

Edinburgh 900 – talks and performances telling the history of theatre

As part of Edinburgh 900 the Scottish Storytelling Centre will host a weekend of talks and performances to tell the tale of Edinburgh's rich theatre history.

Edinburgh actor Michael Davison will perform his solo play, which he also wrote, called A Noble Clown. This work relates the story of one of Scotland's finest actors, Duncan Macrae, who died in 1967. Macrae starred in Scottish delights including Whisky Galore, Para Handy and Dr Finlay's Casebook. A Noble Clown celebrates the rebirth of Scottish theatre in the mid 20th century with excerpts of Macrae's finest roles.

Performer and playwright Michael Daviot said: "For 20 years as an amateur and 23 as a professional, Duncan Macrae dominated the Scottish stage. He co-founded Scottish Equity and loudly promoted Scottish Independence. Remembered mainly for his Hogmanay rendition of The Wee Cock Sparra and as the Pipe Major in Tunes of Glory, his greatest work was done on stage in roles such as Jamie the Saxt, Harry Magog and Michael Scott in plays by Robert McLellan, James Bridie and Alexander Reid. But he was also acclaimed in Macbeth, An Inspector Calls, Ionesco's Rhinoceros (with Laurence Olivier) and the original production of Joe Orton's Loot. He, and the works he found fame in, deserve to be rediscovered."

Donald Smith, Director, Scottish International Storytelling

Festival said: "A golden age of Scottish theatre talent fed into the Edinburgh International Festival and the Fringe, making it a special century in Edinburgh's 900 official years. Don't miss out on a weekend of drama backstage and out front."

A Noble Clown, will be performed twice, on Saturday 30 November at 7pm and on Sunday 1 December at 3.30pm, and will be accompanied by a pre-curtain talk with **Priscilla Barlow** author of Duncan Macrae's biography – *Wise Enough to Play the Fool*, speaking about Scotland's theatre scene during Macrae's lifetime.

Scottish Theatre History Weekend Programme

30 Nov – 1 Dec

All events take place at the Scottish Storytelling Centre, 43-45 High St, Edinburgh EH1 1SR All Talks are free but ticketed. *A Noble Clown* tickets are £12.

Sat 30 Nov

2pm: Walter Scott's National Dramas, Charles Mackay and the Theatre Royal

(with Helen Graham, author of *The Real Mackay: Walter Scott's Favourite Comedian*)

3:20pm: Restoring the King's Theatre

(with Charlotte di Corpo, Capital Theatres Trust)

4pm: Edinburgh's Theatres and the Edinburgh Festivals

(with David Pollock, author of *The Edinburgh Festival: A Biography* and Donald Smith, author of *Edinburgh: Our Storied Town*)

7pm: *A Noble Clown*, a new play about Duncan Macrae

(devised and performed by Michael Daviot)

Sun 1 Dec

1:30pm: Duncan Macrae: Writing his Life

(with Priscilla Barlow author of *Wise Enough to Play the Fool: A Biography of Duncan Macrae*, and Iain Wigglesworth)

3.30pm: *A Noble Clown*, a new play about Duncan Macrae

(devised and performed by Michael Daviot) £12

<https://sisf.online.red61.co.uk/event/913:5777>

The event is part of [Fair Saturday](#), a global mobilisation that aims to create a positive social impact every last Saturday of November, the day following Black Friday, the greatest expression of consumerism. Artists and cultural organisations from all over the world get together in a global festival of arts for change.

