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## Traverse Theatre announces Autumn 2025 season



- Scotland's engine room of new writing reveals Autumn programme of home-grown performances and thrilling new work from Scotland and further afield
- Traverse commissions Stephen Christopher and Graeme Smith's *Dancing Shoes* for new December production
- Taking centre-stage in Traverse 1 is *Black Hole Sign*, a razor-sharp new Traverse co-production about the healthcare system written by practicing NHS nurse Uma Nada-Rajah
- Two hilarious plays from Douglas Maxwell, including the return of award-winning Traverse co-production *So Young* and new canine comedy *Man's Best Friend*
- Exciting partner company productions include *Night Waking* by Shireen Mula, *Arlington* by Enda Walsh, *Through the Mud* by Apphia Campbell, and the award-winning *Òran* by Owen Sutcliffe
- Audience-favourite & TravFest24 Fringe First-winner *BATSHIT* by Leah Shelton returns to Traverse 2
- *A Play, A Pie, & A Pint* is back at the Traverse for six-week Autumn season of new plays

Hot on the heels of a thrilling [TravFest25](#) programme, the Traverse Theatre has announced the first details of the exciting work audiences can look forward to seeing in the venue from September. The Autumn season sees some of the most exciting artists and companies working in Scotland take centre stage with new productions and returning favourites alike.

**Stephen Christopher** and **Graeme Smith's** raucous new comedy, *Dancing Shoes*, is being fully commissioned by the Traverse to run in Traverse 1 in December 2025. Struggling with isolation and addiction, long-suffering Donny joins a local support group where he meets new-found friends Jay and Craig. When Donny shares his secret passion – donning his best shoes for a private boogie in his bedroom – Jay smells an opportunity. Unexpected viral fame follows, and the men's new friendship is put to the test with the whole world now watching on. Packed with humour and emotion, *Dancing Shoes* is a sure-footed comedy that's guaranteed to have audiences laughing this winter.

New Traverse production [Black Hole Sign](#) – co-produced with the Tron Theatre in association with National Theatre of Scotland – is a new play taking a razor-sharp scalpel to the absurdities, tragedies and realities of working within the modern healthcare system. Written by **Uma Nada-Rajah**, a practicing NHS nurse and one of the most exciting new voices in Scottish playwrighting, *Black Hole Sign* sees three generations of NHS nurses doing their best to stay afloat against a crumbling system which seems stacked against them.

Directed by Traverse Artistic Director **Gareth Nicholls**, the play will be brought to life by a multi-talented ensemble cast including **Martin Docherty**, **Dani Heron**, **Amelia Isaac Jones**, **Beruce Khan**, **Helen Logan**, and **Ann Louise Ross**. An exploration of changing attitudes towards an institution once world renowned, the play asks what we want for the future of our National Health Service and, crucially, who will hold it together when it all falls down?

**Uma Nada-Rajah, Playwright, said:** *"I'm a nurse in my day job and have been a nurse for a long time. There is something so funny and tragic about day-to-day life in hospital, the way that routine and paperwork brush up against the grand processes of human existence: When you're born you get a birth certificate. When you die you get a death certificate. I wanted to capture that sense of absurdity and put it into a play that will make people laugh or cry. And at a time when there are a lot of questions circulating about the future of the National Health Service, I hope Black Hole Sign will make audiences think about the significance of care in modern society."*

Two productions by celebrated playwright **Douglas Maxwell**, the man behind previous Traverse favourites including *Decky Does A Bronco* and *I Can Go Anywhere*, will delight theatre-going audiences this Autumn.

[Man's Best Friend](#) is a hilariously heart-warming story about the give-and-take of companionship – specifically the four-legged kind. Walking his neighbours' dogs kept Ronnie together after a very difficult lockdown. But when a series of mishaps result in the dogs slipping their leads and disappearing off into the woods, Ronnie is forced to take chase and confront some hard truths. Directed by **Jemima Levick** and starring **Jordan Young** (*River City*, *Scot Squad*) as Ronnie, this Tron Theatre production visits the Traverse as part of its acclaimed Scotland-wide tour in September.

And following its critically acclaimed, Fringe First-winning premiere at TravFest24, [So Young](#) returns to the Traverse 1 stage for a hilarious new run of performances from 23 – 25 October. When Milo invites his two best friends Davie and Liane around for a takeaway to meet his new girlfriend, it promises to be a great night spent reconnecting. As they delve into the past and swap the same old stories they've been through a thousand times before, the night becomes more about those absent than present; remembering who they have lost and who they were, or thought they were...

Produced by Raw Material and the Traverse in association with the Citizens Theatre, *So Young* is a touching and funny story about old friends coming back together after time apart. Following its Traverse performances the production will transfer to the Citizens Theatre as part of its long-awaited reopening season.

Another returning favourite from TravFest24 will be **Leah Shelton's** riotous one-woman tour-de-force [BATSHIT](#), which once again takes the Traverse 2 stage by storm from 22 – 25 October.

Quiet Riot's wildly theatrical, darkly comic, and deeply intimate reckoning with the myths and misconceptions of female madness is created by Shelton and directed by Olivier award-winning Ursula Martinez. A requiem for Leah's grandmother Gwen, who was incarcerated for seeking independence in 1960s Australia, *BATSHIT* draws on personal stories, in-depth research and pop culture to unpack how psychiatry has been shaped by gender bias. The show won both a Scotsman Fringe First & the Mental Health Foundation Fringe Award on its premiere at TravFest24, heralded for its razor-sharp wit, raw storytelling, and unflinching central performance.

The season will also see the venue host visiting productions by some of Scottish theatre's most exciting artists and companies. On 01 October **An Tobar and Mull Theatre** present [Night Waking](#) - a sharp, strange, and darkly funny exploration of motherhood, colonialism, and the ghosts we inherit. As Anna ricochets between present-day exhaustion, historical letters, and a past that won't stay buried, she is forced to confront what it means to nurture, to protect, and to fail. Adapted from **Sarah Moss's** novel by **Shireen Mula**, and directed by **Rebecca Atkinson-Lord**, this one-woman play is a feat of acting virtuosity—a fragmented, fevered journey through sleepless nights, long-lost voices, and the things that won't stay hidden.

Glasgow-based dance-theatre company **Shotput** bring their thrilling new production of **Enda Walsh's** [Arlington](#) to the Traverse from 06 – 08 November. In a room, high in a tower block, Isla waits for her number to be called. Her only companion, on the other side of the wall, is an anonymous man who collects her stories. Today there is a new listener. He offers glimpses of the world beyond the tower, and what seems at first to be a small, if strange, conversation between two strangers turns out to be something much more terrifying and sublime – in a dark fable of surveillance, connection, and the power of imagination.

Wonder Fools' critically-acclaimed production [Oran](#), winner of **The Bestie's Best Debut Award** on its premiere in 2024, arrives at the Traverse from 13 – 15 November. A visceral piece of contemporary theatre is a collaboration between Wonder Fools and the acclaimed hip-hop artist **Owen Sutcliffe** with music by **Vanlives**, creating an urgent and entertaining modern retelling of the classic Greek myth Orpheus.

Against a stunning live soundtrack of gospel and blues, [Through The Mud](#) explores what it takes to become a revolutionary. The story of two generations of women activists in the struggle for black liberation in America: One, notorious Black Panther Assata Shakur, the other a college student at the beginning of the Black Lives Matter movement in Ferguson in 2014. Written and performed by **Apphia Campbell**, Fringe First-winner and creator of the hit show *Black is the Colour of My Voice*, *Through the Mud* arrives at the Traverse from 14 – 15 November.

Audiences can also look forward to a night with the multi-award-winning comedian and Taskmaster-star [Babatunde Aléshe](#) as he guides us through family life, his new-found fame and the joys of Costco in his hilarious new stand-up show *High Expectations*, which visits the Traverse on 02 November as part of its UK-wide tour.

The season also sees the return of the beloved **A Play, A Pie, & A Pint** as it returns to the Traverse for a new run of performances promising some of the very best new-writing on the Scottish stage, with more to be announced soon.

[Music At The Traverse](#) continues to bring brilliant gigs and sessions into the theatre this Autumn. **Soundhouse** present a trio of events spotlighting exciting global jazz, country, traditional and folk acts, including a special concert celebrating the release of jazz pianist [Paul Harrison's](#) long awaited new album *Encontros*, a slice of Ancient Northumbrian Futurism from [Kathryn Tickell & The Darkening](#), and the exciting [Erik Palmberg Quartet](#) bringing their lyrical jazz melodies to Edinburgh on a first UK tour. Faroese folk masters [Spælimennir](#) arrive on a 50th anniversary tour, while there are also gigs from award-winning young violinist [Ryan Young](#) and a solo performance from one of the great Irish singers [Andy Irvine](#).

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**Notes to editors:**

Full programme and booking: [www.traverse.co.uk](http://www.traverse.co.uk)

Traverse Theatre, 10 Cambridge St, Edinburgh, EH1 2ED | [traverse.co.uk](http://traverse.co.uk)

**For more information, interviews, press tickets or images, contact [press@traverse.co.uk](mailto:press@traverse.co.uk)**



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