

PRESS RELEASE
Immediate Release
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**New play *Men Don't Talk* by Clare Prenton
explores masculinity, mental health and Men's Sheds,
as part of Scottish tour this Autumn**

**Produced by Genesis Theatre Productions,
Men Don't Talk is part of the Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival,
presented in partnership with Scottish Men's Shed Association and Luminare**

This Autumn, new theatre company Genesis Theatre Productions are proud to present UK-based theatre maker Clare Prenton's new play *Men Don't Talk* - a moving and poignant production that explores that very myth, as part of a Scottish tour that runs from Friday 18 October - Tuesday 19 November 2024.

Inspired by real men's stories, *Men Don't Talk* was written by Prenton following cups of tea, cake and spirited conversations with real 'shedders' who participate in community workshops, organised and run by volunteers from men's sheds across Scotland.

Designed to provide opportunities to work together in a way that contributes to community development, the overall aim of men's sheds is to support men coming together in a way that impacts positively on their health, wellbeing and education.

The moving production will convert community spaces and theatre spaces into fictional men's sheds to address the importance of people coming together to talk about their emotions, feelings, trials and tribulations to promote positive masculinity.

Alongside being spotlighted in Scottish Parliament at Holyrood, *Men Don't Talk* will tour to Mull, Cumbernauld, the Borders, Peebles, Aberdeen, Orkney, Aberdeenshire, Paisley, Edinburgh and Cromarty.

Starring stalwarts of Scottish theatre, actor Billy Mack is joined alongside Dougal Lee and Greg Powrie in a production that sees three men find banter, bird boxes and biscuits within a fictional men's shed that celebrates companionship, camaraderie ... and custard creams.

Presented as part of Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival, in partnership with Scottish Men's Shed Association and Luminare, *Men Don't Talk* has been praised in the Scottish Parliament for promoting the benefits of this growing mental health and wellbeing movement.

This comes in the same year as the Scottish Government held a vital round table with practitioners and leaders who are working to promote positive masculinity in their broader approach to achieving equality across Scotland's communities.

Talking about *Men Don't Talk*, writer and director Clare Prenton, said:

'It's really gratifying and exciting to see a play that began with chats over a cuppa in my local Men's Shed grow into a full length play, touring Scotland. The message it aims to convey is that it's good for men to talk, and there are spaces for that across the shed network.'

It's been a privilege to partner with Scottish Men's Shed Association (SMSA), Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival (SMHAF) and Luminate to get this important message out there. If theatre can play a part in helping one man cross a threshold into a shed, then the play has played its small part in putting men's health, wellbeing and suicide prevention in the cultural conversation.'

Producer of Men Don't Talk and Founder of Genesis Theatre Productions Michelle McKay, added:

'I am delighted that the first show produced by Genesis Theatre Productions is such an important one. With the high rates of male suicides in Scotland, the tour aims to highlight the importance of expressing emotions, whilst educating, entertaining and raising awareness of spaces like Men's Sheds.'

Scottish Men's Sheds Association (SMSA) Chief Executive Officer Jason Schroeder said:

'As Scotland's largest and most successful men's health and wellbeing charity, the SMSA supports the play *Men Don't Talk* wholeheartedly, and we encourage everyone to see the play to get a deeper understanding about what they can do to support themselves and loved ones.'

To help create and raise the awareness of the plight men have found themselves in with the 'strong and silent' type generic cultural model, this play highlights the inherited situation and, more importantly, a new pathway now available through Scottish Men's Sheds to support the healthy change so desperately required for men in Scotland.'

Andrew Eaton Lewis of Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival's said:

'We're delighted to include the Scottish tour of *Men Don't Talk*, as part of Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival's 2024 programme. Our festival theme this year is 'In/Visible', and we're interested in exploring which aspects of our mental health we keep hidden.'

Clare Prenton's play, in which a group of men defy the stigma surrounding male mental health to open up about difficult and painful experiences, is an important and valuable part of that conversation.'

Developed by Producer Michelle McKay under her new company Genesis Theatre Productions, *Men Don't Talk* is supported by Creative Scotland Touring Fund and An Tobar and Mull Theatre.

To find out the full details and touring information for Men Don't Talk, visit:

www.genesistheatreproductions.co.uk

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Notes to Editors:**Contact:**

For more information, please contact Joy Parkinson, PR on:
joy_parkinson@hotmail.com / (+44) 7780310614

A press pack can be [found here](#)

Creative Credits:

Writer: Clare Prenton
Director: Clare Prenton
Cast: Billy Mack
Dougall Lee
Greg Powrie
Designer: Frances Collier
Sound Design: John Kielty
Lighting Design: Kate Bonney
Producer: Michelle McKay
PR: Joy Parkinson

Tour Dates, 2024 with more to be announced:

Friday 18 Oct: An Tobar and Mull Theatre, Isle Of Mull
Saturday 19 Oct: Bunessan, Isle of Mull
Wednesday 23 Oct: The Lantern Theatre, Cumbernauld
Friday 25 Oct: Heart of Hawick, Borders
Saturday 26 Oct: Eastgate Theatre, Peebles
Tuesday 29 Oct: Scottish Parliament, Holyrood
Wednesday 30 Oct: The Lemon Tree, Aberdeen
Saturday 2 Nov: Flotta, Orkney
Sunday 3 Nov: Burray, Orkney
Tuesday 5 Nov: Stenness, Orkney
Friday 8 Nov: The Barn, Aberdeenshire
Thursday 14 Nov: Paisley Arts Centre, Paisley

Saturday 16 -Sunday 17 Nov: The Scottish Storytelling Centre, Edinburgh

Tuesday 19 Nov: Victoria Hall, Cromarty

Partners and Supporters:

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Find your local Scottish Men's Shed on our 'Find a Shed' map on the SMSA website at <https://scottishmsa.org.uk/find-a-shed> and join the Association for free to get connected.

This project has been funded and supported by The National Lottery through Creative Scotland, and An Tobar & Mull Theatre.

Creative Scotland is the public body that supports culture and creativity across all parts of Scotland, distributing funding provided by the Scottish Government and The National Lottery. Further information at creativescotland.com.

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