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Martin Travers

Scarfed for Life

second edition



B L O M B U R Y

Martin Travers
Scarfed for Life

Martin Travers

Martin Travers has been on the Playwrights' Studio, Scotland mentoring scheme, and on writing attachment with the National Theatre of Scotland.

In 2010 he worked with prisoners to create the script for the large-scale *Platform 2:10* project that culminated in four live performances in the chapel at HMP Barlinnie. *Platform 2:10* was part of Creative Scotland's ground-breaking Inspiring Change initiative. The script for *Platform 2:10* won a gold Koestler Trust Award in 2012.

In 2011, in partnership with Sense over Sectarianism, *Scarfed for Life* toured secondary schools with a cast of professional actors and members of the Citizens Theatre's Young Company. A new version of *Scarfed for Life* toured Scotland prisons in 2013.

In 2012 his play *Roman Bridge* was the centrepiece of the National Theatre of Scotland's *Reveal* season.

'eloquent and forceful'

**** *The Scotsman*

'a major new voice might just have been heard'

**** *The Herald*

'the greatest pleasure is Travers' muscular dialogue, at once flinty and naturalistic and richly lyrical, which marks him out as a new voice to relish in the future'

**** *The List*

His adaptation of Theresa Breslin's *Divided City* was performed at the Citizens Theatre in 2011 and 2012, and in South Lanarkshire and in Derry as part of the Derry/Londonderry City of Culture in 2013. *Divided City* was published by Bloomsbury as part of their Critical Scripts series.

Martin's latest play *Summer Rape Winter Soup* is in development with the Playwrights' Studio, Scotland.

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Sense over Sectarianism

Sense over Sectarianism (SOS) is a partnership between Glasgow City Council, Rangers and Celtic Football Clubs, the Church of Scotland, the Catholic Archdiocese in Glasgow, and Nil by Mouth, and sits within Glasgow City Council Education Services Department. As an organisation, SOS delivers and facilitates anti-sectarian work across the network of Glasgow schools, and provides funding and support to community groups from both Glasgow and the ‘travel to Glasgow’ region of Scotland.

This play is a direct result of work commissioned by SOS in 2011 to explore in what ways sectarianism and prejudice affects young people today, and to raise the issue of sectarianism in local communities.

When *Scarfed for Life* toured to Scottish Prisons in 2013, SOS hosted group debate and discussion after each performance and we were pleased to see how a play originally written for teenagers also connected on many levels with adults.

SOS employs a number of resources to facilitate our work and this play. *Scarfed for Life* is the latest of these vehicles to be used as a tool to engage and educate people about the issue of sectarian behaviour, and the unacceptable football-related behaviour which is often identified and experienced alongside sectarianism. A lesson pack to accompany the play has been written and developed by SOS.

For free resources to support the play from Sense over Sectarianism: www.glasgow.gov.uk/senseoversectarianism

Introduction to Resources

The idea behind *Scarfed for Life* was to create a play that reflected how young Glaswegians felt they were affected by issues of discrimination and prejudice in their city. Sixteen- and seventeen-year-old pupils from four Glasgow Secondary schools were involved in consultation workshops I led with the playwright Martin Travers and artist Rachel Mimiec, and much of the content of the play comes directly from that consultation process.

Initially, the play toured Glasgow secondary schools and each performance was followed by a question-and-answer session. These discussions were lively and good-humoured, and prompted questions from the audience to the cast regarding how they felt about playing their characters, as well as debate about the issues in the play and how they related to the young audience members' lives – especially sectarianism.

The exercises accompanying the play in this edition are designed to help facilitate discussions in a workshop/classroom setting. We have identified scenes which we think will be useful to explore and each exercise can be used in isolation or alongside each other. They focus on the issues our young people said mattered to them when asked about their experience of discrimination and prejudice. Please feel free to use them and develop them to suit your class/group's needs and please everyone have fun with acting the scenes out!

More recently, I updated the original exercises with Elly Goodman from the Citizens' Learning team for a series of Continuing Professional Development events that accompanied the Citizens Theatre's Scottish prisons tour of *Scarfed for Life*.

Kate Black, Director of original schools production

Introduction

In June 2011, working in partnership with Sense over Sectarianism, the Citizens Theatre worked with eighty young people from four Glasgow schools to find out what they thought about the ongoing problem of sectarianism in society and how it affected their lives. The clear message from the young people was that they had had enough of sectarian behaviour and that adults were the main cause of it in their lives. This response became a central part of the story of the play.

Scarfed for Life was originally performed by members of the Citizens Theatre's Young Company with two professional actors. It played to 900 young people and adults in schools across Glasgow.

This script has been adapted for adults, and this new version of the play was performed in Scottish prisons in March 2013 as part of a Scottish Prison Service Tackling Sectarianism Week.

The publication of the script coincides with performances in nine West of Scotland prisons. After each performance debate is encouraged with the audience about the issues raised in the play. I hope seeing or reading the play gets you talking about the issues too.

John's poem

I met John when he was doing a radio interview with the *Scarfed for Life* cast and have since worked with him on *What's the Story?*, a Citizens Theatre and Motherwell College writing project. When I first read this poem I found it really powerful. It was almost like I could feel the regret coming off the page and wanted many more people to read it. That's why I was delighted when John allowed us to include it here.

Martin Travers