

# Playing at The Custom House in June – book your tickets now

The secret history of Leith will be enacted at one of its most historic buildings when the Custom House becomes the backdrop for a new play.

The four performances, by Citadel Arts Group, will allow a rare behind the scenes look at the Georgian Custom House – which is currently awaiting redevelopment.

Liz Hare, artistic director of Citadel Arts Group and director of Leithers Live said: “We are very excited about this. It is the first time we have performed a site specific work.

“It will be wonderful to see the play come to life inside the Custom House and outside on the Shore – which is where some of the scenes in the play take place.”

The new work is based on the novel ‘Leithers One Family’, by William Haddow, which traces the history of the port from mediaeval times to the present day.

It has been adapted by ten different writers from the Citadel Arts Group, with each episode taking place at a different time in history.

Author William Haddow said: “If you look at the geography Leith really should be the capital of Scotland. But Edinburgh realised it had to have access to the sea and so they bought

the Shore. It created something like apartheid between Leith and Edinburgh. It's quite a story.

"The history of Leith is amazing – when you look at what's involved. There's no town with the same length and depth of incredible history like it in the whole of the UK."



Gregor Davidson, Leithers Live PHOTO Eric Robinson  
Leithers Live covers the whole range of life in the port, with characters including bankers, smugglers, fishwives and

pickpockets – right up to the modern day invasion of hipsters and gourmet coffee shops.

Lizzie MacLean, who is one of the playwrights involved said working on the play had been a joy. “I joined the Citadel writing group during lockdown and it has been a great experience. I’ve learned such a lot – both from the other writers and from the actors.”

Leithers One Family was originally adapted into a podcast during lockdown before being re-adapted for live performance.



Mark Kydd The Story Teller in rehearsals PHOTO Eric Robinson  
Una Richards, CEO of Scottish Historic Buildings Trust said it was a great opportunity to use the building in a creative way

and for people to see inside the building, which is normally closed to the public.

“As part of our commitment to the community of Leith, we are delighted to welcome Citadel Arts to the Custom House to perform Leithers Live.

“After such a long time in lockdown, it is wonderful that the Custom House is being brought back to life with such an enthusiastic progressive performance.”

Scottish Historic Buildings Trust is currently discussing the future of Custom House, which was bought by Edinburgh City Council in 2015 for £650,000, after 30 years as a storeroom for the Museum of Scotland.

Leithers Live | The Custom House Play | June 17 and 18 |  
Performances at 2pm and 7pm

Tickets: [ftennick@hotmail.com](mailto:ftennick@hotmail.com) tel:01875 340 717





Mark Kydd, Mairi Jayne Weir and Debbie Whyte in rehearsal at Custom House PHOTO Eric Robinson



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