

Fringe 2024 – gritty dramas explore working class life in Scotland

Award-winning Saltire Sky Theatre has returned to the Edinburgh Fringe with fresh versions of two hard-hitting and critically acclaimed shows about working class life in Scotland today.

MANikin and **Bits 'N' Pieces** both address tough issues from an authentic and distinctively Scottish perspective.

Bits 'N' Pieces is about three friends – Tommy, Matty and Dougie – who are as close as brothers. When Matty is posted to Afghanistan with the RAF the boys want to him an unforgettable sendoff.

Denis Sulta? All night rave? Usher Hall? Too good to be true!

Immersing the audience in this final hurrah, the show becomes an assault on the senses featuring music from a resident live DJ, as it tracks the course of the night and all its implications...

The play tackles attitudes towards recreational drugs and the culture surrounding them.

Winner of the Best Scottish Production 2022 **Bits 'N' Pieces** reveals what it's like to come of age in the height of Scotland's drug-death crisis.

It takes an access-all-areas approach to working class life.

Saltire Sky collaborated with NHS support workers, and their partner charity Crew 2000, throughout the show's development to ensure the script is accurate and prevent the spread of false information.

A spokesperson from Crew 2000 said: *"We know that records for drug-related harms and deaths among young people have increased over the last few years, especially among young men and people with adverse childhood experiences."*

"Inequalities, stigma, and shame make it so much harder for people to access help early. We know early intervention to address inequality, evidence-based education and harm reduction without judgement are needed to change this, and we're glad to see Bits 'N' Pieces highlighting their importance."

MANikin is an equally powerful one-man show.

Set in the small town of Ellon, Aberdeenshire, it tells the story of Fraser Patterson as he wrestles with his mind and body in a struggle to play the bit-part role of The Big Guy.

Brutal playground initiation evolves into real-world tribulation in a society riddled with stigma and prejudice.

This is an unflinching portrait of a man's struggle with obesity and body image that demonstrates how these issues arise, escalate and become life threatening.

The British Obesity Society will provide free information packs to all audience members.

These will include vital resources and information related to male obesity and offer guidance on how to being a personal health and wellness journey.

Nathan Scott Dunn, Creative Director of Saltire Sky Theatre, said: *"Our goal with MANikin is to spark conversations and challenge perceptions about male obesity. We are incredibly indebted to British Obesity Society for supporting us."*

"This collaboration underscores the commitment of both organisations to not only entertain but also educate and empower audiences."



Jane DeVille-Almond, President of the British Obesity Society added: *"We are excited to collaborate with Saltire Sky Theatre to bring attention to the important issue of male obesity.*

"The arts have a profound ability to influence and inspire, and we believe this play will resonate deeply with many people."

The play was nominated as Best Scottish Production 2023 (Scottish Theatre Awards).

Saltire Sky won a Broadway baby Bobby Award for their production **1902** and an Off West End Award in the ShortFest category 2022.

- Both shows have been substantially developed for the 2024 Fringe – so even if you have seen them before, provide a new and compelling experience.
- Tickets from <https://www.edfringe.com/>