

Double bill at the Traverse

In November the Traverse will celebrate its 60th anniversary with a double bill of Scottish theatre, with a play written in 1987 and the follow up written some 35 years later.

John McKay's two-hander *Dead Dad Dog* played to sell out audiences at the Traverse when it was first written and featured a young Robert Carlyle on its first UK tour.

The sequel *Sunny Boy* is a continuation of the same story with the main character Eck returning to Scotland uneasy with some of the relationships he has made since leaving. Picturing himself as a homecoming hero this is a tale which reflects identity, culture wars, and uncomfortable home truths in a scandalous heartfelt new play.

Writer John McKay, said: "I wrote *Dead Dad Dog* aged 22, most of it by hand in one long overnighter, a bit drunk after Christmas Eve in the pub; and somehow the idea of being an optimistic young person in Edinburgh 1986, dogged by the ghost of 1970s Scottish cheesiness, seemed to strike a chord with the playgoing public.

While I moved into TV and film, the play never quite went away – notable revivals include, for one night only, Alan Cumming and Brian Cox in New York, and now in London and Edinburgh with Liam Brennan and Angus Miller; a terrific combination of experience and exciting new talent.

Reviving *Dead Dad Dog*, writing my first play in 30 years,

Sunny Boy, and working with Liz again has been exhilarating, and I hope that the double bill has some funny and truthful things to say about Scotland – and fathers and sons – then and now.

And while there are a surprising number of people who still remember the original production, working with producer Robyn Jancovich-Brown and her innovative team at Stories Untold in Edinburgh seems an ideal way to reach a new, contemporary audience too.”

Director of Dead Dad Dog and Sunny Boy, Liz Carruthers, said: “When approached by the Finborough Theatre to propose a Scottish play for their Autumn 2023 season, I suggested Dead Dad Dog, John McKay’s triumphantly successful play, commissioned by the Traverse in 1987. As a young writer this, his first play, was fresh, physical, and very funny. More than three decades on, it remains very relevant and still has lessons to teach us from a previous time of shifting national identity.

The opportunity to direct a new work from John was one I could not pass by. The return of such an important writer to Scottish theatre, after a very successful career in film and television, is a major coup.

It is a rare thing for an audience to have the chance to see two plays by the same writer written more than 25 years apart. One with a young and fresh voice and the other by a mature and wise voice of experience.”

- Writer John McKay
- Director Liz Carruthers
- Angus Miller as Eck/Bob
- Liam Brennan as Willie/Eck

Traverse Theatre (10 Cambridge Street, EH1 2ED)

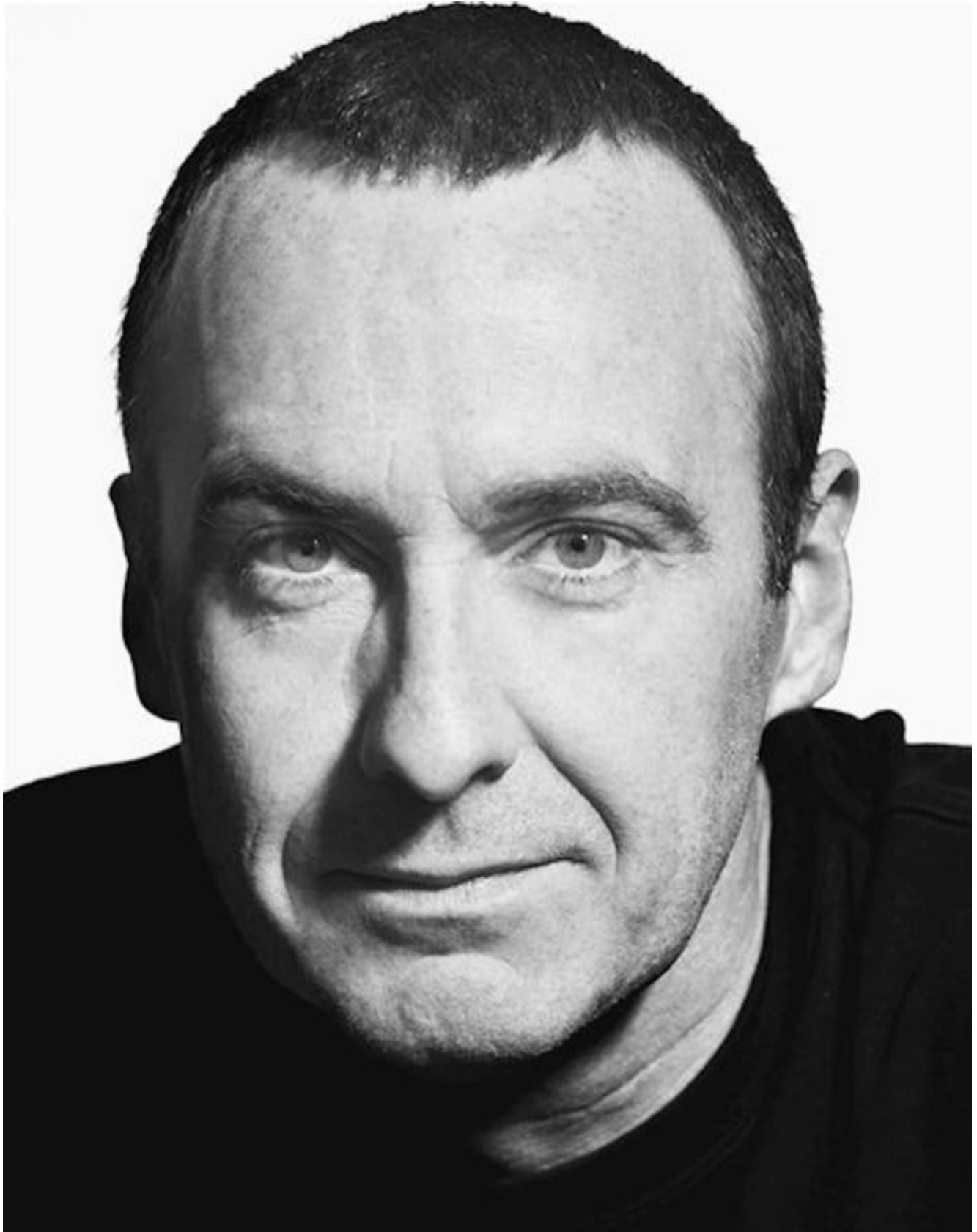
Wednesday 1 November – Saturday 4 November 2023

7.30pm | 2hrs 20mins (incl interval)

£14-£17

www.traverse.co.uk







John McKay COMPACT Pictures

