

THE NINTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

VIBRANT 2017 – A FESTIVAL OF FINBOROUGH PLAYWRIGHTS

Sundays, Mondays and Thursdays, 8, 9, 12, 15, 16, 19, 22, 23, 26 October 2017

FOR SIDEBAR

Curated by Finborough Theatre Artistic Director Neil McPherson.

Produced by Lynne McConway

Supported by



OBERON BOOKS



FOR MAIN TEXT

Plays by

June Carryl, Sue Healy, Adam Hughes, Iain Finlay Macleod, Joe Marsh, Carmen Nasr, Jeff Page, Avin Shah and Athena Stevens

Directed by

Charlie Barker, Manuel Bau, Jelena Budmir, Liz Carruthers, Shane Dempsey, Fay Lomas, Alisdair Pidsley, Tricia Thorns and Oscar Toeman.

THE SEASON AT A GLANCE

Week One – 8–12 October 2017

Sunday, 8 October 2017 at 7.30pm – Genie by Athena Stevens. Directed by Jelena Budimir.

Monday, 9 October 2017 at 7.30pm – The Climbers by Carmen Nasr. Directed by Charlie Barker.

Thursday, 12 October 2017 at 3.00pm – Checkpoint Chana by Jeff Page. Directed by Manuel Bau.

Week Two – 15–19 October 2017

Sunday, 15 October 2017 at 7.30pm – Beeston by Adam Hughes. Directed by Alistair Pidsley.

Monday, 16 October 2017 at 7.30pm – Imaginationship by Sue Healy. Directed by Tricia Thorns.

Thursday, 19 October 2017 at 3.00pm – Morningland by Iain Finlay Macleod. Directed by Liz Carruthers.

Week Three – 22–26 October 2017

Sunday, 22 October 2017 at 7.30pm – The Good Minister from Harare by June Carryl. Directed by Shane Dempsey.

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Monday, 23 October 2017 at 7.30pm – Outcaste by Avin Shah. Directed by Fay Lomas.

Thursday, 26 October 2017 at 3.00pm – We Struggle by Joe Marsh. Directed by Oscar Toeman.

Now in its ninth consecutive year, the multi-award-winning Finborough Theatre – the coalface of British Theatre – presents **Vibrant 2017 – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights**, its annual explosion of new writing, performing on **Sundays, Mondays and Thursdays, 8, 9, 12, 15, 16, 19, 22, 23, 26 October 2017**

As always, this year's festival features an eclectic and idiosyncratic selection of staged readings of new works by UK and international playwrights, both established and new, discovered, developed or championed by the Finborough Theatre.

Concentrated solely on full length works for the stage, Vibrant 2017 – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights continues to introduce you to some of the fascinating diverse vibrant voices we have nurtured.

A unique opportunity to see behind the scenes at one of the UK's most exciting theatres as we continue to discover and develop tomorrow's plays today, brought to life by some of the UK's most talented actors and directors.

Since our first festival in 2009, our Vibrant festivals have included over 100 new plays, 26 of which have gone on to be produced in full productions at the Finborough Theatre including Mirror Teeth by Nick Gill, The Man by James Graham, And I And Silence by Naomi Wallace, Black Jesus by Anders Lustgarten, Carthage by Chris Thompson, Nona Sheppard and Craig Adams' musical version of Thérèse Raquin, This Heaven by Nakkiah Lui, Continuity by Gerry Moynihan, and Dubailand by Carmen Nasr. Many other plays first seen in Vibrant have also gone on to be produced by other theatres.

Despite remaining completely unsubsidised, the Finborough Theatre has an unparalleled track record of discovering new playwrights who go on to become leading voices in British theatre. Under Artistic Director Neil McPherson, it has discovered some of the UK's most exciting new playwrights including Laura Wade, James Graham, Mike Bartlett, Chris Thompson, Jack Thorne, Alexandra Wood, Al Smith, Nicholas de Jongh and Anders Lustgarten; and directors including Blanche McIntyre, Robert Hastie, Kate Wasserberg and Sam Yates.

Vibrant 2017 – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights is again curated by Finborough Theatre Artistic Director **Neil McPherson**, winner of The Writers' Guild Award for the Encouragement of New Writing, and twice winner of the OffWestEnd Award for Best Artistic Director.

• Week One – 8 - 12 October 2017

Sunday, 8 October 2017 at 7.30pm

Genie by Athena Stevens. Directed by Jelena Budimir.

With severe Cerebral Palsy, an IQ of 30, and the inability to hear, Genie has spent the past two decades isolated in an institution. But when Jessica, Genie's twin sister, decides to take her out of the care home, none of the doctors can explain why Genie has developed a compulsion to destroy anything made of fabric. With a home shredded and Jessica's marriage in tatters, being a carer proves to take more of a toll than Jessica expected. But when an unlikely explanation arises regarding Genie's compulsion, it calls into question how much she is aware of, and whether more meaning can be woven into her life than anyone ever thought. Based on the work of Judith Scott, Genie is an inspirational testament to the power of creativity in the face of trauma.

Playwright **Athena Stevens** is a Playwright on Attachment at the Finborough Theatre, following her debut writing and acting in Schism in 2016. She is the Artistic Director of Aegis Productions Ltd. Aegis seeks to accurately reflect the world we live in, including how issues of gender, power, disability, and socio-economic status shape our culture. Collaborations have included the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe and Sadler's Wells. In 2017, she began an attachment with the National Theatre where Genie was developed with the National Theatre Studio. She currently writes the blog Never Walked in High Heels and is also completing her first Young Adult novel with the Golden Egg Academy and Chicken House Books. Athena is a social activist and advocate and was recently elected by the Women's Equality Party as their Equality in the Media Spokesperson. Athena is also a TEDx speaker and heads up the Stevens Report, a research initiative focused on the integration of artists with disabilities in the mainstream media which has included participation from Robert LePage, Anish Kapoor, Howard Davies and Daniel Kramer. Athena was born with athetoid cerebral palsy.

Director **Jelena Budimir** has written and directed many shows for children and young people. Jelena was Associate Director at Chickenshed Theatre where her responsibilities included leading and directing pieces from the theatre's emerging writers programme Write Here, Write Now. Direction includes Refugee Boy, Gut Girls, The Comedy of Errors, Can't Pay! Won't Pay!, Lysistrata, Our Country's Good, Yard Gal and Widows (Chickenshed) and Life After Death (Camden People's Theatre).

•
Monday, 9 October 2017 at 7.30pm

The Climbers by Carmen Nasr. Directed by Charlie Barker.

British couple Yasmin and Charlie are inexperienced but passionate mountaineers, determined to climb the highest mountain on Earth and see the curve of the Earth from the summit. With a hired professional guide and an army of Sherpas, they set off to conquer the mountain. But when things go wrong on the climb, and Charlie goes missing on the descent, Yasmin and the guide's accounts of what actually happened don't quite add up...

Exploring the questionable ambition of today's increasingly inexperienced expeditions to Mount Everest, *The Climbers* challenges our dangerous tendency to celebrate the human conquest of nature.

Playwright **Carmen Nasr** is a British-Lebanese playwright, and is currently Channel 4 Playwrights Scheme Playwright in Residence at the Finborough Theatre, supported by the Peggy Ramsay Foundation, following a spell as Playwright on Attachment. Her play *Dubailand* received a production at the Finborough Theatre in February 2017. *Dubailand* originally received a staged reading at *Vibrant 2015 – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights*. Plays include *The House of My Father*, which received a staged reading at *Vibrant 2014 – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights*, and was also part of the annual *Nour Festival of Contemporary Middle Eastern and North African Art and Culture*. In 2015, *The House of My Father* was longlisted for the *Bruntwood Prize*. She was shortlisted for the *OffWestEnd Adopt a Playwright Award 2015*.

Director **Charlie Barker** was a professional actress before moving into teaching and directing at drama schools such as *Mountview*, *ALRA* and the *Arts Educational Schools*, London. Her most recent position was as Head of Acting on the *Musical Theatre Course* at the *Arts Educational Schools*. Direction includes *Anything Goes*, *Assassins*, *Merrily We Roll Along* and *Company* (*Arts Educational Schools*), *The Comedy of Errors*, (*Mountview Academy*), *Hay Fever* and *Present Laughter* (*Arts Educational Schools*) and *Who Shot Wayne Sleep* (*Vault Festival*, London).

•
Thursday, 12 October 2017 at 3.00pm

Checkpoint Chana by Jeff Page. Directed by Manuel Bau.

Poet *Bev Hemmings* is in the eye of a storm after she publishes a poem that the world seems to believe is anti-Semitic. She's convinced she's innocent, but everyone else – including her PA, *Tamsin* – wants her to apologise. A press interview is planned to begin her public rehabilitation, but *Bev's* erratic behaviour, exacerbated by drink and a dying father, make her public contrition a complex process.

Checkpoint Chana examines the point where pro-Palestinian criticism of the government of Israel and anti-Semitism blur.

Playwright **Jeff Page** is a writer and voluntary sector worker. He is a graduate of the *John Burgess* playwriting course at the *Nuffield Theatre*, Southampton. Plays include *Attack of the A&E Zombies* (*Descent Theatre* and *Irlam Festival Fringe*).

Director **Manuel Bau** is originally from Italy where he graduated in Theatre Directing in Venice and then trained at the *London Film Academy* and at the *Lincoln Center Directors Lab*. Direction includes *Questions of Terrorism and Repression* (*Lion and Unicorn Theatre*), *A Feyre Tale* (*The Space*, *Edinburgh Fringe*), *The Man With The Flower in His Mouth* (*Christ Church College*, Oxford), *How Does That Make You Feel?* (*Lion and Unicorn Theatre*), *Soft the Moon Rose* (*Etcetera Theatre*) and *The White Room* (*Courtyard Theatre*). Direction of short plays includes *Girls Just Want to Have Fundamental Human Rights*, *Girl of My Dreams* and *The Lottery* (*Theatre503* and *Southwark Playhouse*). Associate Direction includes *Porgy and Bess* (*Open Air Theatre*, *Regent's Park*), *Le Grand Mort* (*Trafalgar Studios*), *How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (*Royal Festival Hall*) and *Allegro* (*Southwark Playhouse*). Manuel was recently language consultant on the *Encores* production of *Do I Hear A Waltz?* at *New York City Center*.

• **Week Two – 15 – 19 October 2017**

Sunday, 15 October 2017 at 7.30pm

Beeston by Adam Hughes. Directed by Alisdair Pidsley.

Summer 2005. Beeston, Leeds. A once white-working class community divided by mass immigration and industrial decline. Nobody knows this more than scaffolder *Jordan*. His only real companion is younger brother *Liam*, who has fallen for *Nadima*, a medical student from the Asian community. But with the 7/7 bombings, everything changes, and *Jordan* finds himself moving down a dark path from which there may be no return... A new play exploring the demonisation of the white working-class and offers a fresh perspective on nationalism and identity in modern Britain.

Playwright **Adam Hughes** is a writer from Leeds and currently Playwright-on-Attachment at the Finborough Theatre. He is a past recipient of the *OffWestEnd Adopt a Playwright Award*. Plays include *Young Girl* (*Theatre Royal*, *Haymarket*) and *Marching On Together* (*Old Red Lion Theatre*). Adam trained on writers' groups at the *Royal Court Theatre*, *Soho Theatre*

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and Sheffield Theatres where he was invited to become a FUSE Playwright. He is currently part of the invite-only Playwrights 1 scheme at the West Yorkshire Playhouse, and a member of the Soho Theatre Alumni Group. His previous work has been performed at the Park Theatre, Crucible Theatre, Theatre Royal Stratford East, Southwark Playhouse and Theatre503. He was a recipient of the Kenneth Branagh Drama Award and was a finalist in the BBC Writers Room ScriptRoom. *Beeston* is his third play.

Director **Alisdair Pidsley** is a freelance Director and Theatre-Maker based in Yorkshire. He is the co-Artistic Director and co-Founder of Barrel Organ Theatre and was the 2014 recipient of the Buzz Goodbody Award for Directing. Direction includes Barrel Organ's award-winning debut productions *Nothing and Some People Talk About Violence* (Camden People's Theatre, Summerhall, Edinburgh, and National Tour). Other direction includes *A Girl in School Uniform (Walks Into a Bar)* (West Yorkshire Playhouse), *Blasted* (Styx Tottenham), *Left Luggage* (The Space), *Danielle* (Slingshot Manchester) and *Road* (Warwick Arts Centre for the National Student Drama Festival 2014). Assistant direction includes work with the National Theatre, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester, the Gate Theatre, Greyscale Theatre Company and Forced Entertainment.

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Monday, 16 October 2017 at 7.30pm
Imaginationship by Sue Healy. Directed by Tricia Thorns.

Great Yarmouth, Norfolk. 59-year-old Ginnie attempts to seduce her unrequited love, the nymphomaniac Brenda. Attila is from Hungary but has ended up scraping an existence in Yarmouth – and pursues Melody who is obsessed with her cold and distant evening-class tutor, Tony. Power-plays and relationships clash until a seduction too far leads to mass murder. Set in a marginalised Brexit town, *Imaginationship* explores obsession, sex addiction, and the devastating effect of imbalanced relationships, not least between immigrants and locals, London and the regions.

Playwright **Sue Healy** is currently Literary Manager at the Finborough Theatre. Born in Ireland, her work has been supported and developed by the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, the Peggy Ramsay Foundation and Arts Council England. She has won the Sussex Playwrights' Award and the Escalator Award, and been a finalist for BBC Scriptroom 12, the Eamon Keane Playwriting Prize, the Nick Darke Award and Old Vic 12. Plays include *Cow* (Etcetera Theatre) and *Brazen Strap* (King's Head Theatre) both funded by Arts Council England. Her work has also been performed at the Hackney Attic, Claremorris Festival (New Writing Award winner), Brighton Festival and Sterts Theatre. Radio plays include nine plays which have broadcast on BBC Radio 4 (Opening Lines winner), WLRfm and KCLR96fm. A UEA Creative Writing MA alumna, Sue spent eleven years in Budapest, editing the newspaper *Hungary A.M.* She is now based in London, and is completing a Ph.D. in theatre history.

Director **Tricia Thorns** returns to the Finborough Theatre where she directed *Red Night* and *London Wall* that subsequently transferred to the St James Theatre. She is Artistic Director of Two's Company. Tricia began her career as an actor in the West End as part of John Neville's company at the Fortune Theatre, after a Classics BA from Nottingham University. Direction includes *What the Women Did*, *The Cutting of the Cloth* and *The Fifth Column* (Southwark Playhouse), *My Real War 1914-?* (Trafalgar Studios and National Tour), *Forgotten Voices from the Great War* (Pleasance, London), *The Searcher* (Musical Futures at Greenwich Theatre), *Ex and Black 'Eil* (Soho Theatre), *Twelfth Night* (Dulwich Picture Gallery), *Peer Gynt* (Alley's Theatre), *Passion Play 2000* (Dulwich Community) and *A Day By The Sea* (Southwark Playhouse). As an actress, theatre includes *End of Story* (Chelsea Theatre), *Harry and Me* (Warehouse, Croydon), *Façade* (Dingley and Dulwich Festivals) *A Kind of Alaska* (Edinburgh, National Tour and USA Tour), *Time's Up* (Windsor Theatre Royal), *The Libertine* and *The Man of Mode* (Royal Court Theatre and National Tour), *Betrayal* (Battersea Arts Centre and National Tour), *Run For Your Wife* (West End) and leading roles in theatres in Salisbury, Ipswich, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Guildford, Derby and many more. Television includes *Dangerfield*, *A Touch of Frost*, *Keeping Up Appearances*, *The Darling Buds of May*, *The Bill*, *London's Burning* and *Captives*. Film includes *The Turn of the Screw*.

•
Thursday, 19 October 2017 at 3.00pm
Morningland by Iain Finlay Macleod. Directed by Liz Carruthers.

A man and woman stand in Glenfinnan forest in the middle of the night. Sorley and Eimhir. He grallochs a deer they have hit with the car and tells her he is AWOL. They are going to Raasay, a place with its own ghosts for Sorley, but the only place no-one will find him. He was brought up there by his uncle, who was traumatised by the Spanish Civil War. Eimhir is Irish and Sorley hid it from her for long enough that he was in the army. Now she finds out that he speaks Arabic and works in intelligence. He has gone AWOL after having to question a man, Ali, involved in a terrorist attack. When they reach the island, his uncle, a man long dead, is there. Sorley encounters the three stories of his life at once – his childhood with his uncle, his unrequited love of Eimhir and the night he interrogates Ali.

Playwright **Iain Finlay Macleod** is from the Isle of Lewis in Scotland and writes in both English and Scottish Gaelic. He returns to the Finborough Theatre following previous productions of *I Was A Beautiful Day*, *Somersaults* and *Atman*. He

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was Associate Artist (Gaelic) at the National Theatre of Scotland from 2013-15. He was also the Robert Louis Stevenson Fellow in 2009-2010 and was Writer-in-Residence at Sabhal Mor Ostaig, the Gaelic College in Skye, for two years. He was also Associate Playwright at the Scottish Playwright's Society for two years. Iain Finlay has written over fifty dramatic works which have been performed professionally for theatre, film, television and radio. His work for theatre has been shown in a number of countries such as the US, France, Germany, Austria, Belgium and England. Plays include Whisky Galore, Dear Scotland Monologue - James Boswell and Somersaults (National Theatre of Scotland), The Bends (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland), The Devils Masters, The Pearlfisher, I Was a Beautiful Day, Broke (adapted from the French play 'Un homme en faillite) and Homers (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh). Iain Finlay wrote St Kilda - The Opera, a large scale multi-discipline theatre piece which was shown at the Edinburgh International Festival in 2009, shown simultaneously in five different European countries in 2008. He has written a number of full length Gaelic novels - The Klondykers, Bounty, Empire, The Black School and Revenge.

Director **Liz Carruthers** returns to the Finborough Theatre where she directed Iain Heggie's The Tobacco Merchant's Lawyer and Lost at Sea by Morna Young as part of Vibrant 2015 – a Festival of Finborough Playwrights. Born in Edinburgh, she was Scottish Arts Council Trainee Director at Perth Theatre, Staff Director at Chichester Festival Theatre and Artistic Director at Cumbernauld Theatre. She has directed plays at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh, Pitlochry Festival Theatre, MacRobert Arts Centre, Stirling, Dundee Rep, Perth Theatre, the Tron Theatre, Glasgow, and Eden Court Theatre, Inverness, as well as middle and small scale touring venues all over Scotland and England. In London, her work has been seen at the Purcell Rooms, Gate Theatre, Soho Theatre and the Duke's Head Theatre, Richmond. She has directed 43 world premieres including work by Stephen Greenhorn, Tom McGrath, Iain Heggie, Bernard MacLaverty, Jackie Kay, Louise Welsh, John McKay and Robert Llewellyn. Recent productions include The Straw Chair (Hirtle and Borderline), Talking Heads (Glasgay Festival), Perfect Days (Pitlochry Festival Theatre), MacBheatha (Made in Scotland Showcase), a one-person version of A Midsummer Night's Dream in Gaelic at the Citizens Theatre, Glasgow, and Para Handy (Pitlochry Festival Theatre). Past productions have won the Guinness Pub Theatre Award, the LWT Plays on Stage Award and been nominated for the Critics' Awards for Theatre in Scotland for Best New Play and Best Production for Children and Young People.

• **Week Three – 22 – 26 October 2017**

Sunday, 22 October 2017 at 7.30pm

The Good Minister From Harare by June Carryl. Directed by Shane Dempsey.

Inspired by the human toll of Robert Mugabe's massacre of at least 20,000 Ndebele in Zimbabwe thirty years ago, The Good Minister From Harare was the winner of the Armenian Dramatic Arts Alliance \$10,000 Saroyan/Paul 2016 Human Rights Award, judged by **Rob Drummer**, Artistic Director of Boundless; **Neil McPherson**, Artistic Director of the Finborough Theatre since 1999; and **Simon Levy**, Artistic Director of the Fountain Theatre in Los Angeles since 1993. When a low-level bureaucrat is asked to right a wrong committed in his village thirty years before, he quickly finds himself plunged into a nightmare wonderland of red tape, government thugs and revolutionary zealots. When the past won't stay buried, do you turn a blind eye and live, or die a martyr in the bloody business of liberation?

Playwright **June Carryl** grew up in Denver and studied Political Science and English Literature at Brown University. Her plays include Booger, Bumper and Free (Finalist, 2017 Heideman Award) and La Bete - A One Act (Spirit of the Fringe Award, 2014). Direction includes DuoFest (Boston Court, 2017) Between Friends (EST Los Angeles One Act Festival 2017) and The Secret History of Bicycles (The Blank Young Playwrights Festival 2017).

Director **Shane Dempsey** is an Irish director and returns to the Finborough Theatre where he directed Continuity and The Non-Stop Connolly Show. He trained as a director at E15 Acting School and has led workshops in New York, Shanghai, Bangkok, Moscow and Beijing. Direction includes The Master and Margarita (The Bussey Building and Te Pooka Edinburgh), Seven Jewish Children and About Last Night (Arcola Theatre), The Bay (Theatre503, The Space and Te Pooka, Edinburgh) and Spring Awakening (Mercury Theatre, Colchester). He ran Stagecraft programming work from Moira Buffini, Simon Stephens, Enda Walsh and Jack Thorne. He is also the founding member of Fragments.

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Monday, 23 October 2017 at 7.30pm

Outcaste by Avin Shah. Directed by Fay Lomas.

1914: A Hindu village boasting generations of warrior tradition. With the outbreak of war in Europe, the army recruitment business booms. With Untouchables deemed unfit for service, Yasmin's father sees an opportunity to enlist by converting to Islam. When he sails off to France, adolescent YASMIN remains behind in a religious community disgusted by her father's blasphemous act. Banned from education and a victim since birth, she struggles to adapt to her adopted Muslim faith whilst vulnerable to persecution and sexual violence. But when news arrives from the Western Front of her father's bravery, her underdog's guile is awakened. Climbing out of the gutter, she steps into the vacant men's shoes and becomes a fearsome adversary...

Playwright **Avin Shah** is also an actor. He is currently writing for BBC Radio 4's drama series *Tommies*, set during the First World War, as well as playing one of its characters. In 2014, he produced his first radio play, *Subterranean Sepoys*, as a free podcast with Tara Arts, directed by Jane Morgan. He also directed two public readings at the National Theatre's Watch This Space Festival. He has been an actor for twenty years, including theatre at the Royal Shakespeare Company, National Theatre, West End, Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester, and West Yorkshire Playhouse, and many appearances on television and in several feature films including *Everest* (Working Title), *Trendy* (Raindance Festival). He also plays the avatar of Maharajah Duleep Singh in the video game *Assassins Creed Syndicate*. In 2014, he was long-listed for BBC Writers' Room Prize, and was a finalist for Film London's Borough Film Fund for his script *Strictly Halal* in 2013. *Outcaste* is his first stage play.

Director **Fay Lomas** has been a reader for the Finborough Theatre and the Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond, and was the Resident Assistant Director at the Royal and Derngate Theatres, Northampton. Direction includes *Left Behind* (Camden Fringe), a reading of *Death of a Salesman: Birth and Afterlife* (Oxford Playhouse), *Grapes of Wrath* (director of Northampton young cast at Royal and Derngate Theatres, Northampton), *Lunch Hour* (Southwark Playhouse), *Three Way* (Theatre503), *Balloon* (Vault Festival), and directed and translated *Blood Wedding* (Bread and Roses Theatre) and *Berenice* (The Space). Co-direction includes a reading of the Molière award nominated *In The Ring* (Institut Francais). Assistant Direction includes *Death of a Salesman* (Royal and Derngate Theatres, Northampton, and National Tour), *Great Expectations* (Royal and Derngate Theatres, Northampton), *Annie Get Your Gun* (Crucible Theatre, Sheffield), *Half Life* (Ustinov Studio and Theatre Royal Bath), *Hamlet and Twelfth Night* (Midsummer Scene, Croatia), *Klippies* (Southwark Playhouse) and *Dracula: The Kisses* (Minack Theatre, Cornwall).

•
Thursday, 26 October 2017 at 3.00pm
We Struggle by Joe Marsh. Directed by Oscar Toeman.

A grey summer's day in East London. Jihad is a man on the edge. He has lost his job and his girlfriend Abida has left him in mysterious and sinister circumstances. Heartbroken and directionless, he defecates on the floor of his local Tesco superstore, steals a kitchen knife from its shelves, and over the hours that ensue has a series of encounters with friends, family and strangers as he forges a dark path forward. These encounters are interspersed with flashbacks to his ill-fated relationship with Abida, as their story of shattered hopes, insecurity and radicalisation unfolds, pointing towards the day's extraordinary climax... Bold and uncompromising, *We Struggle* is an urgent exploration of how life in our broken city is pushing people to extremes.

Playwright **Joe Marsh** is a Playwright on Attachment at the Finborough Theatre. His first play, *Black July*, was workshopped at Theatre503, where he also had his short play *National Mourning* produced earlier this year. Another short, *It Arrives As Your Friend*, was produced by Reading Between the Lines Theatre Company as part of the 2017 Off the Block Festival. Joe is also Writer in Residence at Green Spring Academy, Shoreditch. Prior to working as a writer, Joe was a professional actor for six years. He trained at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School and acting included *Aristo* (Chichester Festival Theatre), *Country Music* (West Yorkshire Playhouse), *Single Spies* (Watermill Theatre, Newbury), *Silent Witness* (BBC) and *Above Suspicion* (ITV). *We Struggle* is his second full-length play.

Director **Oscar Toeman** returns to the Finborough Theatre where he directed *After October*, *Laburnum Grove* and *Hey Brother* for *Vibrant 2011 – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights*. Oscar was Resident Assistant Director at the Finborough Theatre in 2011 where he assisted on *Accolade* and *Mirror Teeth*. He is currently Associate Director on the Lincoln Center Theater New York production of *Oslo* (National Theatre and Harold Pinter Theatre). Direction includes *Measure for Measure* (North Wall Arts Centre, Oxford), *Richard III* (Stanwix Theatre, Cumbria), *What They Took With Them* (Moving Stories: United Nations Refugee Agency fundraiser at the National Theatre), *Why I Want to Work at Tesco's* (Bush Theatre), *A.G.M.* (Soho Theatre) and *The Ballad of the Copper Revolution* (The Old Vic Tunnels). Associate and Assistant Direction includes *Waste*, (National Theatre), *The Merchant of Venice*, (Royal Shakespeare Company), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Theatre Royal Bath), *Twelfth Night* (Shakespeare's Globe and Apollo Theatre), *Uncle Vanya* (The Print Room) and *Skane*, (Hampstead Theatre). He was long listed for the JMK Award in 2014 and 2015, a National Theatre Staff Director in 2015, an Interim Resident Director at the National Theatre Studio in 2016 and a member of the Lincoln Center Directors Lab in 2017.

IN ITS OWN BOX

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Introduce Yourself to the Finborough Theatre

To ensure our work remains accessible to all, accompanying this year's *Vibrant 2017 – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights* is the return of our **Introduce Yourself** initiative for writers who have never previously submitted work to

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the Finborough Theatre. The last Introduce Yourself saw us receive more than 200 submissions – one of which went on to a full production at the Finborough Theatre. We pride ourselves on accepting full length scripts all year round, but during Vibrant 2017 – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights, we'll be relaxing our usual submission rules to make ourselves even more accessible to new writers.

Introduce Yourself is for new writers from the UK who have never previously submitted work to the Finborough Theatre. We'll read your work and guarantee feedback from our Literary Team.

Please submit

An unperformed short play or twenty pages of an unperformed full length script.

A synopsis of whatever you are submitting.

A little bit about you. It could be a short biography, or a CV, or a chatty letter telling us what music you like.

As an unsubsidised venue, we are usually not able to give feedback. During **Introduce Yourself**, we promise to give you at least a paragraph of feedback on everything we receive. Do please bear in mind that may take a while, and normal submissions will take longer than usual to process during this period.

Submissions must be made between **Sunday, 8 October to Thursday, 26 October 2017**

Please email **ONLY** and include the words 'Introduce Yourself' in the subject line to

literaryteam@finboroughtheatre.co.uk

We cannot accept submissions by post or by hand.

PDF attachments are preferred if possible.

Your play can be on any subject or in any style you like. We want to read what you are passionate about – not impose themes or subjects or time limits on you.

Writers can be any age, but must be resident in the United Kingdom, and have never previously submitted work to the Finborough Theatre.

And every Wednesday evening during Vibrant 2017 - A Festival of Finborough Playwrights (11, 18 and 25 October), **Neil McPherson**, Artistic Director of the Finborough Theatre, and **Sue Healy**, Literary Manager of the Finborough Theatre, will be in the Finborough Arms pub below the theatre between 7.30pm and 9.30pm if you want to **Introduce Yourself** personally. Bookings will open for each fifteen minute slot at the Finborough Theatre through the Vibrant page of our website on **Sunday, 1 October 2017**. Please note these meetings are for writers only. We will be holding similar events for directors and designers soon.

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IN ITS OWN BOX

Inaugural Meeting of the Finborough Theatre Writers' Group

The Finborough Theatre Writers' Group will launch on Thursday, 19 October 2017 at the Finborough Arms pub, and, thereafter, it will be held at the Finborough Arms pub on the third Thursday of every month at 8.00pm. The group is by invitation only.

A guest will open each session with a short address and speakers will range from theatre industry professionals to scientists, adventurers, political activists, whisky tasters, astrologers, paramilitaries, sex workers, or anyone with an interesting story to tell...

After the speaker shares their story, the group will have a chance to ask questions, share their own thoughts, talk about being a writer and spend time in the company of fellow playwrights.

The Finborough Theatre's Writers' Group aims to forge a social and support network for dedicated playwrights, to foster camaraderie and provide opportunity for discussion and debate, about playwriting and life. We intend it to be both informative and fun.

The group is by invitation only and we will email the emerging and established playwrights we are keen to get to know better and those whom we feel would be an asset to and benefit most from the evening.

The speaker for the inaugural meeting will be announced on 10 October 2017.

Date: Thursday, 19 October (and the 3rd Thursday of every month thereafter).

Time: 8.00pm.

Place: The Finborough Arms pub, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED.

- **Vibrant 2017 – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights**

Finborough Theatre, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED

Book online at www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk

Telephone Booking 0844 847 1652 (calls will cost 7ppm plus your network access charge).

Sundays, Mondays and Thursdays, 8, 9, 12, 15, 16, 19, 22, 23, 26 October 2017

Sunday and Monday evenings at 7.30pm. Thursday matinees at 3.00pm.

Tickets £5 all seats.

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Thursday, 12 October 2017 at 3.00pm – Checkpoint Chana by Jeff Page. Directed by Manuel Bau.

Week Two – 15–19 October 2017

Sunday, 15 October 2017 at 7.30pm – Beeston by Adam Hughes. Directed by Alistair Pidsley.

Monday, 16 October 2017 at 7.30pm – Imaginationship by Sue Healy. Directed by Tricia Thorns.

Thursday, 19 October 2017 at 3.00pm – Morningland by Iain Finlay Macleod. Directed by Liz Carruthers.

Week Three – 22–26 October 2017

Sunday, 22 October 2017 at 7.30pm – The Good Minister from Harare by June Carryl. Directed by Shane Dempsey.

Monday, 23 October 2017 at 7.30pm – Outcaste by Avin Shah. Directed by Fay Lomas.

Thursday, 26 October 2017 at 3.00pm – We Struggle by Joe Marsh. Directed by Oscar Toeman.