the Traverse programme. Following seven months of workshops with playwrights and theatre makers, scripts written by the young people of **Tynecastle High School**, **The Royal High School**, **Trinity Academy** and **Craigroyston Community High School** will take to the stage and performed by professional actors.

For the first time in over a decade, Class Act has also made its way over to Glasgow! [*The Class Act Glasgow Showcase*](#) (Wed 11 – Thu 12 Mar) presented at the newly reopened Citizens Theatre will feature scripts written by young people from **Holyrood Secondary School**, **Notre Dame High School**, **Govan High School** and **Bannerman High School**.

For the first time since its world premiere at TravFest in 2013, **David Greig's** play, [The Events](#) (Fri 27 – Sat 28 Feb) takes to the Traverse 1 stage following a critically acclaimed run at Cumbernauld Theatre in October 2025. Featuring a community choir, **Wonder Fools'** new production is a bold, powerful and uplifting performance about the extraordinary power of community to heal after a tragedy.

The award-winning production of [Medea](#) by **Kathy McKean** after Euripides (Fri 6 – Sat 7 Mar) joins us as part of the **Bard In The Botanics** Scottish tour with **Nicole Cooper** stepping back into the central role. Cooper won an Outstanding Performance Award at the 2022 Critics Awards For Theatre In Scotland, with the production also picking up the Best Production Award that same year.

An intimate look at war through the eyes of a child will be told in [A Grain of Sand](#) by **Elias Matar** (Tue 10 – Thu 12 Mar). Blending Palestinian folklore with real-life testimonies from children in contemporary Gaza, **Good Chance's** production is story of resilience, hope and the right of children to be children.

[Saint Joan](#) (Wed 18 – Sat 21 March) reimagines **George Bernard Shaw's** classic play for the 2020s, in a stripped-back, close-up staging directed by **Stewart Laing**, with a film sequence written and directed by **Adura Onashile**. A **Raw Material, Perth Theatre and Aberdeen Performing Arts co-production**, in association with **Citizens Theatre**, *Saint Joan* explores power, gender and youth-led change through the story of a teenager who challenged the systems of her time – a play that speaks powerfully to today's generation facing political unrest and war.

[The Light House](#) (Sat 28 Mar) by Glasgow-based theatre artist **Alys Williams** will combine puppetry, clowning and gently embedded audience participation in a real-life love story about holding on to each other, even in the darkest times. It follows a celebrated national tour and London run at the Park Theatre in 2024.

Abigail Dooley and **Emma Edwards** of **A&E Comedy** return to the Traverse with the hotly anticipated sequel to their 2018 show *Enter The Dragons*, entitled [Game of Cronos](#) (Sat 4 – Sun 5 Apr). This is a funny, feral, and gloriously unapologetic celebration of women in their prime - warriors who will not go gentle into bingo night.

Artist-led theatre company **Vanishing Point** are teaming up with Danish company **Teater Katapult** to present [What I'm Here For](#) (Wed 15 – Sat 18 April) by **Josephine Eusebius**, directed by **Matthew Lenton** in Traverse 1. With bold theatrical innovation and immersive world-building this is a fast-moving fusion of new European writing and visual imagination, which explores the tragi-comic collateral of hospitals and human choices.

In new, highly anticipated work from choreographer **Tamsin Fitzgerald**, **2Faced's** extraordinary male company explore the future in [Tomorrow](#) (Tue 28 – Thu 30 Apr), with their trademark no holds barred approach of stunning athletic performance and startling vulnerability.

From **Kangaroo Court**, [Shotgunned](#) (Wed 29 – Thu 30 Apr) is a relatable and intimate piece of theatre about how the people we lose can shape who we become. Telling the story of Dylan and Roz – a couple who unexpectedly fall out of love – the play takes audiences on a non-linear journey through their relationship in a collection of fragmented scenes, blending humour and heartbreak in equal measure.

Award-winning Isle of Wight company **Deadman's** debut [The Freshwater Five](#) (Fri 15 – Sat 16 May), arrives fresh from sell-out tours to coastal communities across the south east in 2023 and 2024. This detailed and rich theatrical investigation will be accompanied by a workshop led by Deadman's

artistic director, Samuel Bossman, allowing creatives the opportunity to focus on finding their voice and building a career.

Tricky Hat Productions also return to the Traverse with [The Flames](#) (Sat 14 Feb), a poignant and humorous multi-media performance created by people aged 50+, exploring the Japanese concept of ikigai through striking contemporary storytelling, film, music and performance.

[Stand & Deliver: The Lee Jeans Sit-In](#) (Tue 19 – Wed 20 May) by **Frances Poet** tells the true story of the women of Greenock's Lee Jeans factory, who staged a seven-month sit-in in 1981 to protest the closure of their workplace. With a live 80s soundtrack and direction by **Jemima Levick**, this **National Theatre of Scotland** and **Tron Theatre Company** co-production is a moving and defiant production which celebrates solidarity, resilience and the power of collective action.

Nicholas Bone directs the world premiere production of [Baby Mash-Up, What On Earth Are You Doing?](#) by Sally Hobson, produced by Stillpoint. This will be accompanied by [a selection of readings](#) which will dive into the questions, concerns, and dreams that drive the writers 'breaking the rules'.

Returning favourites also feature throughout the season, led by the much-loved [A Play, A Pie and A Pint](#), which returns for a four-week run of new plays. Festival partners **Manipulate** also make a welcome return to the Traverse, presenting [Coffee with Sugar?](#), [Don Quixote \(Is A Very Big Book\)](#), [Size Matters](#), [The Rite of Spring](#) and [The Wood Paths](#).

The programme of performances is supplemented by a range of **creative engagement activities** so that audiences and creatives alike can get a peek behind the curtain at the theatre-making process. **Post-show Q&As** will take place with the creative teams of *The Events*, *Game of Crones*, *A Grain Of Sand*, *The Freshwater Five*, *A Fishy Tale in Anstruther*, *Yui's Unique Adventure* and *Baby Mash-Up, What On Earth Are You Doing*. Workshops will be hosted by the creative teams of *The Freshwater Five* and *Baby Mash-Up, What On Earth Are You Doing*. The Traverse will also host a [Verity Bargate Award workshop](#), offering participants tools and inspiration to begin writing a play.

Further events, workshops and Q&As will be announced in due course, with additional programming from **Tradfest** and the **Edinburgh International Children's Festival** later in the year.

Alongside its theatre programme, the Traverse's spring [music line-up](#) features performances from **Espen Eriksen Trio**, **Portable Infinity**, **Laura Jurd**, **Tony McManus & Julia Toaspern**, **Suntou Susso**, **Harben Kay**, **Holly Clarke**, **QOW Trio**, **Aspyrian**, **Portable Infinity**, **Vandalia** and **Ordinary Elephant**. The Traverse also continues its collaboration with music partner **Soundhouse**.

Comedy at the Traverse this Spring includes **Jack Docherty** with [The Chief: No Apologies](#) and **Leila Navabi** with her sharp new show [Relay – Show & Tell](#).

Audiences can also look forward to performances from **Lung Ha Theatre Company**, including *The Table* and an evening of rehearsed readings, [A Fishy Tale in Anstruther](#) and [Yui's Unique Adventure](#), alongside student showcases from **Performing Arts Studio Scotland** and **Queen Margaret University**.

Notes to editors:

Full programme and booking: www.traverse.co.uk

Traverse Theatre, 10 Cambridge St, Edinburgh, EH1 2ED | traverse.co.uk

For more information, interviews, press tickets or images, contact press@traverse.co.uk



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