

Summer 2019

# scene



The magazine of Scottish Community Drama

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## Scottish Final Kirkcaldy 2019

Full report on  
pages 11 to 14



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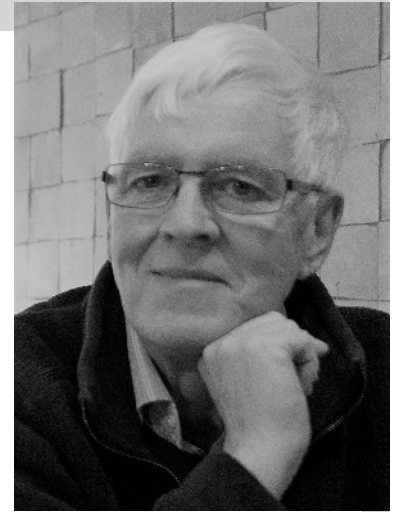
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### Cover

The cast of Stromness Drama Club's 'Shakers', winners of this year's Scottish One-Act Final.

Photo by **Walter Hampson**

# Chairman's Chat



## Hello

At the time of writing we are in the middle of the festivals season, with the Divisional festivals just getting under way. Entries are up slightly from 2018 in both youth and open categories. Western Division accounts for half the National Youth entries with Stewartry district responsible for no fewer than 9 youth plays. The sheer number of youngsters involved is impressive. Eastern Division decided this year to invite all the youth entries to the Divisional festival – this amounted to 5 entries with a total of 108 cast members. Just as well an entire dance studio was available as a dressing room for the 52 cast of one play! The adjudicator commented that the 5 plays came from just 3 clubs and it would be good to see more clubs represented. These three clubs came from 2 of the 4 districts. It made me wonder if some believe the paperwork and procedures required where children are involved, to be off-putting. It would be good to know, because its important for our future that we give young people the experience of performing and its good for them too to acquire the skills associated with drama.

SCDA does try to help by proving guidance and our new Child Entertainment procedures should considerably help clubs with festival plays. If there is more we can do, then please tell us.

The youth final in the Ryan Theatre Stranraer is on 15 June with three teams representing Eastern, Northern, and Western divisions. If you can, do come along.

**Tony Flisch**  
([chair@scda.org.uk](mailto:chair@scda.org.uk))

## Welcome . . .

### To new Individual Members

Susan Stewart Borders (Eastern)  
Alan Tricker Fife (Eastern)  
Tom Fuge Glasgow (Western)

### To new Clubs

Angus Centre for Performing Arts  
Angus (Northern)

## Thank you . . .

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Thanks once again to the Executive and National Committee Members for donating their expenses

# British Final Harrogate 5th-6th July

Stromness Drama Club will represent Scotland at this year's **BRITISH FINAL OF ONE-ACT PLAYS**, the 86th such event. It will be held at Harrogate Theatre, North Yorkshire on the nights of Friday 5th and Saturday 6th July, starting at 7pm. Harrogate Theatre is a magnificently restored, 500 seat, late Victorian venue which opened in 1900 as 'The Grand Opera House'. It was designed by Frank Tugwell, architect of the Savoy Theatre in London.

The spa town of Harrogate is a justly popular tourist destination. Famous for its curative waters, Betty's Tearooms and splendid shopping facilities, it has many acres of municipal parkland (the Stray) and gardens (Valley Gardens and RHS Harlow Carr). It is also a gateway to the Yorkshire Dales National Park and Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Not far to the North lies Fountains Abbey, a World Heritage Site, whilst two miles to the east is the ancient market town of Knaresborough, perched impressively on the side of the Nidd Gorge.

The lead hotel for the event is the Cairn, Ripon Road, HG1 2JD (a three minute bus-ride or 10 minute walk from the theatre) where after-show social events (enlivened by Harrogate Gilbert and Sullivan Society and Betty Luptons Ladle Laikers) will take place on both nights.

If practicable, this year's winning Geoffrey Whitworth play will receive a rehearsed reading at the Frazer Theatre, Knaresborough, HG5 0EQ on the afternoon of Saturday 6th July (free entry). Buses to Knaresborough leave from Harrogate Bus Station every 10 minutes.

Accommodation at the Cairn and tickets for the social events can only be reserved by using the British Final Booking Form.

Theatre tickets (£17 for one sessions, £30 for both sessions) should be booked via Harrogate Theatre itself (01423 502116 or online at [www.harrogatetheatre.co.uk](http://www.harrogatetheatre.co.uk))



## Is this your magazine ?

If you've just picked up Scene at a drama rehearsal, or from a friend's coffee table, we hope you enjoy it. If you'd like to get your own copy four times a year, it's one of the benefits of becoming an Individual Member of SCDA. Go to our website: [scda.org.uk](http://scda.org.uk) for more information.

# Carole's workshops

Over recent years we have developed the workshop programme to hopefully make it accessible and attractive. I have attended local meetings, AGMS and festivals with my portable display and talked to anyone who would talk to me. We have also updated the website and created a menu of workshops based on the most popular requests which has been sent to all clubs. Much of my work is still very bespoke to the needs of the individual club and as I return to many clubs on a regular basis, we work together to make every visit worthwhile and fun and we become more ambitious about the content on each occasion.

So, what do clubs get out of workshops? The first obvious answer is some new skills but I think there is a lot more to it than that. I have seen that events such as workshops are a great way of bringing people together to have fun without the pressure of a production. It can also provide an opportunity for Directors to see their members in a new light which opens up ideas for productions and casting. It can sustain a club between productions and sometimes a recruitment tool – I've seen clubs where new people have come to a workshop and ended up not only joining the club but participating in District activities. It can also be an eye opener - conversations over coffee or lunch often results in members talking about things in an open way leading to some positive changes or identifying areas where there is a lack of understanding about why things are done the way they are.

Sometimes Directors call me into the rehearsal room to help move things forward or problem solve – a recent example of this is where I assisted a Director to rework the opening of their pantomime to try to achieve more impact.

Sometimes an outside eye bringing in new ideas or questions can be really useful and help to get over a bump in the road. Building these relationships is so important to me as I know it can be a lonely job directing and having someone unconnected to the club to bounce ideas off can be helpful and relieve some of the inevitable stress.

**Dunoon Players**



What we still don't know much about is why so many clubs don't book workshops? 155 adults and 80 young people took part in a workshop across 2017/18 across 20 clubs more than ever before, but this is a small percentage of the number of member clubs. So, if your club or district has never run a workshop what are the barriers and what can we do to better meet your needs? Please get in touch with me at [nda@scda.org.uk](mailto:nda@scda.org.uk) with your suggestions, questions or even your grumbles.

Here's hoping to see even more of you in 2019.

**Carole Williams**  
National Drama Advisor

**Kirkintilloch**



# The Houghmagandie Players

Greetings, fellow thespians, from The Houghmagandie Players of South Lanarkshire's little village of Longnetherbottom! It seems we are the newest club to join SCDA, and the team at Scene positively begged us for an article about our club, so here goes.

Last year some of us decided that a drama club was what our village needed to spice up life a bit. The first challenge – what should we call ourselves? The Longnetherbottom Players would be a bit of a mouthful, and, if the truth be told, we're all a bit sick of the anatomical jibes from nearby villages about our name – some of them quite obscene.

As I lay awake one night pondering the problem, a word leapt into my head – 'houghmagandie'. I couldn't remember where I'd heard it or what it might mean but doesn't it just flow off the tongue? And so, the Houghmagandie Players were born.

Our first club meeting was unforgettable. People came from far and wide to pour into the village hall.

Even our team of binmen were there and they all live in distant Hamilton! (With an eye to the future, I thought they'd come in handy if we ever had to transport scenery – they always have such big lorries). It was pandemonium and we almost ran out of chairs. I laid out our plans for the future, starting with a Christmas pantomime. That was when we had our first disappointment. It turned out many of them believed we were some sort of dating agency, which explained why I'd thought a number of the men were leering a bit too obviously at some of the ladies.

The hall cleared more quickly than cinemas did in the days when they played the National Anthem at the end and everybody tried to escape before it began.

Fortunately we were left with a stout band of stalwarts, and rehearsals began. I'm proud to say our panto was a rip-roaring success – over four nights, the audience grew and grew as word spread. There were a couple of

tiny wee hitches on the last night: the large wheelbarrow (borrowed from one of our farmers) adapted for use as Cinderella's coach, fell to pieces and two of the mice began brawling over whose fault it was; the stage manager was a bit drunk, wandered onstage, tripped and shouted what sounded like a very rude four-letter word (we don't think anyone noticed); a lady in the audience complained that Buttons kept pinching Cinderella's bottom – likened him to somebody called Winestain, so maybe she got him mixed up with the stage manager. Nevertheless, at our finale our audience brought the house down with their wild cheers. I think it was cheers.

It turned out two ladies from a club in Glasgow had somehow heard of our prowess and attended the final performance. They told us all about SCDA and suggested we'd be very welcome. They also told us about the competitions, or should I say 'festivals', and how they thought it would be great if we entered. As they left, I heard one remark to the other something about it being time another club won the wooden spoon as she was tired of winning it every year, all of which puzzled me as I thought trophies were usually made of silver, but maybe she got mixed up.

Sadly we were too late to enter this year's festival but at the time of writing this, we're looking forward to seeing your performances this year. Roll on 2020 and our festival debut!

**Isabella Rae**



Fairy Mary threatens  
Mag the Hag



# The Joy of Playreading

When did you last read a play? No, I don't mean relaxed in front of the fire with a nice glass of wine or at a nerve-jangling audition. I mean an organised playreading with parts allocated to different readers. Basically, a performance without prior rehearsal, stage directions, sets or costumes. I'm guessing the answer might be not for a while or never. Yet there was a time when playreadings were regular events for many clubs. Even professional theatres were known to present public readings. But, alas, playreadings seem to have become a forgotten pleasure.

I'll digress for a moment and ask if you've heard of the University of the Third Age? Over four hundred thousand members in the UK certainly have, but many people haven't. So, what is the U3A – as it is most commonly called? For starters, it's not a University in the accepted definition. No qualifications required, no examinations and no degrees awarded. Instead, they describe themselves as "a learning co-operative to enable members to share knowledge and learning... and to have fun". The "Third Age" isn't one specific age but that period in life when full time employment has ceased and parenting responsibilities have diminished.

Throughout the UK, there are over a thousand local groups, including my own home town of Edinburgh. Within each local group are scores of activity groups covering many different subjects, each lead by an individual member who passes their knowledge of that subject to others. When I joined U3A after retiring, I signed up for Genealogy, Scottish History, Ten Pin Bowling and my favourite – Playreading. U3A Playreading groups consist of around ten members who meet during the daytime in the comfort of a host member's house to read a complete play and discuss it afterwards.

You might expect a group of retirees to choose a safe repertoire of Oscar Wilde and Noël Coward, but our choices are surprisingly diverse, anything from Greek Tragedy to Shakespeare, Restoration Comedy and translations of Molière and Chekhov. We've crossed the pond to tackle Arthur Millar and Tennessee Williams, and been absurd with Ionesco and Tom Stoppard. We've had a *Birthday Party*, been *Teachers*, *Waited for Godot* and *Looked Back in Anger*.

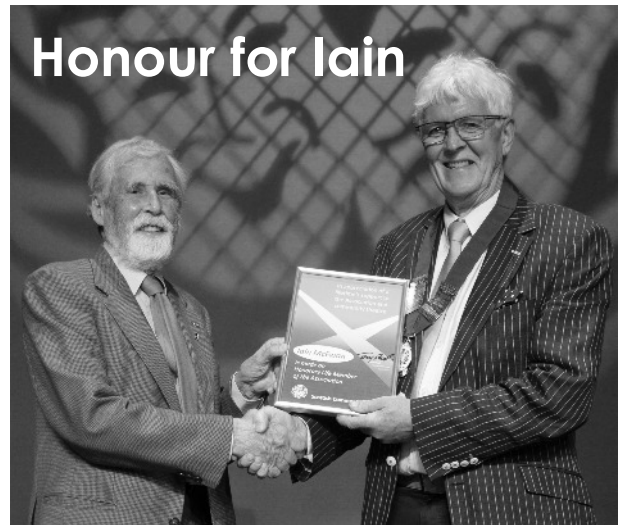
By simply reading a play, there is no limit on what you can choose. My group recently tackled *The Royal Hunt of the Sun* – the sort of huge cast/big set epic most of us can only dream of being involved in. The size of cast is no problem. You often find yourself reading multiple parts, but that's a great exercise for those little grey cells. The age of characters doesn't matter when you're all in the same age group and how else can free bus pass holders get to be Romeo or Juliet? There's often that chance to play those dream parts. Personally, I've been held in the Tower of London as Sir Thomas Moore in *A Man for all Seasons*,

dissected Doctor Knox in *The Anatomist*, and had two stabs at Thomas Becket in T.S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* and Anouilh's *Becket*.

So, what's the connection between the U3A and the SCDA you'll be patiently wondering? That connection is our own wonderful SCDA library. Seven U3A Playreading groups in Scotland are "Friends of the Library", which is a scheme for individuals or groups outwith the membership of the association that gives them access to the library service only, at a cost of £24 a year. It's a win-win arrangement - a source of income for SCDA, inexpensive script hire costs for U3A and the library doesn't have sets of plays out of stock for months of rehearsals - which brings me back (about time!) to the gist of this article. If you're an active club who quickly jump from one production to the next, pause to consider the benefits of playreadings. No play is out of reach. New members can be heard when they're relaxed and not auditioning. Potential directors can gain experience with non-consequential casting and new plays can be tried. You could even consider presenting public playreadings as fund raisers. The possibilities are endless. Simply enjoy.

Alan Richardson

## Honour for Iain



On the last night of the Scottish Final Iain McEwan was presented with honorary Life Membership of the Association by Chair Tony Flisch.

Iain has been a long serving member of SCDA and a stalwart of Perthshire District in various capacities.

He has also been Chairman and later Treasurer of Northern Division for over 10 years. Iain has contributed hugely to the National Committee and latterly the Executive over 20 years. His advice, experience and enthusiasm for drama has been infectious and along with his encouragement of our youth is much appreciated.

# The Northern Stars Shone Brightly

The weather in Orkney may have been wet and windy during this year's Northern Divisional youth festival, but the talent on stage in mid March shone brightly in the night. Even the Northern lights decided to remain veiled given the quality of what was on the Kirkwall stage.

The second performance was **Stromness Drama Club's**, "A Handbag" by Anthony Horowitz. With an opening scene based on an Edwardian set and costumes, the audience was lulled into believing that this was a period drama but gradually a darker core emerged. The staging of a partially completed set was very cleverly constructed and complemented the status of the play being rehearsed. Hamish Burgon portrayed a very believable nervous, stuttering prompt who portrayed a very competent actor when required, and well deserved the best moment of theatre. Auden Towie and Lewis Burgon were the strong central characters around which the performance revolved. Together with the help of Savannah Taylor, Jayden Taylor, and Oliver Johnston the cast worked very well together to tell what was a challenging story for the audience. The way in which they skilfully revealed the various layers to expose what had happened, left the audience to ponder what happens to those who end up incarcerated within secure establishments, and their future there.



**Carnoustie  
Drama Club**

The evening commenced with **Carnoustie Drama Club's** "The Dreaming" by Richard James. The premise for this play is the age old question of who are we and why are we here. The script gives the Director virtually no clues on how to stage the play. For an experienced director this would be difficult enough, but for first time director Rebecca Taylor it must have seemed a huge challenge. But she and the two cast rose beautifully to the challenge. The opening scene with three white rectangular frames gave the the audience the first clue that this was something different. This was immediately picked up by the two actors, Sarah Oliphant and Jessica Taylor, who took the audience on an existential journey with the characters "One" and "Two" trying to understand the meaning of their existence. Sarah showed through her interpretation of character "Two" why she has been a leading light for a number of years on the Carnoustie drama scene. Jessica's portrayal of character "One", and her stage chemistry with Sarah, belied the fact that this was her first time on stage – what a real find for Carnoustie. Both actors kept the audience enthralled and entertained all the way to the end of the play.

The third production of the festival was a delightful four hander from **Blairgowrie Players** called "In need of care" by David Rowley. The setting inside a barn was very authentic, with the emergence of Indira Mayne and Honor Wood from the straw bales being very imaginative and creative. This was further enhanced by the constant background sound of birds and bees. With the premise of two girls having run away from a reform school, both female actors quickly established their characters before hiding in the straw again prior to the arrival of the boys.



**Stromness  
Drama Club**





The initial reactions of Alex Hewitt and Cieran Low on finding a “body” in the straw, through to the realisation that it was not one but two, very much alive, girls in the straw was well directed and had the audience hooked. The splitting up into two couples was tactfully handled, leaving Honor and Alex on stage to start building a relationship between their characters. There wasn’t one member of the audience who didn’t remember what it felt like when they were first attracted to someone else and to empathise with the characters. The dynamics between the various pairings was very believable, well performed and maintained to the inevitable conclusion.



opened the festival. The use of blank panels to write down clues was innovative, and when combined with the playing area being gradually reduced by subtle lighting effects, this allowed the audience to contrast and compare where different directors and casts can take the same play.

Initially, the audience may have been disappointed to realise that they were only going to see three different plays at this festival. However, they were delighted to see four superb performances by very talented young actors who we hope to see again in future youth and open festivals. Alasdair Hawthorn announced Stromness Drama Club the winners and they will make the long journey to Stranraer.

Finally a special thanks to the Orkney District committee for again organising a great festival and after show party. If only they could do the same re the state of the Pentland Firth in March...

**Peter Esson**  
Northern Division

The final treat for the audience was **Ury Players** with the evening’s second production of “The Dreaming”. Whilst the audience knew where the play was going from the start, the opening sequence with no dialogue being spoken in the first three minutes, meant this interpretation was sufficiently different to keep the audience enthralled and engaged. As the performance continued, Eleanor Douglas and Isla Neil were not afraid to use the opportunities for silences to breakup the play into its key parts. When combined with their stage presence, confident interactions and seamless use of the stage, the overall result was a significantly different production to that which



# JOHN MORLEY'S PANTOMIMES

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# The Scottish Final . . .

First impressions – great theatre and attractive spacious auditorium. Good sized audience too, not bad at all for a Thursday night. I have to do the introduction to the evening and managed OK, I think, but forgot to introduce myself – maybe no one will notice that, or the fact I nearly fell down the stairs!

There is a really deep forestage which will create some difficult choices for the teams I think

Straight into the first play. **88 Theatre**, with their production of Muriel Gray's 'Behind the Barrier'. Simple set with a steel barrier flanked by a couple of 'People make Glasgow' banners all played in front of the cyc. Interesting how they managed to create different spaces by moving the barrier and using the space in front to represent a beach scene (Girvan), restaurant, garden etc. Poignant in places but a lot of comedy too.

Next was **Buccaneer Theatre** with 'Bride or Groom' by Bill Cashmore and Andy Powrie. The curtain opened to simple set with four chairs a table and a gobo on the cyc representing an arched church window. Suddenly mayhem as the four actors burst into auditorium arguing and fighting loudly and made their way to the stage where the fighting continued. I'm not going to describe what happened next or indeed the play, but they coped with the same challenges

as 88 in creating different environments from simple items – the chairs and table became a car, a van, a bus, a train, a station platform, the church interior etc. High paced energetic comedy throughout.

Finally, **Leslie ADS** "Nine" by Jane Shepard – opened with a raked platform with the two women chained to the sides. We never learn why they are there, but are clearly being subject to torture.

The drama consisted entirely of the dialogue between the two actors. Great use of lighting and sound with the sometimes-beautiful physical shapes created by the two actors, helped make a believable and intensely moving piece of theatre.

They did notice, so I had to introduce myself before our festival adjudicator, Alan Haslett. He then finished our first evening by giving a brief critique of each play.



He complimented 88 Theatre's use of silhouettes at the start to create the impression of an augmented crowd. He commented positively on the scene changes, and felt the cast ably captured both the poignancy and humour and summed it up as a very very effective production.

On Buccaneers he was enthusiastic about the costumes, characterisation, energetic pace and use of sound and music. He felt that more use of lighting could have helped focus attention. Overall though he enjoyed the contrast between the characters and the energetic pace throughout.

He complimented Leslie's staging, creating a cramped and claustrophobic feeling with the raked platform particularly effective in allowing the two actors to lie down and still be totally seen by the audience. The lighting and sound too added to the overall effect. He then praised both the actors for their excellent diction and the director who used 'every trick in the book'.



# . . at the Adam Smith



dialogue though that may well just be me.

Then it was **Carnoustie Theatre Club** with 'Almost the Birthday Party' by Paul Kalburgi. They had set their sofa well forward and this helped their connection with the audience. The two camp men on stage addressed an invisible Mrs Percival which was occasionally a bit disconcerting and the acting was frankly wildly OTT but great fun to watch. I guess it helped to be familiar with the Pinter play they were attempting to cast, although they only possessed Act 1.

Its now day two and three more plays.

First was **Stewarton Drama** with 'A Galway Girl' by Geraldine Aron. This was a tight intimate set created with appropriate furniture and a lot of attention to detail and was played

against blacks. Because it was set behind the tabs, it was quite a way back from the audience. The two actors captured the poignancy of the story well, but I struggled to catch all the

Finally we had **Wick Players** with 'Gods are Fallen and All Safety Gone' It seems an odd title and an odd structure too, as we watched essentially the same scene being played three times with slight difference of character relationship and language used then repeated once again with a very different relationship and totally different words. The set was stark, and I thought rather beautiful with two angled walls and a door and with interesting reflective art work.

Alan Haslett said of 'Galway Girl' that their challenge was to make us believe we are eavesdropping on real conversation but the placement up stage was too much of a barrier to intimacy. However, he said he heard every word (so it was me!) and praised the acting although he would have liked more variation in pace and dynamics. He felt the lighting effectively focused attention on this comfortable production.

On 'Almost the Birthday Party' he said the challenge was to emphasise the darkness in the writing. He noted the furniture was arranged linearly, but felt that, in this production, it worked. He described the acting as delightfully OTT and right for the play. No comic moments were missed by a director who 'used very trick in the book'



Finally, 'Gods are Fallen, and All Safety Gone' we learned, is a Steinbeck quote from 'East of Eden' about the inevitable discovery by a child that parents are not the perfect gods they once believed, and the child's world is never quite whole again. An ahah! moment. He liked the angled set and told us the challenge was for them to portray the realism in the drama. He criticised the placement of a table and chairs as too far upstage. He complimented the acting and loved the way the metallic art work added to the atmospheric ending.

Somehow its now Saturday and we have the Civic Reception. Provost Jim Leishman is charming and genuinely interested in what we do. He welcomed us and spoke about some



length of his experiences in amateur dramatics. He had said earlier to me that he might sing a song, but that didn't happen. I wasn't quite sure if I was disappointed. I replied briefly on behalf of SCDA and then manged to get some coffee and a giant scone with butter and jam. Lots of friendly chat and everyone genuinely seems to be enjoying the experience.

Back to the Adam Smith and we start with **Arbery Productions'** performance of 'Bull'. The curtain opened to a brilliantly lit square floor-cloth in white, with splashes of red, and ring created from plastic drinking cups. A lone white chair was placed upstage. Two actors then embarked on an utterly cold hearted and increasingly aggressive bullying of the other member of the trio. An uncomfortable watch, but it is clearly

meant to be. I wondered a bit about the dark suits worn by all the actors against the blacks.

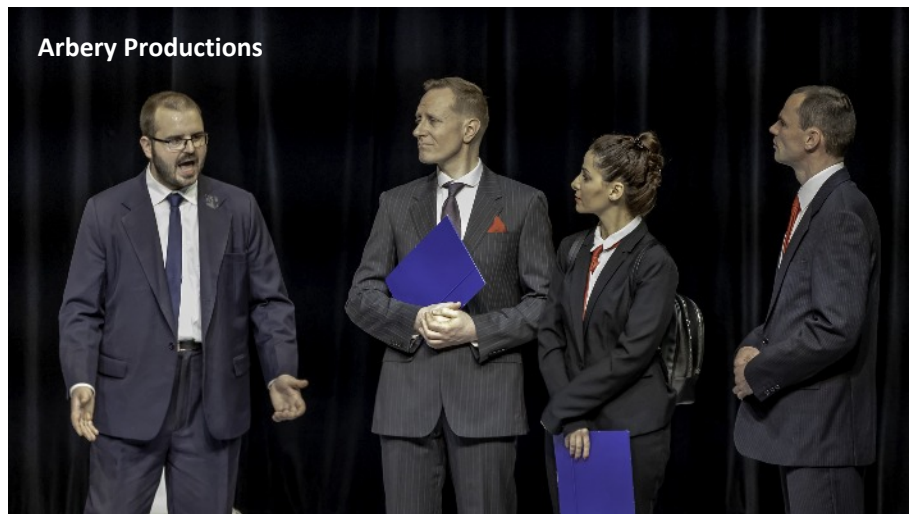
We then had **Stromness Drama Group's** production of 'Shakers' by John Godber and Jane Thornton. A simple and effective set in red and black, played against the cyc, consisted of a

raised dais with a bar and an illuminated 'Shakers' sign flown from above. The red bar stools surrounded the bar and there was a table and chair down stage left. The four girls moved in effectively choreographed and

clearly well-rehearsed sequences more or less continuously.

In his adjudication, Alan Haslett praised the set of 'Bull' but felt the cups needed more of a contrast against the white cloth. He liked the characterising of Isobel with her 'evil smile' but would have preferred to see more stylised acting throughout. He also felt that the bullied character Thomas could have been played a little weaker from the start.

He clearly loved Shakers, the set, the costuming, the acting and the pace with scenes flowing seamlessly from one to the next in a carefully choreographed way. All 4 actors were good and played well together in a great ensemble piece. His only note of criticism was that he didn't like the chain that was used for the 'Shakers' sign



After the raffle it was the platform party. I introduced the evening, clutching my instructions from Morna, and after the awards for the Poster Competition and the Scott Salver, Iain McEwan, who had been invited to present the trophies was himself awarded honorary life membership of the Association. I then gratefully handed over to Alan Haslett to announce the trophy winners which are listed below.

The winner, Stromness Drama Club was clearly popular with the audience and as it transpired with their competitors too who burst into spontaneous applause when Stromness entered the evening social having come from their private adjudication. There was a warm atmosphere in the room and through chatting to the clubs afterwards it was clear to me that they were all content with the outcome.



A really successful festival and thanks to all involved in the planning and execution. Finally, a special thanks to Margaret Allan of KADS who had injured herself quite badly by falling backstage at the previous round and

was confined to her home so missed the festival. She is well on the mend and we wish her a speedy full recovery.

**Tony Flisch**

Pictures by **Walter Hampson**

## The trophy winners

Wheatley Tassie (First Place) - **Stromness Drama Club**  
 Jim Porteous Trophy (Second place) - **Leslie ADS**  
 David Baxter Salver (Third place) - **88 Theatre**  
 Connie Fisher Trophy  
 (Highest direction marks) - **Stromness Drama Club**  
 Donald T Farmer Trophy  
 (Best theatrical moment) - **Buccaneer Theatre Group**

Grampian Television Trophy (best stage décor) **Leslie ADS**  
 Glen McKemmie (Scottish life and character) - **88 Theatre**  
 Scott Salver  
 (best original script) - **Mike Tibbetts for 'Mrs G'**  
 Dunmore Trophy  
 (best poster) - **Stromness Drama Club for 'Macbeth'**

The winning directors from 88 Theatre, Stromness, Leslie and Buccaneer with adjudicator Alan Haslett



# Scott Salver Competition

It was very encouraging to see an increase in the new scripts submitted for assessment this season with thirteen entries being mailed to our judging panel members.

Experienced playwrights vied for success with first time entrants but achieving victory for the second occasion was our 2014 winner **Mike Tibbetts** from Milngavie with his latest work *'Mrs G'* premiered at the Stirling District Festival.

A dark and potentially uncomfortable subject matter is handled extremely skilfully and there is believable dialogue between the two characters as 'The Man' attempts to justify his actions whilst 'Mrs G' refuses to allow him absolution. The play's opening commands attention and the surprise conclusion isn't telegraphed in advance creating the maximum impact that finally explains Mrs G's presence. Technically sound writing which draws the audience into the ambiguities and different perspectives of villain and manipulator.

In runner-up position came our 2017 recipient **Drew Young** from Banchory whose script *'The Train (Back to where it Ended)'* was presented in Aberdeen District.

An ambitious play with an unorthodox structure going back in time as all the characters on board this ghost train with the exception of the angel become their younger selves. Some conversations appear slightly contrived to make political and historical references. There is scope within the writing to develop and challenge the actors and this thought provoking script under a skilful director could produce a powerful piece of theatre.

In third place was **Isabella C Rae's 'Grave Prospects'** staged in Argyll and Kintyre District. Strong, differentiated characters and a good ear for dialogue are the strengths of this novel family ghost story set in a graveyard. The farcical entrance of a ghost predicting the end of the world and the appearance of two humans bring conflicting revelations with the comedy building throughout to a dramatic climax which is well handled.

Last season's 'hat trick' winner **Bob Davidson** achieved fourth position with *'La Tour Eiffel'* produced for Perthshire District.

Two well developed and believable characters – a married couple whose marriage is in trouble – sit at the heart of this storyline.

Isabella C Rae achieved another highly placed script with *'Flying Colours'* entered in Glasgow District Festival.

A strong ear for dialogue drives this humorous storyline along with potentially memorable comedy moments. The opening grabbed attention through the outrageous behaviour of the janitor although the play's ending proved slightly anticlimactic. The characters were strongly



delineated with broad humour prevailing. Split set of waiting and interview rooms.

Finally, amongst the top runners was David Carswell's Inverclyde District premiered *'There is No Such Thing as an Accident'* set during a Speed Awareness Course. Scope for character development although some border on stereotype at times. Throughout the action there are frequent monologues which assist the structure. The dialogue was well written and amusing if slightly overloaded with statistics and set jokes. There is an awkward shift in tone towards the end but overall an entertaining piece of writing.

The remaining scripts submitted were: *'Dear Mum'* by Anna Price and David Roy, *'Royal Confrontation'* by Ashlyn Kinahan, *'The Corrida'* by Drew Young, *'Our Boy'* by Helen Hammond, *'Where are You Mary Rose'* by John Fowler, *'The Jungle Fling'* by Grier White and James Reid, *'Lizzie'* by Rhiannon Woonton and Mason Avci.

All of this season's entries are available to borrow from National Library at Summerhall, Edinburgh.

The top competition scripts were forwarded to the Geoffrey Whitworth Competition for original plays presented in the first round of One Act Festivals organised by SCDA, AETF, DAW and AUDF across the UK with the successful playwright receiving their award at the British Final in Harrogate Theatre early July.

Knaresborough Players will be hosting a rehearsed performance of the winning play in their local Frazer Theatre on 6 July.

**Stephen Lambert**  
Playwriting Convenor

## Samuel French Ltd

### **'Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em'** by Guy Unsworth

Based on the television series by Raymond Allen

Comedy in Two Acts

Cast: 4 Male 2 Female (with doubling)

ISBN 9780573115509

This adaptation of the 1970s situation comedy achieves something truly remarkable managing to stay true to the original plotting whilst delivering fresh writing that is entirely of its own.

A hugely enjoyable sparkling, frothy farce with a script packed with cracking jokes and humorous wordplay which crosses the generations providing a redoubtable comeback for the comic creation that is Frank Spencer.

Complete with fascinating biographies of writers Guy Unsworth and Raymond Allen. The production was premiered in February 2018 featuring comedian Joe Pasquale in the lead role prior to a UK tour.

Contains detailed set plan of Frank and Betty's house highlighting the collapsing and exploding items with full property list, lighting and sound effects crucial to the frenetic action.

### **'The Cat's Mother' by Erica Murray**

Comedy Drama in Sixteen Scenes

Cast: 3 Female

ISBN 9780573115608

The script is a 'laugh out loud' dark Irish comedy asking the question – how far are you willing to go for your own family and what happens when you have to care for the person who should be caring for you?

Ciara's younger sister Sinead arrives at her door all set for what Ciara thinks will be a weekend of respite from caring for their mother Eileen but unbeknownst to Ciara, her sister has alternative ideas about how the weekend will pan out. Over the hours that follow, the sisters are forced to make a choice that will affect their lives forever.

A number of other characters appear from whom Ciara seeks guidance gaining hilarious insight into her attempts to reach a final decision.

The play premiered at Underbelly, Cowgate as part of the 2018 Edinburgh Fringe.

Primary action set in cramped living room flat with various locations across London.

Supplied with suggested cuts for a one hour version.

### **'Back Home' by David Wood from the novel by Michelle Magorian**

Drama in Two Acts

Cast: Large ensemble of actors each playing several different roles

ISBN 9780573115264

Described as the National Children's Dramatist this is David Wood's second adaptation of a Magorian story following the famous 'Goodnight Mister Tom'.

This gripping tale set at the end of the Second World War features an evacuee returning from several years in the States trying to adjust to her very different life in England, and a family who hardly recognise her as their daughter and grandchild.

Rusty's mother appears a stranger, her little brother scarcely knows her and grandmother constantly criticises her accent and attitudes. The girl rebels against the strict girls boarding school

regime so unlike her American progressive co-ed. However her feisty determination sees her win through but not before her family become a casualty of the war years.

A multipurpose set is envisaged including stairs to upper level and scaffolding to the ground. The large variety of locations can be simply created by the cast but 'cabin in woods' may require naturalistic design. 'The Bomb' a 1930s four door Morris car should ideally be 'real'.

Comprehensive furniture and property list.

### **'Lost Boy' Book, music and lyrics by Phil Willmott and Mark Collins**

Musical Drama in Two Acts

Cast: 12 Male, 8 Female plus extras

ISBN 9780573115165

A dark sequel to Peter Pan, this original British Youth musical reunites J M Barrie's favourite characters when a young officer falling asleep with a copy of the children's classic in his pocket imagines himself as Peter embarking on a final 'awfully big adventure' namely the First World War.

Skilfully blending contemporary music theatre with music hall influences this artfully structured script contains epic themes and riveting drama.

Bright and energetic yet thought provoking and inspiring.

Contains helpful cast doubling suggestions, costume descriptions and a breakdown of the locations, action and songs in the many scenes.

Phil Willmott's previous successes include *Around the World in Eighty Days* and the *Dick Barton Trilogy*.

**Scripts can be obtained through the SCDA discount scheme** - please contact Brenda Williams at our national office for details. Geoffrey Whitworth and Scott Salver scripts can be borrowed from our SCDA National Library at Summerhall Arts Centre.



# Love's Labour's Lost

Shakespeare at Traquair's annual promenade performance this year features **Love's Labour's Lost**, a boisterous send-up of all those who confuse fantasy with reality. No, not another Brexit parody but a Shakespearean romp that uses just about every weapon in the Bard's arsenal from excruciating cross-purposes and impersonations to drunkenness and bust-ups.

A male quartet from the upper echelons of Navarre society make bold public commitments which prove a tad inconvenient, so they simply invent a way to ignore their own edicts. But the boys are swiftly outfoxed by the quartet of strong-willed girls that they try to woo and who quickly tie the love-struck guys in knots. Game, set and match to the ladies.

Throw in a confused Spaniard, a raunchy wench, twenty noisy children, a gullible fool and a couple of waffling academics and you've got all the ingredients for an evening of music and mayhem. Bring a picnic, perhaps a chair, something warm and waterproof to wear and we'll start entertaining you with some music from around 7.15pm. The show proper starts at 7.30pm.

## Performances are at Traquair House, Innerleithen

There's a preview on Tuesday 28th May (entry by donation) followed by performances from Wednesday 29th May to Saturday 1st June and then Wednesday 5th to Saturday 8th June. Tickets are £8/£6 Weds/Thurs, £14/£12 Fri/Sat from the Eastgate Theatre on 01721 725777



## CLASS ADS

Playwright?; small business?; buying or selling?; All kinds of small ads accepted. Have your ad read throughout SCDA land. Contact [scene@scda.org.uk](mailto:scene@scda.org.uk)

**CORDINER PRESS** One-act plays and pantomimes by Isabella C. Rae – comedy, drama, fantasy! For catalogue, see [www.cordinerpress.co.uk](http://www.cordinerpress.co.uk) or contact 36 Mansefield Avenue, Cambuslang, Glasgow G72 8NZ  
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## **Saughtonhall Drama Group become television film stars!**

In December 2018 Saughtonhall Drama Group were invited by the founder of a film company to take part in the production of a Christmas Television movie.

The production involved the filming of a royal ball-room scene in a romantic comedy entitled ‘Christmas in the Highlands’, part of which was filmed in Edinburgh.

The movie is about a New York sales manager who is sent to the remote Scottish Highlands at Christmas to acquire a limited edition perfume from a dashing Earl preparing for his annual ball but instead he falls in love.

The filming involved members of Saughtonhall Drama Group acting alongside, and dancing with, several well-known professional actors, including Dan Jeannotte (the dashing Earl), Brooke Williams (co-founder of the film company), Nicholas Farrell, Geraldine Somerville, Caprice Bourret and Ellen Patterson.

It is not yet known when, or on which TV channel, the movie will be screened.



# Downs with Love

Cutting Edge Theatre exists “to make a difference through theatre” and one of the ways we do that is to produce plays that give disadvantaged people a voice. One of our main projects is called INSPIRE which uses drama exercises to help people with disabilities to improve their confidence, self-esteem and vocal abilities where possible.

than we set out to do. It was fabulous to see such diverse audiences and seeing families coming with their young people who have disabilities to see a play that was relevant to them was wonderful. We also heard from parents who told us the play had given them hope for their own kids, to see what they could achieve.



We are looking to see what happens next with the play and in the meantime, our INSPIRE groups continue and we hope to expand them further afield.

One of the sad things we learnt about Abi in the process was that she had wanted to go to a local amateur drama group and so went along. She knew the main parts were already cast and wasn't bothered about that, she just wanted to act. Unfortunately, she was late on her first evening and walked in to a group who were laughing and already enjoying themselves. The room went quiet when she walked in and the lady in charge got up, took Abi outside and said there wasn't anything for her. She had to leave. Abi went home in tears, her mum emailed the group. The response was “she should have told us she had Down's”. In the play, Abi's character tells that

We run three groups in Fife, are in five special schools and one adult group in Edinburgh. In these groups, we encourage participants to realise their potential - whatever that is! One of the participants in Fife, Abigail Brydon who has Down's Syndrome has a dream - to become an actor and so we began to work with her to create a play around her experiences. I'd had an idea for a play around thirty years ago, so when Abi turned up it was the perfect scenario. We used improvisation to integrate Abi's experiences into the play and produced it for the Fringe in 2016. We had a great response to that and then were fortunate to win The People's Project funding last year to expand our work and to set up a short Scottish tour of the play.

story and says “Why? What difference does it make?”

What difference indeed? Theatre is all inclusive and there is ALWAYS a way to include people. We just have to be patient, loving and inclusive. After all, how many of us started going to a drama group and found that it was the one place we were accepted for who we were - I know I did!

The play tells the story of Beth, a young girl who has Down's and her new support worker Tracy. Beth is a very independent young woman who has a routine which involves going to the pub on a Friday to see Mark, the local singer. She has fallen for him but then when he meets Tracy, he falls for her. A love triangle that challenges our perceptions about disability and relationship. It's a simple play with a powerful message.

We were overwhelmed by the audience response and it achieved so much more

**Suzanne Lofthus**

Pictures by **Alan Peebles**



# scda at the fringe

## ARBERY PRODUCTIONS:

Two shows

**(1) 'SUNSET'** by Martin Foreman  
17.20 (45mins); 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> (preview times tbc), plus 5<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>  
**Venue 9: theSpace on Niddry Street.**  
Tickets £9 (£7), (preview prices tbc)

"You were faithful, in your fashion". At the end of the day a grandmother remembers her first date, the man she married and their life together. A moving and intense portrait from Maggie Macleod.



**(2) 'BULL'** by Mike Bartlett  
17.20 (50 mins) 12<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>.  
**Venue 9: theSpace on Niddry Street.**  
Tickets: £10 (£8)

A razor-sharp play about the fine line between office politics and playground bullying which exposes the vicious side of human nature and the power of words. Runner-up at 2019 Edinburgh District One-Act Festival.

## ARKLE THEATRE COMPANY:

Two shows

12<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>.  
**Venue 241, Royal Scots Club,**  
29-31 Abercromby Place, EH3 6QE.  
Tickets: £tbc

**(1) 'LOW LEVEL PANIC'**  
by Claire McIntyre 6.15p.m

Being a woman in her 20s is hilarious; as Jo, Mary and Celia will testify. It's also exhausting, overwhelming, terrifying and so much fun. Does this stuff ever get easier? When is it too much?

Three girls, one bathroom = a disaster waiting to happen. Jo, Mary and Celia are totally fine sharing their tiny flat, until they're not.

**(2) 'THE TAMING OF THE SHREW'**  
by William Shakespeare 8.30p.m

Classic Shakespeare requiring a mixture of ages all under the capable gaze of David Grimes. Love found, love lost, love found, you know the drill...

## EDINBURGH GRADUATE

**THEATRE GROUP:** Two shows.

5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>.  
**Venue 241, Royal Scots Club,**  
29-31 Abercromby Place, EH3 6QE,  
£12 each. <https://theegtg.com>

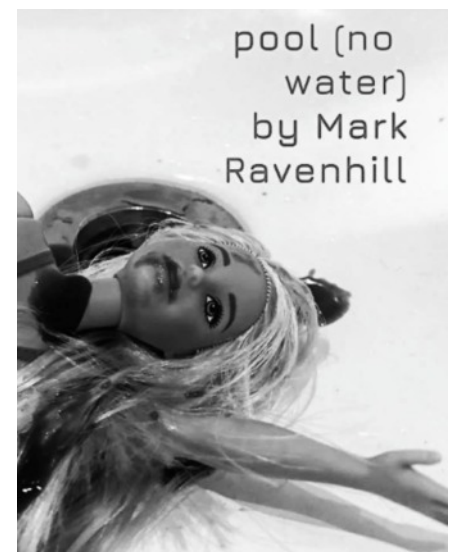
**(1) 'THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR'**  
by William Shakespeare 7pm

An uproarious tale of marriage, mischief, lies, and laundry. In financial peril, the "Fat Knight" woos two women of Windsor in an attempt to swindle their

husbands and regain his wealth. The wily wives are on to him from the start however and plot their revenge with hilarious results.

**(2) 'POOL (NO WATER)'**  
by Mark Ravenhill 9pm

A group of bohemian artists. A pool. Everyone's welcome. It's fantastic, fantastic, fantastic until the skinny dipping accident. Mark Ravenhill's dark, witty comedy on betrayal and envy shows how one person's success can rip apart friendships.



## EDINBURGH MAKARS:

19<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm.  
**Venue 241, Royal Scots Club**  
29-31 Abercromby Place, EH3 6QE.  
Tickets: £12.50 & £11.00 (conc)  
[www.edinburghmakars.com](http://www.edinburghmakars.com)  
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**'PERFECT WEDDING'**  
by Robin Hawdon

A bridegroom wakes on his wedding morning in his own bridal suite, with his bride-to-be about to arrive any moment, and finds a strange girl in bed beside him. Worse – during the ensuing panic to get the stranger dressed and out of the way, the bride arrives and the girl is trapped in the bathroom. By the time the bride's parents and half the hotel staff get in on the act, the chaos reaches nuclear proportions!

## Edinburgh's clubs present an amazing variety for your delight at the Fringe.

ALL DATES AUGUST. See Fringe brochure for timing and prices. [www.edfringe.com](http://www.edfringe.com)

### EDINBURGH PEOPLE'S THEATRE:

Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> to Fri 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm (not Suns). Sats mats 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> 2.30pm.

Venue 11, Mayfield Salisbury Church Hall, 18 West Mayfield.

Tickets: £12 (£10 conc) from Fringe Box Office or

[www.ept.org.uk/boxoffice](http://www.ept.org.uk/boxoffice) or Tel 0333 666 3366 (booking fees apply)

Record breaking 62<sup>nd</sup> year on the Fringe.

#### 'SECOND HONEYMOON'

This hilarious comedy follows a week in the life of Frank McIlroy and his wife Agnes who have chosen to revisit the Guest House where they had spent their honeymoon 25 years earlier. 'Second Honeymoon' is certainly a comedy classic. This was one of Sam Cree's plays made famous in Scotland by the late, great Jimmy Logan, and is the sequel to our 2017 Fringe play, 'Wedding Fever'.

### EDINBURGH THEATRE ARTS

5<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm. Mats Sats

10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> 2.30pm

Venue 230 St Ninian's Hall, 40 Comely Bank, Edinburgh EH4 1AG

Tickets £12 (£10) from Fringe Box Office or 07599 928440 [www.edinburghtheatrearts.com](http://www.edinburghtheatrearts.com)

#### 'SUDDENLY LAST SUMMER'

by Tennessee Williams

After witnessing Cousin Sebastian's horrific murder, Catherine paints a story so fantastic that her aunt, Violet Venable, refuses to believe it. In Tennessee Williams' haunting play, how far will a mother go to preserve her son's reputation?

### LEITHEATRE:

3<sup>rd</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> 7.30 p.m. and 2.30 p.m.

(plus 17<sup>th</sup> matinee only). (not Suns)

Venue: Inverleith St. Serf's Church Centre, Clark Road, Edinburgh.

Tickets £12 (£10 concs) from [www.edfringe.com](http://www.edfringe.com)

or from Don Arnott,

e-mail: [donarnott27@gmail.com](mailto:donarnott27@gmail.com)

#### 'TARTUFFE' by Liz Lochhead.

Liz Lochhead translates TARTUFFE into an energetic and rollicking Scots, bringing out Moliere's mix of political satire and black comedy, as the religious hypocrite Tartuffe, worms his way into Orgon's household. A complete theatrical winner, a brilliant blend of traditional lowland Scots, contemporary Glasgow patter and lethally sophisticated female wit.

### SAUGHTONHALL DRAMA GROUP:

5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> 7:30 pm, Sat mat 2.30pm.

Venue: 273 Saughtonhall Church.

85-87 Saughtonhall Drive, Edinburgh, EH12 5TR

Tickets: £9 (£5 under 16). 0131 539 0491 or [edfringe.com](http://edfringe.com)

### 'SURPRISE PACKAGE'

The Tinsley family's holiday in Spain proves an even greater change from Blackpool than expected. To start with, it seems young Ron has persuaded his father to book the same hotel as Gloria, the girl Ron loves despite the disapproval of her mother, who also turns up. Everyone becomes involved in general misunderstandings and a final surprise shatters everyone.

### THE BRUNTON:

in association with Tommie Travers,

4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> time tbc

The Brunton Theatre, Musselburgh.

Tickets: £tbc available from the Fringe Box Office and the Brunton.

#### OLIVER! by Lionel Bart

One of the world's best-loved musicals. Created by youngsters between the ages of 8 and 13 attending a 2 week Summer School to culminate in these fully-staged performances



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# Check out new scripts available from the SCDA libraries



## National Library, Edinburgh

Room 3/6, Summerhall Arts Centre,  
Edinburgh EH9 1PL

Hours : Tuesday 2.15 - 6.30pm (last orders)

Contact details : [Library@scda.org.uk](mailto:Library@scda.org.uk)

Librarians:

Douglas Currie (07879 877732)

Susan Wales (07799 408608)

Alison McCallum (07772 945612)

## Inverness Library

Inverness Public Library, Farraline Park,  
Inverness IV1 1NH

Tel: 01463 236463

Hours : Mon & Fri 9am -7.30pm

Tues & Thurs 9am - 6.30pm

Wed - Sat 9am - 5pm

Library contact : Olga Kimmons

## Let Carole build your theatre skills ...



Carole Williams is SCDA's National Drama Advisor. She offers a wide range of challenging and fun workshops to develop your performance and directing skills.

Workshops are supported by SCDA and can be tailored to your individual needs.

Contact Carole through the National Office or directly at [nda@scda.org.uk](mailto:nda@scda.org.uk)



# Eastern Full Length Festival

We had twelve full length entries in the year from March 2018 to February 2019 which meant our adjudicator, Ron Nicol, visited many varied venues all over the division, from theatres via community halls to a farmyard barn.

March 2018: we started on 30<sup>th</sup> with the first visit to Edinburgh People's Theatre with 'Ten Times Table' by Alan Ayckbourn at Church Hill Theatre, Edinburgh.

In April: on the 12<sup>th</sup> it was to Stirling District for Dollar Drama Club and 'Forget Me Knot' by David Tristram at Dollar Academy Studio Theatre, then back to Edinburgh on 13<sup>th</sup> for the first visit to Edinburgh Theatre Arts for 'Moon Over Buffalo' at St Ninian's Hall, Comely Bank.

In May: On the 18<sup>th</sup> it was the first visit to Leitheatre for 'The Homecoming' by Harold Pinter at Festival Theatre Studio, Edinburgh, and on 19<sup>th</sup> Ron was back in Stirling District for Fintry ADS with 'Agatha Crusty – And The Village Hall Murders' by Derek Webb at Menzies Hall, Fintry.

August saw productions in the Fringe: On 8<sup>th</sup> it was Edinburgh Graduate Theatre Group with 'skirt' written and directed by Claire Wood, at the Royal Scots Club, and on 13<sup>th</sup>, the second visit to St Ninian's Hall for Edinburgh Theatre Arts and 'The Front Page' by Ben Hecht & Charles MacArthur.

September it was back to Fintry on 28<sup>th</sup> for the second visit to FADS for 'Journey's End' by RC Sherriff in a studio created out of a farmyard barn.

November was the busiest month: to Fife District on 2<sup>nd</sup> for Kirkcaldy ADS with 'Dirty Dusting' by Ed Waugh & Trevor Wood, at Adam Smith Theatre; back to Edinburgh



ETA receive the Fraser Neil Cup

on 16<sup>th</sup> for the second visit to Leitheatre for 'Sunset Song' by Lewis Grassic Gibbon at Church Hill Theatre, then to Fife again on 17<sup>th</sup> for Leslie ADC with The Flint Street Nativity by Tim Firth, at Rothes Halls, Glenrothes.

Finally on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019, it was back to Edinburgh district for Livingston Players with 'A Bunch Of Amateurs' by Hislop & Newman at Howden Park Centre, Livingston, West Lothian.

**The results in Miss World Order are:**

3<sup>rd</sup> – ETA with 'The Front Page', 2<sup>nd</sup> - FADS with 'Journeys End',

and the winner is . . . *drumroll* . . . . **Edinburgh Theatre Arts with 'Moon Over Buffalo'.**



FADS 'Journey's End'

ETA were presented with the Fraser Neil Cup for the Full Length Winners and FADS received the newly inaugurated Runner-Up trophy, Eastern Divisional Sec's Award, at the Eastern Divisional Final held at Church Hill Theatre on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

The 2019/20 competition is up and running and already has three entries, with one visit completed. The adjudicator is Dave Bennet. If any clubs in Edinburgh District (which covers East, Mid and (some) West Lothian clubs, plus the Borders), wish to enter, please email [admin@scdaedinburgh.org.uk](mailto:admin@scdaedinburgh.org.uk) for an entry form.

**Susan Wales**

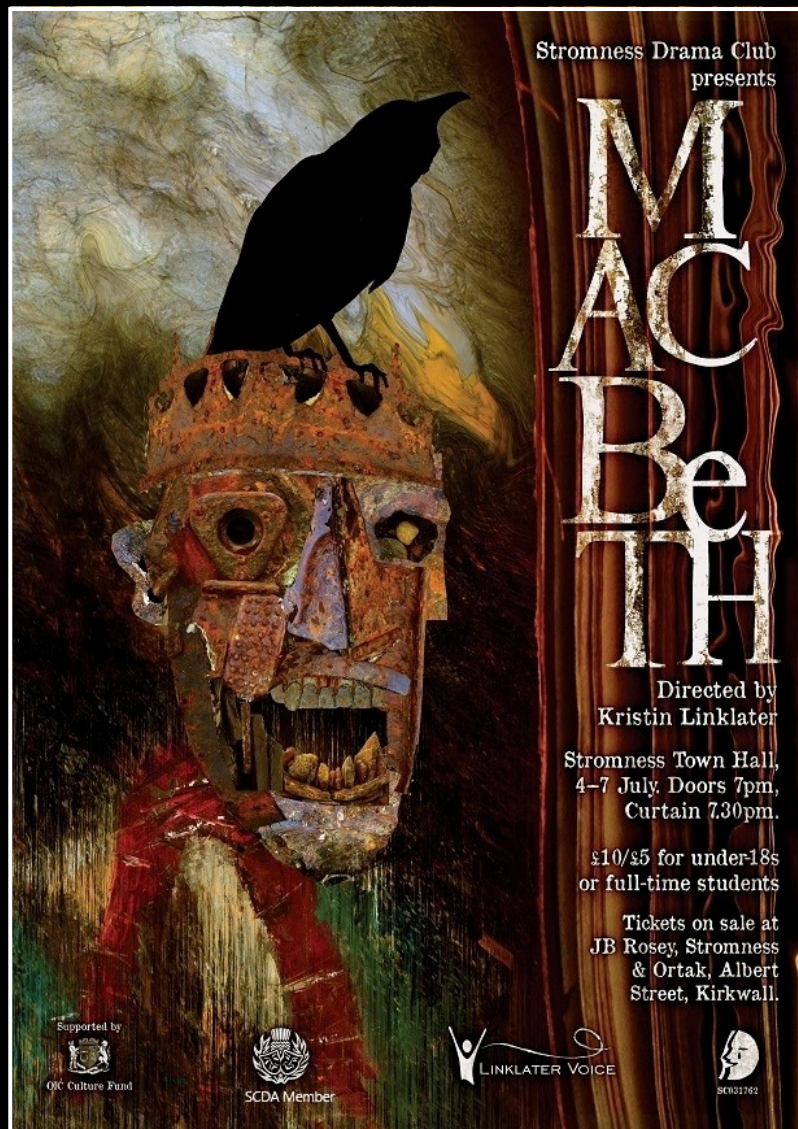
# Poster competition

This year's poster competition was won by Stromness Drama Club. Shaun Gardiner picked up the Dunmore Trophy in Kirkcaldy for his arresting poster for their recent production of Macbeth.

Runners-up were a bright and eye-catching poster from Spotlights Community Youth Theatre and Killin Drama Club's poster based on very strong black and white image.

Entries for the 2019-20 poster competition should be sent to [scene@scda.org.uk](mailto:scene@scda.org.uk).

Remember that posters must include the SCDA badge or a reference to SCDA membership.



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**ST FILLANS GOLF CLUB**  
hosts

**An evening of entertainment with Killin Drama Club**

Featuring "Happy Jack"  
by John Godber  
and short sketches

**SANDISON HALL**  
**ST FILLANS**

**Saturday 23rd June**  
**7.30 pm**

**Tickets from St Fillans Golf Club**  
**£10 with a complimentary refreshment**

**A fundraiser for both clubs**