

Boost for emerging Scottish Playwrights' programme

Following the successful pilot in 2011 of its all-encompassing mentoring programme for emerging Scottish playwrights, Siege Perilous today announce a number of exciting developments to increase its support to this community.

The programme, now named The Avalon Mentorship, will again offer support for up to six new playwrights. Each will receive one-to-one mentoring to develop their writing skills from the company's experienced Writer-in-Residence and playwright Caroline Dunford, be guided on the creative process from the company's Artistic Director Andy Corelli, and learn about the operational aspects of staging a show from its Producer Tina Finch. There are two significant enhancements to boost the value of the programme even further. The first is that up to 6 of the playwrights will have an in-depth scene workshop of their final script with Andy and a team of professional actors. Secondly, up to 3 of the final pieces of work will be offered a full-scale professional production for 2013/14.

The company is also thrilled to announce that its next show in October will be one of the mentees from its inaugural programme. Glasgow-based John C. Gilmour will see a full length production of 'Farmhouse', the script he developed through the programme, performed at Malmaison, Edinburgh in October.

Sharing his views about the programme, John said "Quite simply I would never have finished this play without the support and encouragement of the playwriting programme. It gave me confidence but it was an exacting process which asked you to do your very best. As a result I felt that it opened a door for me. To have your work staged is wonderful of course, but the true value of the programme for me was that I discovered that I could write".

When the programme was trial launched in October 2011, the company was delighted to receive 68 submissions. Caroline Dunford commented "We debated long and hard about which scripts to work with as much of the work was to a very high standard. I am delighted that Siege Perilous is continuing its commitment to the programme and can't wait to start working with them again".

The Avalon Mentorship will be open for submissions for a 2-week period from 10th September, and any Scotland-based playwright will be eligible to apply. The playwright does not have to have been previously produced. The script should not have been professionally performed and needs to be an exclusive submission to this programme. We are delighted to again be collaborating with McDonald Road Library where the programme will be delivered. Full details of the programme can be found at www.siegeperilous.co.uk.

ENDS

Notes to editors

1) Press contact: Tina Finch 07720 288620, tinaf@siegeperilous.co.uk

2) Siege Perilous is a professional theatre production company based in Leith, Edinburgh. It was founded in London in 2000 by Artistic Director Andy Corelli and Producer Tina Finch. The overall aim of the company is to champion new writing from new writers. Over the past 5 years, the company has demonstrated its passion and commitment to theatre, and its aim. Funded by income from ticket sales, personal contributions and a grant from Arts & Business, it has staged 14 productions from 9 new playwrights. It had a 2-year residency at a central Edinburgh venue, has appeared at Edinburgh's Festival Fringe five times, completed a UK tour and collaborated with partners including Pendragon Associates and the de Marco European Art Foundation. Its productions have been staged in a variety of spaces including a nightclub, an unused retail space, a hotel, a bar and an open air production at Craigcrook Castle. It received an Arts and Business Award in 2010. For more information about Siege Perilous, go to www.siegeperilous.co.uk.

3) Caroline Dunford is best selling author of 'How to Survive the Terrible Twos: Diary of a Mother Under Siege' as well as crime series, The Euphemia Martins Mysteries. She is a multi-produced playwright of stage and educational work and was selected to participate in the Scottish Book Trust's "Screen Lab". She was one of the writers in the sell-out series of short plays, Ten, at the Traverse Theatre. She has been a regular contributor to the EIBF since 2007. From autumn 2012, she will introduce a new Creative Writing programme to Edinburgh's Office of Lifelong Learning. She has 15 years experience of running workshops and mentoring, and as an Advanced Psychotherapist brings a strong insight into human nature to her work. She has won mentorships with both the Playwrights Studio Scotland and The Scottish Book Trust, and is a member of the Scottish Playwrights Society and Crime Writers Association. Caroline can be contacted direct to Caroline.dunford@gmail.com. More information can be found on www.carolinedunford.com

4) McDonald Road Library was built as a benefaction from Thomas Nelson II, the nineteenth-century Throsk-born printer and publisher. It is one of four Nelson Halls in various parts of Central Edinburgh. It stands on part of a 5-acre site occupied in 1763 by the Physic Garden of the University before it moved to Inverleith to become the Botanic Garden. Sensitively refurbished in 2003, McDonald Road Library today hosts a wide range of events, classes and activities and offers up-to-date facilities such as wi-fi and internet access.

5) Interviews can be arranged with Caroline Dunford, Andy Corelli or Tina Finch on request.