

## PRESS RELEASE

THEATRE (Comedy / New writing)

The Royal Court Theatre in association with Farnham Maltings presents:

# MANWATCHING

Written by an anonymous woman | Performed by an unprepared man

Directed by Lucy Morrison

**Paines Plough's ROUNDABOUT @ SUMMERHALL, 4 – 27 (not 8, 13 – 19, 22) August,  
19.25 (20.20)19.25 (20.20)**

“This is a rare voice – despite the male body delivering it – that deserves to be heard” ★★★★★ The Telegraph

Comedians Edward Aczel, Eshaan Akbar, Dan Antopolski, Mitch Benn, Markus Birdman, Jason Byrne, Keith Farnan, Stuart Goldsmith, Darren Harriott, Pete Johansson, Tony Law, Andrew Maxwell, Simon Munnery, Andrew O'Neill and Mark Watson will be performing *MANWATCHING* at Paines Plough's ROUNDABOUT @ SUMMERHALL at Edinburgh Festival Fringe this August.

*MANWATCHING* is a funny and frank insight into heterosexual female desire, read out loud by a man. The show begins with a male comedian being given a script they have never seen before. They read the script out loud, sight unseen, in front of an audience. This is a show about what one woman thinks about when she thinks about sex with men. Written by an anonymous woman and performed by an unprepared man, *MANWATCHING* is directed by Royal Court Associate Director Lucy Morrison with Lighting Design by Jamie Spirito.

Commenting on the project the anonymous female writer states;

“I have been thinking about what it means to be objectified, and whether or not that is really tied to desire or power. Although men are objectified by other men, I was at a loss to think of many examples of men being objectified by women, and the examples I could think of were quite complicated - frequently involving the man's profession rather than appearance (in *Sex and the City*, for example, men are usually referred to in shorthand by whatever job it is they do rather than how they look or act), or their dominance was the source of objectification. Even though many women desire men, the most basic elements of that desire seemed oddly unexplored.

So I thought, who better to give the words of a woman desiring men to, than the voice of a man, as it's so much more comfortable and familiar for us to hear about desire through the male perspective?”

**Friday 4 August:** Tony Law

**Saturday 5 August:** Andrew Maxwell

**Sunday 6 August:** Keith Farnan

**Monday 7 August :** Edward Aczel

**Wednesday 9 August:** Mitch Benn

**Thursday 10 August:** Pete Johansson

**Friday 11 August:** Stuart Goldsmith

**Saturday 12 August:** Jason Byrne

**Sunday 20 August:** Mark Watson

**Monday 21 August:** Darren Harriot

**Wednesday 23 August:** Dan Antopolski

**Thursday 24 August:** Markus Birdman

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**Friday 25 August:** Eshaan Akbar

**Saturday 26 August:** Simon Munnery

**Sunday 27 August:** Andrew O'Neill

*MANWATCHING* ran from 10 – 20 May 2017 in the Jerwood Theatre Upstairs before going on tour to The MAC, Belfast selling out at both venues. Previous comedians include Will Adamsdale, Rob Beckett, Danny Brown, Adam Buxton, Nick Frost, Phill Jupitus, Miles Jupp, Funmbi Omotayo, John-Luke Roberts, Sunil Patel, Romesh Ranganathan, Arthur Smith, Mark Thomas, Thom Tuck, Phil Wang and Liam Williams. Tommy Tiernan also performed it at The MAC, Belfast.

It will be performed at Latitude Festival on 14 July by Seann Walsh before the run at Paines Plough Roundabout @ Summerhall, Edinburgh 4 - 27 August 2017.

*MANWATCHING* was first presented as a work-in-progress by the Royal Court and Paines Plough as part of the EARLIER/LATER performances at Roundabout @ Summerhall at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2015. The Edinburgh run is in association with Farnham Maltings.

@royalcourt | #MANWATCHING | [www.royalcourttheatre.com](http://www.royalcourttheatre.com)

**Running Time:** 55 minutes | **Suitable for ages** 16 + (Contains strong language)

## Company Information

The anonymous woman's work includes a lot of stuff that can't be disclosed as she chooses to remain anonymous.

## **Lucy Morrison (Creative Director)**

For the Royal Court: *Plaques & Tangles*, *Live Lunch Series*, *Who Cares*, *Pests*, *Product* (& Traverse/European tour). Other theatre includes: *Billy the Girl*, *This Wide Night* (Clean Break/Soho); *Little on the Inside* (Clean Break/Almeida/Latitude); *it felt empty when the heart went at first but it is alright now* (Clean Break/Arcola); *Fatal Light*, *Doris Day* (Soho). Lucy is Associate Director at the Royal Court.

## Listings information

### **Paines Plough's ROUNDABOUT @ SUMMERHALL, Summerhall Place, Edinburgh, EH9 1PL**

4 – 27 (not 8, 13 – 19, 22) Aug, 19.25 (20.20)

Preview 4 Aug: £9

5 – 6, 9 – 10, 21, 23 – 24 Aug: £15 (£10 concs)

7, 11 – 12, 20, 25 – 27 Aug: £17 (£12 concs)

[www.summerhall.co.uk](http://www.summerhall.co.uk) | 0131 560 1580

The performance on 12 August will be BSL signed.

## Previews

14 July            Latitude Festival (Performed by Seann Walsh)

## Notes to editors

### **Biographies:**

**Edward Aczel** | [www.edwardaczcel.co.uk](http://www.edwardaczcel.co.uk)

**Press Contact:** Emma at Mobius 020 3195 6269 [emma@mobiusindustries.com](mailto:emma@mobiusindustries.com)

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Edward has been a comedian and actor for 10 years. Prior to that he worked in a humdrum office before running away to the stage. He is known for his shambolic anti comedy style and has won the Malcom Hardee Award and was runner up in the BBC New Comedy Awards. 2017 marks his eighth solo show on the fringe and in 2015 he also performed in the award-winning *Waiting for Gaddot* with Richard Gadd. *'Aczel is more of a verbal clown: he presents himself as an informed idiot – a man who has read a lot of books on a lot of subjects but understood none of them'* The Guardian

**Eshaan Akbar** | [www.eshaanakbar.com](http://www.eshaanakbar.com)

A winner of the Piccadilly Comedy Club New Comedian of the Year 2016, Eshaan has been in the finals of other prestigious competitions, including So You Think You're Funny 2014 and Laughing Horse 2014. He has performed across the UK and in Germany and Bangladesh. In 2016, he supported Dane Baptiste on his UK tour. His professional career has taken him from private banking through to corporate communications via a career in local government public policy. He has previously written for The Guardian, The Times online, The Observer New Review and The Huffington Post UK. He is a member of the UK Speechwriters Guild and Fellow of the RSA. *'So slick, I could have been watching a Live at the Apollo set'* Evening Standard

**Dan Antopolski** | [www.danantopolski.com](http://www.danantopolski.com)

Dan is a stand-up and actor. He is a three-time Edinburgh Comedy Award nominee and Dave's Funniest Joke of the Fringe Award winner. He's been seen and heard regularly across television and his own BBC Radio Four series. He is at the Fringe this year with his eighth solo stand-up hour - *Return of the Dan Antopolski* - about change, pain, honour and gain. *'Some of the best gags I've ever heard'* ★★★★★ The Scotsman

**Mitch Benn** | [www.mitchbenn.com](http://www.mitchbenn.com)

Described by The Times as "the country's leading musical satirist", Mitch was a regular contributor to BBC Radio 4's The Now Show for more than a decade. His critically acclaimed Edinburgh Show *Mitch Benn Is The 37th Beatle* was broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in 2014 and, following on from its success, a further three specials were commissioned on music icons Bob Dylan, David Bowie and Elvis. *'Well crafted, well sung, his songs are just plain funny'* The Guardian

**Markus Birdman** | [www.markusbirdman.co.uk](http://www.markusbirdman.co.uk)

Markus is one of British comedy's most experienced and well-travelled performers. In demand all over the UK and abroad, Markus is a veteran of the Edinburgh Fringe with many solo shows to his credit and headliner status at all the top clubs. He's performed at the Melbourne, Adelaide, and Perth Comedy Festivals and was nominated by the New Zealand Comedy Guild for Best International Guest. His international gig list would give Michael Palin a run for his money, with shows in Singapore, The Netherlands, Qatar, Bahrain, Austria, Spain, France, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Finland, Cyprus and India to name a few. Not to be missed, catch him in the UK before he jets off again. *'Delightfully comic. Controversial, personal and wickedly punchy.'* The List

**Jason Byrne** | [www.jasonbyrne.ie](http://www.jasonbyrne.ie)

Jason's style is a free-wheeling, high energy brand of lunacy that takes the audience on a helter-skelter tour of his offbeat mind, helped along by his curious array of bizarre props. He has performed all over the world and has an ever-growing international following. *'The outright king of live comedy'* The Times.

**Keith Farnan** | [www.keithfarnan.com](http://www.keithfarnan.com)

Having appeared on *Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow*, Montreal's *Just for Laughs*, Showtime's *Live from Amsterdam* as well as *Money, Money, Money*, his own stand-up documentary for RTE, Keith Farnan continues

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to perform his unique shows with their mixture of satire and insight at festivals across the world. *'Artful, satirical...with a lightness of touch and a hefty helping of roguish Celtic charm'* Sunday Times

**Stuart Goldsmith** | [www.comedianscomedian.com](http://www.comedianscomedian.com)

Stuart is an internationally award-winning comedian, writer, podcaster and host. With a reputation for smart, accessible stand-up, Stuart's enthusiasm and natural charm conceal a quick wit and fearlessness honed by his early career as a street performer. In addition to his stand-up credentials, recent years have seen Stuart build a reputation as a highly skilled interviewer and engaging host. His always insightful and often inspiring The Comedian's Comedian podcast shines a light on the darkest creative secrets of his fellow comics, and is much beloved by comedy fans, performers and industry alike. Previous guests include Russell Brand, Jimmy Carr, Tim Minchin, Russell Howard, Sarah Millican, Al Murray, Ross Noble, Tim Vine and Jo Brand. *'A charming, expert stand-up'* Sunday Times

**Darren Harriott** is one of the most exciting up-and-coming comedians on the circuit. Over the last year, he has appeared on *Russell Howard's Stand Up Central*, supporting Jimmy Carr. He also provided tour support for Funmbi Omotayo on his national tour. Darren then headed to the Edinburgh Festival 2016, as part of the prestigious Pleasance Reserve, where he featured on the comedy show, *BBC Radio 4 Extra Stands Up*. *'Darren Harriott got some of the biggest laughs of the night... Harriott, is definitely going to make an impact.'* Bruce Dessau

**Pete Johansson** | [www.petejohansson.com](http://www.petejohansson.com)

Pete is as sharp, confident and relaxed as you might expect of a top-notch half Canadian, half American comic. A big US favourite after a barnstorming gig at Montreal's bigwig Just For Laughs Festival. *'Supremely entertaining'* The Independent

**Tony Law** | [www.mrtonylaw.com](http://www.mrtonylaw.com)

Tony is a three-time Chortle Award winner, Amused Moose Best Show winner and Fosters Edinburgh Comedy Award nominee. His extensive TV and radio credits include: *Have I Got News For You* (BBC One), *The Alternative Comedy Experience* (Comedy Central), *8 Out Of 10 Cats* (Channel 4), *Celebrity Mastermind* (BBC One), *Celebrity Squares* (ITV) *Never Mind The Buzzcocks* (BBC Two), *Heading Out* (BBC Two), *The Culture Show* (BBC Two), *Charlie Brooker's Weekly Wipe* (BBC Two), *Edinburgh Nights* (BBC Two), *Tony Law's Surreal Guide To Surreal Comedy* (Radio 4 Extra), *Loose Ends* and *Infinite Monkey Cage* (Radio 4). *'Form-busting and hugely enjoyable'* The Times. *"Imagine if Harry Potter was a Canadian non-wizard who writes very funny jokes with his big hands, that's Tony Law"* – Sean Lock

**Andrew Maxwell** | [www.andrewmaxwellcomedian.com](http://www.andrewmaxwellcomedian.com)

Renowned for his cutting edge comedy and intrepid social commentary, Andrew is also the recognisable voice of MTV's hit show *Ex On The Beach*, which is now in its sixth series. As seen on *Live At The Apollo* (BBC One), *Have I Got News For You* (BBC One), *Celebrity Juice* (ITV2) and *Mock The Week* (BBC Two). He is also the voice of *Get Your Tats Out: Kavos Inc* (Channel 5). *'One of the most significant comedians working in the country today'* The Independent

**Simon Munnery** | [www.simonmunnery.com](http://www.simonmunnery.com)

Simon is a multi-award-winning stand-up comedian, performing at this year's Fringe for his 31st year. He's a Sony Radio Award winner, Chortle Award winner, British Comedy Award nominee and Edinburgh Comedy Award nominee. *'An annual must-see for any comedy connoisseur'* The Guardian

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**Andrew O'Neill** | [www.andrewoneill.co.uk](http://www.andrewoneill.co.uk)

Andrew's combination of sci-fi twists on real life, long hair and impeccable manners have led him to being revered on the London comedy circuit. Activist, misanthrope and transvestite waxes comical about everything. *'One of the funniest comedians on the circuit at the moment... hitting new heights of comedic brilliance'* Time Out

**Mark Watson** | [www.markwatsonthecomedian.com](http://www.markwatsonthecomedian.com)

Edinburgh Festival Award Winner and Time Out Critic's Choice, Mark Watson is one of the most talked-about British comedians to emerge in recent years. Mark has been the face of shows such as *BBC Four's We Need Answers* and *BBC Radio 4's Mark Watson Makes The World Substantially Better*. He has also appeared on *Mock The Week*, *Celebrity Pointless*, *Have I Got News For You*, *Would I Lie To You?*, *Live At The Apollo* and *Channel 4's Comedy Gala*. He is currently recording another series of his hit Radio 4 show *Mark Watson Talks A Bit About Life*. Not only a Stand-Up, Mark has written six novels: *Bullet Points* (2004), *A Light-Hearted Look At Murder* (2007), *Eleven* (2010), *The Knot* (2012), *Hotel Alpha* (2014), and *The Place That Didn't Exist* (2016). *'Terrifyingly funny'* The Times

**The Royal Court Theatre** is the writers' theatre. It is the leading force in world theatre for energetically cultivating writers - undiscovered, emerging and established. Through the writers, the Royal Court is at the forefront of creating restless, alert, provocative theatre about now. We open our doors to the unheard voices and free thinkers that, through their writing, change our way of seeing. Over 120,000 people visit the Royal Court in Sloane Square, London, each year and many thousands more see our work elsewhere through transfers to the West End and New York, UK and international tours, digital platforms, our residencies across London, and our site-specific work. Through all our work we strive to inspire audiences and influence future writers with radical thinking and provocative discussion.

The Royal Court's extensive development activity encompasses a diverse range of writers and artists and includes an ongoing programme of writers' attachments, readings, workshops and playwriting groups. Twenty years of the International Department's pioneering work around the world means the Royal Court has relationships with writers on every continent.

Within the past sixty years, John Osborne, Samuel Beckett, Arnold Wesker, Ann Jellicoe, Howard Brenton, David Hare have started their careers at the Court. Many others including Caryl Churchill, Athol Fugard, Mark Ravenhill, Simon Stephens, Debbie Tucker Green, Sarah Kane; and, more recently, Lucy Kirkwood, Nick Payne, Penelope Skinner and Alistair McDowall, have followed. The Royal Court has produced many iconic plays from Laura Wade's *Posh* to Jez Butterworth's *Jerusalem* and Martin McDonagh's *Hangmen*.

Royal Court plays from every decade are now performed on stage and taught in classrooms and universities across the globe. It is because of this commitment to the writer that we believe there is no more important theatre in the world than the Royal Court.

[www.royalcourttheatre.com](http://www.royalcourttheatre.com)

**Farnham Maltings** is a cultural organisation that works with artists and communities of South East England to encourage the most people to make the best art they can. We believe that the arts help us to make sense of the world, bring people together and articulate new ideas. By encouraging people to participate in the arts, as audiences and makers, we will foster a healthier, happier and safer contemporary Britain.

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We are curious about how we make and build an audience for contemporary theatre. We support a network of 180 venues across the region, organise a bi-annual showcase of new English performance for an international audience, produce a stable of independent theatre companies and are working to diversify the makers and audience for the arts. Farnham Maltings is a registered charity (no 305034) supported by Arts Council England and Waverly Borough Council.

[www.farnhammaltings.com](http://www.farnhammaltings.com)

**Paines Plough** is the UK's national theatre of new plays. We commission and produce the best playwrights and tour their plays far and wide. Since 1974 we have produced more than 150 new plays by seminal writers such as Abi Morgan, Sarah Kane, Mark Ravenhill, David Harrower, Enda Walsh, Simon Stephens and Mike Bartlett. We've toured those plays to hundreds of places – from Manchester to Moscow to Maidenhead - in spaces ranging from the 1,500 seat Barbican to a 100-seat arts centre in Luton; at music festivals, in nightclubs, Off-Broadway and in our very own award-winning pop-up theatre Roundabout. [www.painesplough.com/roundabout](http://www.painesplough.com/roundabout)

**Roundabout** is the world's first pop-up, plug-and-play theatre. It flat packs into a lorry and pops up all over the country in theatres, school halls, warehouses, sports centres, car parks and fields. We created Roundabout because we're passionate about new plays and we want as many people as possible to be able to see them. Roundabout means we can tour further and wider than ever before. For the next decade Roundabout will travel the length and breadth of the UK bringing the nation's best playwrights and a thrilling theatrical experience to audiences everywhere. [www.painesplough.com](http://www.painesplough.com)