

**[NATIONAL
THEATRE
OF SCOTLAND]**

MAGGIE & ME

Written by Damian Barr and James Ley
Adapted from the memoir by Damian Barr
Directed by Suba Das

DAMIAN BARR:

The play you're about to watch is about a boy who was saved by stories – a boy who hid in libraries, a boy who was hurt by the stories told about him, a boy who grew up and told stories for a living but was scared of his own. Sometimes still is.

Writing *Maggie & Me* was terrifying and liberating – growing up I was told nobody would believe me if I said what was really happening at home, if I told the truth about my bruises. I played down the poverty that left me hungry and ashamed of being hungry. I lied to everybody, including myself, about how I felt when Steven Carrington dazzled in *Dynasty*.

Scotland in the 1980s was a culture of shame – too often it still is. I carried these secrets until they became so heavy I couldn't carry them anymore. So, I put them all in a book. And now a play.

Writing that book was a thirtysomething man looking back at a boy. Writing the play is a fortysomething man looking back at his thirtysomething self, writing about that boy. A hall of mirrors - easy to get lost in. Happily, I was not alone and I'm grateful to our Director Suba Das, cowriter James Ley, our creative team, all at NTS and to the actors you're about to meet. And to my husband and family of choice for always believing me.

I wrote the line 'Stories are mirrors' for the DB character (still weird talking about myself as a character). I'm handing you a mirror - I hope you glimpse something of your story in it and that you look over your shoulder and see you are not alone. Everybody in this theatre has a story. And stories are for everybody.

JAMES LEY:

The thing that first attracted me to this story was injustice. The injustice that a queer identifying working class young person isn't able to stay safely and happily in their own community, but that they have to excel and exceed in order to escape. It was that injustice that I wanted to see on the stage and for us to confront it as a collective so that we can ask ourselves how we feel about it. Sadly this injustice is still very much alive today. But there is often a silver lining to this injustice, in that in the struggle to survive and escape, incredible people like Mark and Heather are brought into our lives to help us do it, transcending pain and transforming suffering into joy.

I am so happy that the real life Damian had Mark and Heather and I'm grateful to Damian for telling us his story, and letting me tell it with him. I'm in awe of Suba Das, the cast and creative team and everyone at National Theatre of Scotland for making this happen. I'd like to say a massive thank you to dramaturg Rosie Kellagher who shone a light for us in the darkness and helped us get into the light. I hope this story is inspiring to anyone who needs to escape. I hope it inspires you to either get out or to stay put. And that whichever you do, you are somehow able to joyfully take up space.

SUBA DAS:

There's something Damian said earlier this year that I know will stay with me forever: that his childhood had been lonely; that writing the memoir had been lonely, but that the journey of making this stage adaptation really hadn't been for him. I think that says so much about the power of art to repair and I really hope that a quality of healing reaches all of you reading this within the show you're about to watch; just as I hope care has been at the heart of the process that it's been such a responsibility to lead for the mighty National Theatre of Scotland.

We live daily through the reminders that while Margaret Thatcher left office and indeed this mortal realm; we've barely begun to address the faultline of fear, protectionism and greed that runs through our souls, corporations and governments, and which helped win this formidable woman (and her imagined inheritors) the huge support she called on.

And so, for me, Maggie sits at the heart of the most important question I've wanted to explore in this production: Margaret Thatcher destroyed working class communities, but what does this truly mean for those who weren't safe there anyway? Where do you fit once you've got out? And what responsibility do you have to those who come next?

Perhaps you'd fit within one of queerest, most outrageously talented teams I've ever convened. Script development has continued to the wire and way beyond; and I am so grateful to the most astonishing, committed and patient human beings both on and off-stage; who've given so much to help us find a shape to the frenzy of a life that has defied every expectation. It's been rigour and passion and silliness and generosity beyond anything I could hope for - heck it's made me decide to call Glasgow my new home.

While a day doesn't now go by where clickbait pundits paw through the lives and the very right to exist of our queer communities; we get so very few opportunities to tell our own stories, with our own peers. Even harder than this, queer stories are still largely seen as niche and self-reflexive; whereas it's held as entirely normal that our communities have something needful to learn from the heteronormative stories that crowd our stages and shelves and phones and papers.

Looking at where we find ourselves - more adrift, more angry, more violent; wandering in Maggie's long shadow - I do rather wonder if it's time to reverse that orthodoxy and insist that the songs we must sing are Dolly's; the stories we must read Alice Walker's; and that the plays we stage and restage and reimagine and reinvent *must* be our most queer, mischievous, rebellious. Who knows, that might just save the world.



Rehearsal photography by Tommy Ga-Ken Wan

CONTENT GUIDANCE

Age recommendation: 14+

Welcome to *Maggie & Me* and thank you for being here. Please be aware that this play features content you may find upsetting or challenging. Themes that are present include: suicide, neonatal loss, sexual exploitation, child abuse, violence, alcoholism, religious bigotry, and bullying. There is strong language throughout and one of the lead characters is repeatedly subjected to homophobic slurs.

If you are affected by any of the content of our show and feel you need some support, scan the QR code for a list of organisations that can help you:



CAST

Sam Angell (he/him)	Wee DB
Nicola Jo Cully (she/her)	Mum, Diana Athill, Posh Friend, Librarian, Bully, Backing Singer, Elaine, Miss Campbell, Floor Manager
Gary Lamont (he/him)	DB
Grant McIntyre (he/him)	Mark, Danny, TV Reporter, Backing Singer, Camera Operator, Majorette, Floor Manager, Party Guest
Beth Marshall (she/her)	Maggie Thatcher, Therapist
Douglas Rankine (he/him)	Dad, Mike, Logan, Johnny, Dodger, Majorette, Camera Operator, Sex Ed and PE Teacher, Floor Manager
Joanne Thomson (she/her)	Heather, TV Newsreader, TV Reporter, Posh Friend, Mary The Canary, Paddy, Jane, Camera Operator, Majorette, Party Guest

TEAM

Damian Barr (he/him)	Writer
Susan Bear (she/they)	Sound Designer
Leah Brown (she/her)	Lighting Trainee
Amy Cheskin (she/they)	BSL/E Performance Interpreter
Laura Clark (she/her)	Producer
Suba Das (he/him)	Director and Script Development
Marianne Forde (she/her)	Company Stage Manager
Sarah Forrester (she/her)	BSL/E Performance Interpreter
Reegan Graham (he/him)	Assistant Stage Manager
Paddy Hepplewhite (he/him)	Swing Technician
Cait Irvine (she/her)	Assistant Producer
Kyle Jessiman (he/they)	Technical Manager
Emilie Leger (she/her)	Deputy Stage Manager
Struan Leslie	Movement Director/ Associate Director
James Ley (he/him)	Writer
Tom Lightbody (he/him)	Lighting Programmer
Ruth Main (she/her)	Wardrobe Supervisor
Matt McBrier (he/him)	Assistant Director
Fraser Mackie (he/him)	Sound Supervisor
Kenneth MacLeod (he/him)	Set and Costume Designer
Nicki Martin-Harper (they/them)	Costume Technician
Emma-Jane McHenry	Audio Describer
Shona M'gadzah (she/her)	Lighting Trainee
Aoibheann Moriarty (they/them)	Video Supervisor
Ailsa Munro (she/her)	Costume Supervisor
Suzie Normand (she/her)	Production Manager
Orla O'Connor CDG	Casting Director
Alison Pendlowski	Captioner
Jonny Reed (he/him)	Lighting Supervisor
Tim Reid (he/him)	Video Designer
Jean Sangster	Voice Coach
Katharine Williams (they/them)	Lighting Designer

NTS is proud to be an organisation where all are welcome, and we've listed the pronouns of the cast and creative team in this play text as part of our ongoing commitment to use more inclusive language wherever we can as part of our LGBT Charter for Business Award.

ABOUT NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND

National Theatre of Scotland is a Theatre Without Walls. We don't have our own venue, instead, we're able to bring theatre to you wherever you are. From the biggest stages to the smallest community halls, we showcase Scottish culture at home and around the world. We have performed in airports and tower blocks, submarines and swimming pools, telling stories in ways you have never seen before.

We want to bring the joy of theatre to everyone. Since we were founded in 2006, we have produced hundreds of shows and toured all over the world. We strive to amplify the voices that need to be heard, tell the stories that need to be told and take work to wherever audiences are to be found.

Jackie Wylie (she/her) Artistic Director & Chief Executive
Brenna Hobson (she/her) Executive Director
Jane Spiers (she/her) Chair

To find out about the full team at National Theatre of Scotland please visit: nationaltheatrescotland.com/about/our-people or follow us on:



If you would like to give us feedback on the show, please email us at feedback@nationaltheatrescotland.com

SUPPORT NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND

National Theatre of Scotland productions grapple with the fundamental questions: What is National? What is Theatre? What is Scotland? We seek to make work that is relevant to and representative of everyone in contemporary Scotland. We want our audiences, artists and communities to recognise themselves in the stories we tell.

And we celebrate theatre as a creator of joy, empathy, education and social cohesion. If you'd like to support what we do, you can join our team of donors from just £30 per year.

Find out more:

Visit: nationaltheatrescotland.com/support

Contact: development@nationaltheatrescotland.com

THE COMPANY WOULD LIKE TO THANK:

Terrence Higgins Trust, Tron Theatre, Scottish Opera, Pitlochry Festival Theatre, Perth Theatre, Colin Barr, aidsquiltuk.org, Angela Lucas at Specsavers, Abi Lumb, Laura McGowan, Michelle Chambers, Wardrobe dept at Dundee Rep, Neil Haynes, Rosie Kelleghar, MCM, Clare Conville and Damian's family.

Images of public health AIDS campaigns, courtesy of Lothian Health Services Archive, Edinburgh University Library

"Nutmeg_51538" and "Turk_28143" footage courtesy Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory

Photograph of Manchester 1998 Section 28 protests courtesy of Peter J Walsh (peterjwalsh.com)

Eoin Carey (Cover Photography)