

FINBOROUGH | THEATRE
VIBRANT NEW WRITING | UNIQUE REDISCOVERIES

May-August 2019 Season

FINBOROUGH | THEATRE
presents
THE ELEVENTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

**VIBRANT 2019 –
A FESTIVAL OF FINBOROUGH
PLAYWRIGHTS**

Curated by Finborough Theatre Artistic Director Neil McPherson

Produced by Ben Chamberlain.

Plays by

Melis Aker

Abigail Andjel, winner of the
The 2019 ETPEP Award

Albert Belz

Sharmila Chauhan

Hannah Morley

Colleen Murphy

Stewart Pringle

Athena Stevens

Palestinian Political Prisoners and Einat Weizman

Directed by

Liz Carruthers

Melissa Dunne

Claire Evans

Tommo Fowler

Matthew Iliffe

Hannah Jones

Rory McGregor

Fidelis Morgan

Georgie Staight

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Press Information

Now in its eleventh consecutive year, the multi-award-winning Finborough Theatre presents **Vibrant 2019 – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights**, its annual explosion of new writing, running between **16 June-4 July 2019**.

This year's highlights include the winner of this year's ETPEP Award in association with the Finborough Theatre, an £8000 prize for a new play by a new playwright who works in another job in theatre, alongside stunning new plays from many Finborough Theatre favourites.

Concentrated solely on full length works for the stage, Vibrant 2019 – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights continues to introduce you to some of the fascinating diverse vibrant voices we have discovered, developed and championed.

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 well over one hundred new plays, twenty four 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 Shepphard and Craig Adams' musical version of *Thérèse Raquin*, *This Heaven* by Nakkiah Lui and *Booby's Bay* by Henry Darke. Plays that went on to be produced by other theatres have included *Bull* by Mike Bartlett at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, *The Stock Da'Wa* by David Eldridge, and *Acceptance* by Amy Ng at the Hampstead Theatre Downstairs, and *Lost At Sea* by Morna Young, which has just completed an acclaimed Scottish tour.

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 2019 – 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.

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THE PLAYS

Week One – 16–20 June 2019

Sunday, 16 June 2019 at 7.30pm

PRISONERS OF THE OCCUPATION

by Palestinian Political Prisoners and Einat Weizman. Directed by Tommo Fowler.

Banned in Israel where it caused a huge public controversy and could not be performed, *Prisoners of the Occupation* focuses on the most hidden victims of the Israeli state: Palestinian political prisoners.

McNarrated by sixty-year-old Ibrahim, himself an ex-prisoner who spent thirty years in Israeli prisons, *Prisoners of the Occupation* takes the audience on a journey into the shrouded confines of prison life including the reception process, investigations, tortures, hunger strikes, solitary confinement, the day-to-day routine, the transitions from prison to prison, and family visits.

The play is based on unprecedented access to verbatim testimonies from both current and former prisoners, who have actively contributed at every stage of the play's creation.

Playwright **Einat Weizman** is based in Tel Aviv, and is an actor, director, playwright and political activist. All her plays, performances and events are focused on documentary theatre as an investigative tool into the hidden spaces of the Israeli reality. Her works include *I, Dareen T.* (Tmu-na Theater, Tel Aviv; Human Festival, Oslo, Norway; Materia Prima Theatre Festival, Florence, Italy), *House 113: A Lesson in Political Construction* (Tmu-na Theater, Tel Aviv), *Palestine, Year Zero* (Tokyo Theatre Festival and Kerala Theatre Festival, India), *Prison Notebooks* (Jaffa Theatre), *Shame* (Avignon Theatre Festival; MoFo festival, Oslo, Norway; ITI conference, Segovia, Spain; and Mosaic Theater, Washington DC.) Einat received the Writer's Guild of Norway's Solidarity Grand Award 2019 for her documentary based plays, giving voice to marginalised groups.

Director **Tommo Fowler** returns to the Finborough Theatre where he directed *Jam*, *I Wish to Die Singing* and *Obama-ology*, and was a Resident Assistant Director where he assisted on *Harajuku Girls* and *Sommer 14*. Direction includes *The Strip*, *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich* (Oxford School of Drama), *Comet* (Pleasance London),

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Griff Rhys Jones: Jones and Smith (UK Tour), Mumburger (Archivist's Gallery and Old Red Lion Theatre). Assistant Direction includes *Passin' Thru* (Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith) and *A Lovely Sunday for Creve Coeur* (Coronet Theatre). Dramaturgy for text and production includes *Inside Voices*, winner of the Origins Award (Vault Festival) and Griff Rhys Jones: *Where Was I?* (International Tour). Tommo is co-founder of RoughHewn, a script-reading and dramaturgy service working internationally with emerging writers, and also works with Literary Departments at the Bush Theatre, Royal Court Theatre, Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester, and Theatre503.

Monday, 17 June 2019 at 7.30pm

THE WOODEN MEADOW

by Stewart Pringle. Directed by Fidelis Morgan

Jim's run this pub theatre for as long as anyone can remember. It might be held together with gaffer tape and hope, but then so is Jim. It's got charm, anyway. It's got history. Punters used to queue thirty deep at the box office. To watch the deaths of kings and the fall of empires in a room above a pub. Play and a pint! Magic.

But while Jim's been keeping the lights on, the world's rolled on beneath him. Numbers are drying up and creditors are closing in. What Jim needs is one big hit to keep the wolf from the door, but the cupboard's bare. Well, it's almost bare...

Playwright **Stewart Pringle** makes his Finborough Theatre debut with *The Wooden Meadow*. His plays include the Papatango Award winning *Trestle* (Southwark Playhouse), *You Look Tasty!* (Pleasance Edinburgh) and *The Ghost Hunter* (Old Red Lion Theatre and National Tour). Stewart is a Dramaturg at the National Theatre, and previously worked as Associate Dramaturg at the Bush Theatre, where he worked on shows including *Misty* (Bush Theatre and West End) and *Nassim* (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh, and World Tour). Prior to that, he spent three years as Artistic Director of the Old Red Lion Theatre, for which he received an OffWestEnd Award for Best Artistic Director in 2015. He co-founded the London Horror Festival in 2011. He has also worked as a theatre critic for publications including *The Stage*, *Time Out* and *Exeunt*.

Director **Fidelis Morgan** returns to the Finborough Theatre where she directed *Drama At Inish*, *But It Still Goes On*, and *The Piper* as part of *Vibrant 2011*, and wrote the sell-out adaptation of *Hangover Square*.

Fidelis has played leading roles in classics from Massinger to Coward, Goldoni to Brecht, at theatres such as the Citizens Theatre Glasgow, Nottingham Playhouse, West Yorkshire Playhouse and Everyman Theatre, Liverpool. She was both player and assistant director at the Glasgow Citizens Theatre and has directed classic plays at the major drama schools and the King's Head Theatre, and St James Theatre. In 2014, she was Artist-in-Residence at the University of California where she directed *The Gambling Lady*. Television as an actor includes *Jeeves and Wooster*, *As Time Goes By* and *Goodbye to Love*. Film includes *A Little Chaos*. Her twenty published books include the ground-breaking *The Female Wits: Women Playwrights on the London Stage* and the *Countess Ashby de la Zouche* crime novels.

Thursday, 20 June 2019 at 3.00pm

FIELD, AWAKENING

by Melis Aker. Directed by Rory McGregor.

After ten years of self-imposed estrangement from her country, Turkey, Rana reunites with three of her old friends on a soccer field in Istanbul on 15 July 2016 (the eve of the attempted coup d'etat in Turkey), only to realize what it was that really drove them apart. Spanning across the surreal events of one evening, *Field, Awakening* is an anti-homecoming: a tale of a stranger in a strange land, searching in vain for a home that is lost in a landscape of fleeting familiarity and heightened political surveillance.

Playwright **Melis Aker** is a writer, actor, and musician from Turkey. She is a 2050 Playwriting fellow at New York Theatre Workshop, and a member of Ars Nova's Play Group. She was recently commissioned by the Atlantic Theatre Company in New York to develop her one-act *Scraps and Things* for their Middle Eastern Mixfest, which included the work of Hannah Khalil, Heather Raffo, Mona Mansour and Kareem Fahmy. Melis' plays include *Field, Awakening* (2018 Sundance Theatre Lab final-round, 2018 Berkeley Rep Ground Floor final-round and Lark's 2018 Van Lier New Voices Fellowship finalist) which was workshopped at Golden Thread's New Threads series and Corkscrew Festival; *Manar* (2017 Columbia@Roundabout finalist) which was at The New Group's New Works series; *LaMaMa* (Golden Thread's 2017 ReOrient Festival, LPAC's 2017 Rough Draft Festival); *330 Pegasus: A Love Letter* (Lark's 2018 Jerome NY Fellowship finalist); *Azul, Otra Vez*, a play with music which was workshopped at the BRICLab Residency; *Dragonflies* (2019 Sundance Theatre Lab finalist); *When My Mama was a Hittite* (2018 Columbia@Roundabout finalist, forthcoming readings at the Park Theatre in September 2019) and *Gilded Isle* (which received readings at New York Theatre Workshop). Acting includes *The Blacklist: Redemption* (NBC), *Love in Afghanistan* (Arena Stage and Roundabout), *Daybreak* (Pan Asian Rep), *We Live in Cairo* (New World Stages) and *Proof* (Edinburgh Festival). Melis' screenplay *ARI* (Bee) will be taking production meetings at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival as part of *Maison des Scenaristes*, and her television pilot of *Manar* will be developed at Transatlantic Partners and the Orchard Project's Episodic Lab. Melis also gave a TEDx talk in Ankara for youth empowerment in performance, and works as Ayad Akhtar's assistant. Training includes MFA Playwriting (Columbia), Acting (RADA) and BA Drama/Philosophy (Tufts).

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Director **Rory McGregor** returns to the Finborough Theatre where he directed *The Great Divide*. He is currently based in New York City, where recent direction includes *NEW HERE* (Dixon Place), *Building Pain* (Origin Theatre) and *Macbeth* (Connelly Theatre). He has developed work at New York Theatre Workshop, Target Margin, 59E59 Theaters, Rising Sun Theatre Company, La MaMa E.T.C and The Tank. Associate Direction includes *Ink* (Broadway), *Sea Wall/A Life* (Public Theater and forthcoming Broadway transfer) and *M. Butterfly* (Broadway). He has taught at Columbia University, mentors undergraduate directing students at NYU/Playwright's Horizons Theatre School and has been a guest director at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. He is currently a Directing Fellow at Manhattan Theatre Club, a script reader at Roundabout Theatre Company and was previously the Artistic Associate of Classic Stage Company and Artistic Apprentice at Roundabout. He holds an MFA in Theatre Directing from Columbia University.

• Week Two – 23-27 June 2019

Sunday, 23 June 2019 at 7.30pm

GEOGRAPHY OF FIRE / LA FURIE ET SA GÉOGRAPHIE

by Colleen Murphy. Directed by Matthew Iliffe.

Part One of *Geography of Fire / La Furie et sa géographie* takes place in 2019 and dramatises the collision of British and French during the Battle on the Plains of Abraham in Quebec during the Seven Years War.

On 13 September 1759, world history changed in twenty-five minutes. Though often portrayed as nothing more than a dust-up between two generals – James Wolfe and Louis-Joseph de Montcalm – the Battle on the Plains of Abraham is actually a magnificent, tragic resistance against the land-grabbing, corporate idea of empire that changed the face of North America for all time.

Summoned by the call of a red-throated loon, 33 fictional and non-fictional characters emerge from their graves with bits of clothing from 1759 still clinging to their burial shrouds. For the next two hours, they relive their experience in an effort to challenge history's interpretation of this tumultuous time.

The full play is in two full-length parts. We present Part One which stands alone in its own right.

Playwright **Colleen Murphy** is the former Canadian Playwright in Residence at the Finborough Theatre where her previous productions have included *The December Man* (L'homme de décembre), *The Goodnight Bird*, *The Piper*, *Beating Heart Cadaver*, *Pig Girl* and *Armstrong's War*.

Murphy's recent works are *The Society Of The Destitute* Presents *Titus Bouffonius* (Rumble Theatre), *The Breathing Hole* (Stratford Festival), *I Hope My Heart Burns First* (University of Alberta) and an opera, *Oksana G.*, with composer Aaron Gervais (Tapestry Opera). Since 2010, Murphy has been guest playwright at the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton, Canada, Playwright-in-Residence at The Factory Theatre in Toronto in 2011-2012, the Lee Playwright-in-Residence at the University of Alberta in 2014-2017 and, most recently, Writer-in-Residence at the University of New Brunswick. Murphy's play, *Pig Girl* won the 2016 Governor General's Literary Award for Drama and *The December Man* (L'homme de décembre), won the 2007 Governor General's Literary Award. Both plays were awarded the Carol Bolt Award for Outstanding Play. Murphy is also an award-winning filmmaker. Forthcoming work includes two new plays (*Bloodsucker Waltz* and *To Grieve Is To Be An Animal*), a new play with Itai Erdal, a libretto with composer Ian Cusson for the Canadian Opera Company, a feature film of *Armstrong's War* (Solo Productions – Canada) and revised productions of *The Breathing Hole*.

Director **Matthew Iliffe** returns to the Finborough Theatre following his acclaimed production of Lionel Bart and Alun Owen's musical *Maggie May* this spring.

Direction includes the European premiere of *The Burnt Part Boys* which was nominated for the OffWestEnd Award for Best Director and Best Musical Production (Park Theatre), *Side By Side* by Sondheim (The Piano Bar, Bristol Hippodrome), *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (Landor Theatre), *Precious Little Talent* (The Albany), *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Alma Tavern Theatre, Bristol) and *The Way Things Weren't* (The Room Above, Bristol). Assistant Direction includes *Brass* (National Youth Music Theatre at the Hackney Empire) and *Romeo and Juliet* (Eastville Park, Bristol). Matthew graduated from the University of Bristol with a first class honours degree in Theatre and Performance Studies, and trained on the StoneCrabs Young Directors Programme, in association with The Albany.

Monday, 24 June 2019 at 7.30pm

BE BETTER IN BED

by Sharmila Chauhan. Directed by Hannah Jones.

Focused and always ready for a challenge: Layla, doctor-married-three kids, is trying to 'fix' her relationship. Signing up to a 'Be Better in Bed' women's sex workshop, she meets three women each with widely different lifestyles. Exploring polyamory, Shibari and pornography, these four women must navigate together what sexuality means to them. They are led by the enigmatic Sapphire, who tells them there isn't anything they can't learn about sex, if they just pay attention and practice, practice, practice...

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Physical, brutally honest and funny, *Better In Bed* explores contemporary sexuality and intersectional feminism: asking bold questions around female empowerment, desire and the male gaze.

Playwright **Sharmila Chauhan** is a playwright, screenwriter and prose writer. Her work is often a transgressive meditation on love, sex and an exploration of the diasporic experience, and she is particularly interested in the intersection of sex, power and gender. Her plays include *The Husbands* (Soho Theatre and UK Tour for Kali and Pentabus Theatre), *Born Again/Purnajanam* (Southwark Playhouse for Kali Theatre) and *10 Women* (Avignon Festival). She was shortlisted for the Asian New Writer Award in both 2009 and 2012. She has had two short films produced and written two features – most recently, her short film *Oysters* was commissioned by Film London; and her feature *Mother Land* is currently being developed by Cinestan International and was long-listed for the Sundance Writers' Lab. Sharmila's short stories have been published widely in print and online. She is also currently working on her novel *Seven Mirrors*.
www.sharmilathewriter.com

Director **Hannah Jones** returns to the Finborough Theatre where she was Resident Assistant Director in 2013 assisting on *The Precariat*, *Fishskin Trousers*, *The White Carnation* and *Carthage*. Direction includes *Geist and Smile* (TalentLab, Luxembourg's International Writing Festival), *Numb* (Barons Court Theatre) *Cold Call*, *Square One* (Little Pieces of Gold Festival) and *The Ticket* (Theatre 503: Rapid Writer's Night). She recently completed her MFA in Theatre Directing at Birkbeck University, where she undertook a Residency at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre as Resident Assistant Director. During her placement, she assisted on *Woyzeck* (Birmingham REP), *Penguins* (The REP and UK Tour), *Fred Jeffs: The Sweet Shop Murder* (The REP and Quinton Libraries) and *I Knew You* (The REP and Barry Jackson Tour).

Thursday, 27 June 2019 at 3.00pm

ASTROMAN

by Albert Belz. Directed by Claire Evans.

New Zealand in 1983 and it's on like Donkey Kong!

'Jimmy' Te Rehua is the king of the Whakatāne Astrocade Amusement Parlour. But while there's no limit to his domination of the video arcade and the Pac-Man high-score charts, this Māori boy genius hasn't yet worked out how to beat the game of life.

A touching story of family, friendship and courage filled with heart, charm and hilarity.

Playwright **Albert Belz** returns to the Finborough Theatre where his first play *Awhi Tapu* was seen in the very first *Vibrant* in 2009, and *Te Karakia*, seen in *Vibrant* 2015.

A multi-award-winning New Zealand playwright, his unique voice has crossed many datelines and divides having been performed internationally including London, Paris, New York, Melbourne and Sydney. Issues ranging from class, ethnicity and sexual politics, to Gothic serial killers and religion resonate through his words. Belz has held writing residencies in Les Quesnoy, France, also Waikato, Victoria (N.Z.) and Canterbury (N.Z.) Universities. *Astroman* has been produced by the Melbourne Theatre Company, Court Theatre and most recently Auckland Theatre Company. Belz was creator and head-writer on the Māori comedy series *Tongue Tied* which screened on television in 2018. Belz is currently completing his *Masters* while lecturing in performing arts, writing for stage and screen. He also writes for New Zealand television drama *Shortland Street*.

Director and Producer **Claire Evans** returns to the Finborough Theatre where she produced *Me and Juliet* and *Bed and Sofa*.

She read English and Drama at Royal Holloway College and has worked as director, producer and theatrical agent. Direction includes *Belle Fontaine* (Vault Festival), three years for Paul Taylor Mills' summer play festivals (Theatre Royal, Windsor, the Pomegranate Theatre, Chesterfield and the Manor Pavilion Theatre, Sidmouth), and, most recently, a play-reading of *LAZYeye* by Nicholas McInerny (Above the Arts, Leicester Square). Producing includes *King John* and Renaissance comedy *Fair Em* (Union Theatre), two musical compilations, both of which she also devised and directed (Edinburgh Festival), *Bette Davis On The Edge*, co-producing with *The Thelmas* (UK Tour), *Ladylogue* (Tristan Bates Theatre for the Camden Fringe) and producing Brunton finalist *Laura Stevens' By My Strength* (Women and War Festival, London). Earlier this year, she was Co-ordinator for the MTFestUK Festival of New Musical Theatre (The Other Palace).

• **Week Three – 30 June–4 July 2019**

Sunday, 30 June 2019 at 7.30pm

THE WINNER OF THE ETPEP AWARD 2019

FENCE

by Abigail Andjel. Directed by Liz Carruthers.

Press Information

Following an aggressive incident at school, 15 year old Nico who has autism and his mother Maria now find themselves isolated in their small and worn out one-bed council flat.

With no date given for Nico's return to school and little action from those who are assigned to help them, they are both deteriorating quickly. Will Maria's social worker, Kate, ever give her a straight answer? Will the council ever fix their broken garden fence, so that Nico can play outside and gain just an ounce of freedom? Will they ever be able to leave their flat again?

Inspired by real events, a new play about isolation, abandonment, strength, love and hope.

The **ETPEP Award 2019** is a playwriting prize for new UK playwrights who work in the theatre industry, run by the Finborough Theatre in association with the Experienced Theatre Practitioners Early Playwriting Trust (ETPEP).

The Award's purpose is to find and nurture a playwright who has worked in theatre for two years or more (but not in a literary department setting or as a paid script reader), who is looking to further their ambitions and skill in the art and craft of playwriting.

The winner will receive a prize of £8,000, a development relationship with the Finborough Theatre including one-to-one dramaturgy with Finborough Theatre Artistic Director and playwright Neil McPherson; a rehearsal workshop with actors and a director to develop the play; and a staged reading performance of the winning play as part of Vibrant 2019.

The judges for the 2019 Award are playwright Winsome Pinnock; Artistic Director of the Finborough Theatre and playwright Neil McPherson; Literary Manager of the Finborough Theatre and playwright Sue Healy; Actor, playwright and activist Athena Stevens; and Clive Webster of the Experienced Theatre Practitioners Early Playwriting Trust, which founded the award. The competition was judged anonymously until the shortlist stage.

Playwright **Abigail Andjel** was born in Yorkshire and trained as an actor at Manchester Metropolitan School of Theatre and has worked in theatres including The Old Vic, the Arcola Theatre and the Public Theater, New York City.

Director **Liz Carruthers** returns to the Finborough Theatre where she directed Iain Heggie's *The Tobacco Merchant's Lawyer*, *Lost at Sea* by Morna Young as part of Vibrant 2015, *King David* as part of Vibrant 2016 and *Morningland* as part of Vibrant 2017. She also directed the Scottish tour of the Olivier Award nominated *It Is Easy To Be Dead* which received its world premiere at the Finborough Theatre.

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 45 world premieres including work by Kieran Hurley, Stephen Greenhorn, Tom McGrath, Iain Heggie, Bernard MacLaverty, Jackie Kay, Louise Welsh, John McKay and Robert Llewellyn. Recent productions include *Quality Street* (Pitlochry Festival Theatre), *Cranhill Carmen* (Óran Mòr, Glasgow), *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 (Citizens Theatre, Glasgow), and *Para Handy* (Pitlochry Festival Theatre). Her previous 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.

Monday, 1 July 2019 at 7.30pm

SCROUNGER

by Athena Stevens. Directed by Georgie Staight.

On the streets of Elephant and Castle, everyone likes to make speculations about Scrounger. She needs help, she must not be aware of the complexities of the world, she is sent from the demons to torture her mum... at least according to her Nigerian Uber driver.

Scrounger doesn't care. A successful online personality, she's got more power from her bedroom than anyone on the Southwark estates could dream of. She's educated, she's ballsy, and with a huge network of online allies, Scrounger is a woman who knows how to make change happen.

That is, until an airline destroys her wheelchair.

Inspired by real events and a lawsuit initiated by Stevens herself, Scrounger drives towards the realities of how Britain is failing its most vulnerable and the extreme cost paid by those seeking justice.

Playwright **Athena Stevens** returns to the Finborough Theatre where she is a Playwright on Attachment, and wrote and performed in the world premiere of *Schism* which has just received an Olivier Award nomination. She is an associate artist at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. She is currently writing the book for a new musical, and is under commission for BBC Radio 3 and National Youth Theatre. She was the first actor in a wheelchair nominated for an OffWestEnd Award for her performance in *Schism*, as well as appearing at the Barbican Theatre as Juliet last year. Stevens is also a spokesperson for the UK's Women's Equality Party.

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Director **Georgie Staight** returns to the Finborough Theatre where she directed *Into The Numbers* and *Dubailand* which was nominated for an OffWestEnd Award.

Direction includes *D-Day 75* (Watermill Theatre and Corn Exchange, Newbury), *CHUTNEY*, nominated for four OffWestEnd Awards (*Bunker Theatre*), *Section 2* (*Bunker Theatre*), *Dreamless Sleep* (*Arts Theatre*), *Flood* (*Tristan Bates Theatre*), *White Light* (*Arcola Theatre*), *Thank You For Your Patience* (*Hackney Showroom*), and *Roosting* (script accelerator at *Park Theatre*). Assistant Direction includes *Sweet Charity*, *Our Town* (*Watermill Theatre, Newbury*), and *Legally Blonde: The Musical* (*Bernie Grant Arts Centre*). Georgie is Joint Artistic Director of new writing company *Flux Theatre*.

Thursday, 4 July 2019 at 3.00pm

ROUGH MUSIC

by Hannah Morley. Directed by Melissa Dunne.

Vi lives in a mobile library parked on the hill beyond the ring-road of a northern market town. Apart from her young employee Isaac, the only person who visits is an eleven year old girl, come to hear Vi's extraordinary tales. Just the three of them is how Vi likes it. But when she wakes up to see a man hanging from the hornbeam tree outside, Vi struggles to keep her past hidden between the books. In a town where public shaming has become the norm, the library becomes a refuge. But as the water levels rise and the town descends, it's harder to see who's worthy of saving. *Rough Music* explores the power of shame and the stories that we tell about each other.

Playwright **Hannah Morley** is currently Channel 4 Playwright in Residence at the Finborough Theatre where her first play *Petrichor*, written as part of the Writer's Lab course at Soho Theatre, won the Radius Playwriting Award, and was performed as part of *Vibrant 2018 – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights*. Born in Doncaster, Hannah trained as an actor at Guildford School of Acting.

Director **Melissa Dunne** returns to the Finborough Theatre where she directed *Just to Get Married*, named in *The Observer's 'Best Theatre Of 2017'* list, and *Sarah Daniels' Masterpieces*. She also directed Hannah Morley's first play *Petrichor* in last year's *Vibrant*.

She is Artistic Director of *Papercut Theatre*. Theatre includes *Lola and Dangerous Lenses* (*Vault Festival 2019*). She founded and continues to creatively manage the acclaimed *XY Playwriting Festival* which has been produced at *Hackney Showroom*, *Latitude Festival*, *Pleasance Edinburgh* and *Theatre503*. She has worked for the Literary Departments of the *National Theatre*, *Bush Theatre*, the *Verity Bargate Award* and *Soho Theatre*. She is Visiting Lecturer at the *Royal Central School of Speech and Drama*.

LISTINGS INFORMATION

Vibrant 2019 – A Festival of Finborough Playwrights

Finborough Theatre, 118 Finborough Road, London SW10 9ED

Book online at www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk

No booking fees on online, personal or postal bookings

Box Office 01223 357851. (Calls are free. There will be a 5% booking fee.) Lines are open Monday – Saturday 10.00am-6.00pm

Sunday, 16 June – Thursday, 4 July 2019

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

Tickets £5 all seats.

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Thursday, 4 July 2019 at 3.00pm – *Rough Music* by Hannah Morley. Directed by Melissa Dunne.

Press Information

FINBOROUGH | THEATRE

For more information, interviews and images, please contact

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Download press releases and images at <http://www.finboroughtheatre.co.uk/press-resources.php>