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*'Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill'*

# Macbeth

by William Shakespeare

THE  
gallery  
STUDIO  
THEATRE

*'Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill'*

# Macbeth

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In 1984 on our way to holiday in Scotland, my then partner and I stopped just outside Alnwick for a refreshment break. In response to a call of nature I clambered over a five bar gate into an area of woodland and thick undergrowth. Once comfortable, I was delighted to discover a few feet off, the pale blue petals of a giant harebell. Kneeling to admire, I gazed up and saw, some feet away poking through brambles, a stone monument in the form of a column surmounted by a cross, perhaps nine or ten feet high. The inscription recorded the death of Malcolm 111 King of Scotland, killed at the Battle of Alnwick, 1093. If you go on line you will be pleased to see, as was I that this site has now been cleared – although nothing will deprive me of the excitement I felt when making that bosky discovery.

This memory stayed with me over the years and brought immediacy to Shakespeare's play. Of course I researched Malcolm and Macbeth and history's records; it makes for fascinating reading but better forgotten when you approach Shakespeare's play. However I was determined to set the play in its historical era. With many notable exceptions I have so often been exasperated by the setting of his plays in a contemporary society in order to 'make the play more relevant'. I hope that in setting this production in the 11th century, the central themes of the play are nonetheless compelling.

Macbeth is the first play I saw at the home of The Royal Shakespeare Company in 1962 with Eric Porter and Irene Worth in the lead rôles. In 1969, recently out of drama school, I played Caithness at the Liverpool Playhouse directed by Dick Tuckey. I have since seen many versions on stage and on screen.

This is the first time I have directed it. Indeed the first time I have directed one of the Shakespeare tragedies.

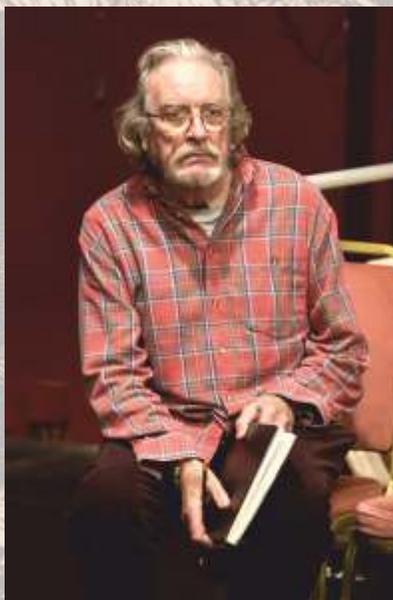
I will not dwell on the issue of what constitutes a tragedy, as there are too many elements to be considered here. Perhaps rather simplistically I elected, personally to focus upon the "exhibiting of the downfall of a good man". And in this case, who or what is responsible for that downfall? At the time of writing I am still discussing this with my Macbeth. Is it ambition, greed for power, innate evil, the supernatural? (and remember these 'witches' are 'weird sisters'- telling what will happen, not causing to happen); and what is Lady Macbeth's role in this? Perhaps this production will decide you one way or the other, or perhaps leave you questioning.

Covid and the associated periods of lockdown, whilst causing untold pain, distress, consternation and disruption to so many lives and organisations, impacted upon this production, which had been within two weeks of opening in March 2020; but it has survived, albeit with many changes of cast and creative contributors. *Ars longa, vita brevis.*

I am grateful for the input of many people to this production and for fear of offending I will not name them all here. Thank you to the Wolsey Theatre Club for enabling me to go to one of the best costumiers and facilitate my decision to set the piece in the 11th century. The named costume contributor has my undying gratitude. Dave Borthwick is an extraordinary phenomenon – thank you.

To Gallery Players, in this Gallery Studio, its new and well deserved home, for their support and wonderful organisation, thank you and to the entire company who have given me an experience the like of which I did not think I would have again, thank you all.

**Brian Theodore Ralph**



## The Real King Macbeth

*(not just a figment of Shakespeare's imagination)*

Shakespeare's Macbeth is one of the most iconic characters ever created. But few people realise that Macbeth was also a real man, a king of 11th century Scotland who led a life filled with as much murder, treachery and drama as the tragic hero of Shakespeare's play.

Macbeth is one of the greatest dramatic works in the English language. But the play departs heavily from its historical source which tells a very different story to Shakespeare's.

**The Man Behind The Myth** In reality, Macbeth had a royal lineage dating back to Malcolm I. His father was Findláech (Findlay), Mormaer of Moray, and his mother a daughter of Kenneth II. He therefore had a legitimate claim to the kingship which he won, not by murdering an elderly King Duncan in his bed, but on the battlefield. And Duncan, far from being an old man, was in fact ages with Macbeth.

**A Long And Prosperous Reign** Macbeth is one of Shakespeare's shortest works. In the play Macbeth's reign is brief, bloody and disastrous - perhaps no longer than 10 weeks - during the course of which he orchestrates the murder of his closest ally and confidant Banquo, as well as the innocent family of his rival MacDuff.

The real Macbeth's reign lasted for 17 years, a remarkable feat that is testament to his strength and competence as a leader. As for Banquo and MacDuff? There is no historical evidence for either of them.

**The End** Like his fictional counterpart, Macbeth met a violent death. But as ever, the climax of the play deviates considerably from historical record. Shakespeare has Macbeth slain by MacDuff at a battle near Dunsinane in the wake of an invasion of Alba lead by Earl Siward of Northumbria.

While Earl Siward did lead an invasion of Alba, it was in partnership with Malcolm Canmore, son of Duncan. Defeated in battle but not vanquished, Macbeth continued to rule for a further three years before dying upon Malcolm's sword.



## The Real Lady Macbeth

The truth about the real Lady Macbeth remains unknown apart from her name, Gruoch. A granddaughter of Malcolm II, she and Macbeth were married for 24 years.

The couple weren't childless either. Gruoch had a son named Lulach from a previous marriage who ruled for a brief time after Macbeth.



# Macbeth

## Cast

*First performance at The Gallery Studio, Monday 25th October 2021*

King Duncan    Steve Taplin  
Malcolm, his son    George Deadman  
Donalbain, his son    Ben Maytham  
Macbeth    Thomas Haigh  
Banquo    Dafydd Westacott  
Macduff, Thane of Fife    Phil Cory  
Ross    James Hayward  
Lennox    Michael Cook  
Menteth    Richard Spencer  
Angus    Leo Wherrett  
Cathness    Neill Pearce  
Fleance, son of Banquo    Will Bathgate  
Bloody Captain    Steve Roche  
Old Man    Steve Taplin  
Porter    Steve Roche  
1st Murderer    Colin Bennett  
2nd Murderer    Ben Maytham  
Son of Macduff    Archie Layzell  
Old Seyward    Steve Taplin  
Young Seyward, his son    Will Bathgate  
Scottish Doctor    Steve Roche  
Seyton, Macbeth's Armourer    Sam Elias  
Servant    Max Riches  
The Boy    Freddie Alcock

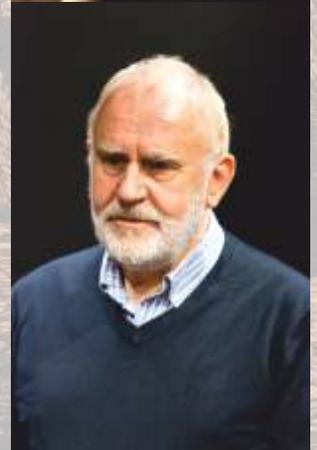
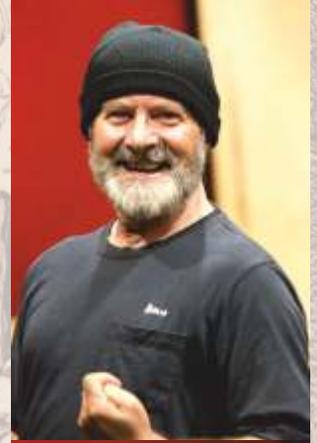
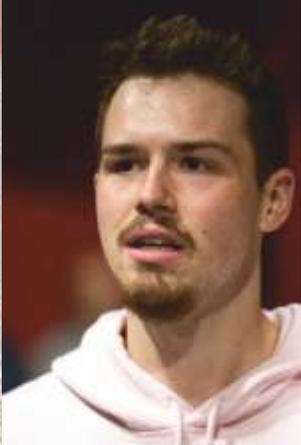
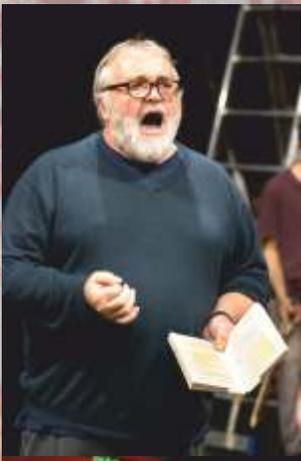
Lady Macbeth    Charlotte Curtis  
Lady Macduff    Jane Hines  
Nurse    Maggie Mudd  
Gentlewoman    Jenni Horn

1st Weird Sister    Maggie Mudd  
2nd Weird Sister    Jenni Horn  
3rd Weird Sister    Sam Elias

Director    Brian Theodore Ralph  
Music    Alfie Harries  
Lighting Design    Callum Macdonald  
Projections/film    Marn Davies  
Set and Costume Design    Brian Theodore Ralph  
Created Costume    Isabel Clover  
Fight Director    Joseph Reed

Costume Hire    Angels

Set Construction and Prop Maker    David Borthwick  
On the Book and Stage Manager    Kerry Lecomber  
Sound Design    Will Dowe  
Light and Sound Operator    Rachel Doy  
Production Photography    Mike Kwasniak





### Acknowledgments

Alan Ayres & Coop Juniors, all Front of House Staff, Penny & Eastern Angles, Ipswich Borough Council, Norman Rutterford.

# The Challenges of Staging Macbeth in it's historical 11th Century Era

For **Dave Borthwick**, the demands came in the form of creating a collection of weaponry appropriate to the period. So, heavy carbon-steel swords, daggers, axes, spears and a selection of celtic shields, plus a couple that identified the different style of shield current in England. But perhaps the most challenging item was a fully operational cauldron. If you are doing a production of Macbeth, you do need a cauldron. Ever tried looking for one? Dave made his own – judge for yourself this wonder of creativity and technical wizardry!



## Angels Costumes



Finding costumes that reflect the period of the 11<sup>th</sup> Century is no easy matter. Ultimately the entire set of costumes with the exception of those made by Isabel Clover, were hired from Angels of London. This amazing family company, founded in 1840, owning the largest privately owned collection of costume for film, theatre and television anywhere in the world, whose Hendon store contains a staggering nine miles of wardrobe rails, came up with the goods. I spent a total of some three or four days inspecting, considering and ultimately selecting costumes for some thirty characters. The costume for each of the thanes, for instance, comprised a total of eight elements including accessories and as you can imagine, a wide range of measurements. Just think, eighteen pairs of shoes with sizes ranging from 5–11. The company has inhabited the characters throughout rehearsals; I hope they are happy inhabiting their costumes. **Brian Theodore Ralph**

## Isabel Clover

*'As a textile artist, colour, texture and form have always been my way of interpreting design. It has been an interesting challenge exploring textiles for the robes of the 'weird sisters'. The main fabric was dyed with Dylon and the hoods with walnut husks, which produced amazing patterns like tree barks. The necklaces are binder twine dipped in walnut stain and plaited, decorated with symbols associated with witchcraft. My other contribution is to the Coronation Robes – needing to create an impression of rich textiles. They are created with painted layers on duck fabric, embellished with medallions, jewellery and glass to improve the texture. This has been a challenge that I was excited to accept.'*





photo - mike kwasniak

# WOLSEY THEATRE CLUB

## Proud Sole Sponsors Of This Production

The Theatre Club was formed in 1962 when The Arts Theatre was in Tower Street. There is some uncertainty as to when exactly the club became named The Wolsey Theatre Club, but it was certainly very active in its support of the building of the Wolsey Theatre which opened in 1979.

Since then the club has given considerable financial support to the theatre over the years assisting in the installation of the lift for the disabled, a new relay system, disabled access for staff and performers at rear of theatre, contributing to replace the lift at the Wolsey Studio and new chairs at the HEG (High Street Exhibition Gallery) amongst many others.

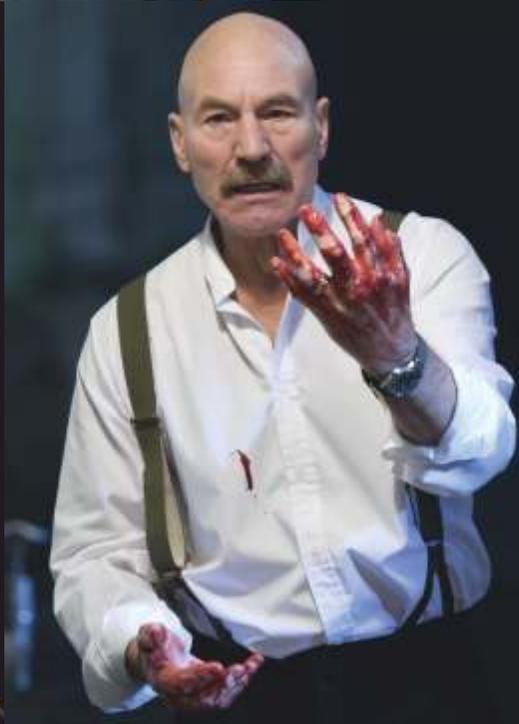
Local companies who have also benefited from support from the club include Red Rose Chain, Eastern Angles, Appeal Theatre Group, Suffolk Summer Theatre and Common Ground Theatre.

The club also sponsored awards for Performing Arts students at Suffolk New College and made individual awards to students gaining places at Drama Schools.

Over the years the Club has existed to provide social events for its members sharing a common interest in theatre but sadly because of changing circumstances, exacerbated by Covid, it is highly likely that at a forthcoming meeting of members, the regrettable decision will be taken to close the Theatre Club. Nevertheless, The Club is proud to be associated with this production and wish the cast and company every success.

The Wolsey Theatre Club would also like to congratulate Gallery Players on becoming the new tenants of The Studio Theatre in St. George's Street and wish them every success in this new and exciting chapter in Gallery Player's history.

# Macbeth



35 Years of ...



1985 - 2020

1985 Cowardy Custard, 1986 Happy as a Sandbag, 1987 Sail Away, 1988 Something's Afoot, 1989 Company, 1990 The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas, 1991 The Hired Man, 1992 Snoopy - The Musical, A Little Night Music, 1993 Stepping Out, Cabaret, 1994 Assassins, The Ghost Train, Into the Woods, Hobson's Choice, 1995 Man of La Mancha, Steel Magnolias, City of Angels, Scent of Flowers, 1996 Little Shop of Horrors, The Most Happy Fella, Blue Remembered Hills, 1997 Dancing at Lughnasa, Pacific Overtures, Chicago, Hard Times, 1998 The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui, Sweeney Todd (The Demon Barber of Fleet Street), Shadowlands, Something's Afoot, 1999 Carnival, Trip to Bountiful, The Boys From Syracuse, Tons of Money, 2000 On Golden Pond, The Bakers Wife, Kiss of the Spiderwoman, A Slice of Saturday Night, One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest, 2001 Mrs Warren's Profession, A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum, Billy, Breezblock Park, 2002 The Memory of Water, Flora The Red Menace, A Slice of Saturday Night, Radio Times, 2003 Kiss Me Like You Mean It, Days of Hope, Honk!, And A Nightingale Sang, 2004 Bouncers, Merrily We Roll Along, Talking Heads, You're A Good Man Charlie Brown, 2005 Kindertransport, She Loves Me, A Night At The Dogs, 2006 Amy's View, Passion, With Love, Colder Than Here, 2007 This Happy Breed, Grand Hotel, You Want Chilli Sauce With That & Marry Me A Little, The Sunshine Boys, 2008 Oh Kay!, Spend Spend Spend, To Kill A Mockingbird, 2009 The Long Road, Follies, Flare Path, 2010 Ordinary Days, Rent, Spring & Port Wine, 2011 My Mother Said I Never Should, Our House, Heroes, 2012 Putting it Together, Love Story, Be My Baby, 2013 A Man of No Importance, Into the Woods, The Importance of Being Earnest, 2014 Oh What a Lovely War!, Galileo, The History Boys, 2015 A Day in the Death of Joe Egg, Hairspray, A Streetcar Named Desire, 2016 Jumpers For Goalposts, The House Of Bernarda Alba, Spring Awakening, Ushers, 2017 Urinetown, Far From The Madding Crowd, 2018 Wolf Hall, Grow Up Grandad, Lucky Stiff, 2019 The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, The Lady In The Van, A New Brain, 2020 Annus Covidicus!!, 2021 Gallery @ 35 (an online celebration), The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Macbeth.

**Future Productions:-**

November 2021 **Bully Boy/Mortuary Sisters** (a double bill), December **Gutenberg** (see our website for details)



**Gallery Players** started back in 1985. *Pat Taplin* decided, with a group of friends, that in order to get the kind of *Theatre* they wanted to see performed locally, they'd have to do it themselves.

Mounting lesser known, rarely produced plays and musicals has always been our forte and we'd like to think we've been doing it rather well for close to 40 years!

Although this direction brings many freedoms, to uncover hidden and forgotten gems of theatre that other groups wouldn't tackle, it can also be financially challenging for us, as we inevitably take more box office risks.

In 2021 we took another 'leap', moving into our very own premises, **The Gallery Studio Theatre**. A dream for a decade had been realised. The opportunities the **Studio** gives us are immense, no rushed get-ins a couple of days before opening night, the ability to rehearse and build a show in the same space it will be performed in - all huge positives. The 'flip' side, of course, will be paying a 'commercial' rent and all the associated costs that go with running and maintaining the building. Since 2019 **Gallery Players** has been a *Charity* and every penny we make goes back into the shows and the upkeep and improvement of **The Studio**.

So, we're asking for a little help from you, our dear friends and supporters. We don't just want to '*get by with a little help .....*' as the *Beatles* sang, we want to *Thrive* and *Flourish*!

We were hoping you'd consider making a manageable monthly donation? Perhaps **£5** or **£10**, nothing silly (unless you wanted to!) which over a year would build to be incredibly useful to us and most welcome. Furthermore, if you are a tax payer this amount could grow 25% at no cost to you through *Gift Aid*.

More details of the scheme will be on our website soon ([www.galleryplayers.co.uk](http://www.galleryplayers.co.uk)) along with a link to join it. There's also a link to email us so that you'll be notified when it's up and running. There's also leaflets in the Studio foyer on which you can fill out your details and hand them to one of our staff who'll register your interest.

***Thanks so much for being one of our supporters, and we do hope you'll consider becoming a 'Gallery Friend'!***

**getting by with a little help from our friends.....**



**[www.galleryplayers.co.uk](http://www.galleryplayers.co.uk) for more info.**

Gallery Players (CIO). Charity number:- 1186641



Original 'Players' & the Steering Group with Dick Tuckey and other photos from our 'Grand' Opening

## ***The Gallery Studio Theatre***

It is probably every Theatre Company's dream to have their own performance, rehearsal and meeting space and certainly it is a dream that we at Gallery have cherished for some time now.

So it is with great excitement that we are pleased to announce that our dream has been realised! We agreed terms with Ipswich Borough Council and have taken over what was The New Wolsey Studio, and is now *The Gallery Studio Theatre*.

We took possession of the building in May and were thrilled to welcome our first audience members to watch our first show 'The Mystery of Edwin Drood' in September.

### ***A Short History Of The Building***

The Salem Chapel was constructed in 1812 at a time when Ipswich was an important centre of religious dissension. It is an example of a class of building of which there were many but it is the only one to have survived into the 21st century in more or less its original state. It is of sufficient historical and architectural interest therefore to warrant its grade 2 listing.

The Chapel was opened on 11th June 1812. It was built at the sole expense of Mr Joseph Chamberlain for £1200 and he conveyed it to trustees for the use of Particular Baptists. At 45' x 35', the Salem Chapel was intended to accommodate four hundred people.

After its use as a Chapel ended it was a little neglected and eventually became a store for Ipswich Museum which it backs on to. Then in the early 1990's the towns Wolsey Theatre (and its Artistic Director Dick Tuckey) were given permission to convert it to a studio theatre of around 100 seats to complement its larger 'main house' just down the road on Civic Drive. It was opened in 1992 by Ipswich 'native' Sir Trevor Nunn and over the next 27 years, had an important role in the Wolsey's, and its reincarnation the New Wolsey's output. In 2019 the New Wolsey handed back the lease to Ipswich Borough Council and this is where we became involved! After short negotiations IBC agreed terms with us to take over the lease and we were due to get the keys at the end of March 2020. Unfortunately global events intervened and it was another 14 months until we finally moved in on the 14th May 2021. With restrictions now relaxed we opened in September 2021 with Drood, and have a full programme of shows earmarked for late 2021 and 2022. To keep abreast of it all sign up on our website to get notifications.

### ***Getting Involved With Gallery***

Gallery Players are a Charity run by a small Steering Group (Wade Ablitt, Dave Borthwick, Helen Clarke, Will Dowe, Steve Taplin & Steve Wooldridge) and aided by an invaluable bunch of wonderful helpers. If you feel you'd like to help in any way please get in touch. Performing, Front of House, Scenery Construction, Lighting, Sound etc, just go to our website and drop us a line. None of this happens by magic but we love it and love getting help. Even if you don't have time yourself you can still help by becoming a 'friend' see the page in this programme, or just by supporting our shows, we make theatre for the love of it but we're nothing without YOU! As our founder Pat Taplin was known to say on many occasions - ***'you're all lovely!'***



Gallery's Steve Taplin chats to Dick Tuckey at the opening



photo credits - mike kwasniak



our continued inspiration Pat Taplin 1928 -2012

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"Not the worst show  
I've ever seen"

New York Trumpet



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"help!"

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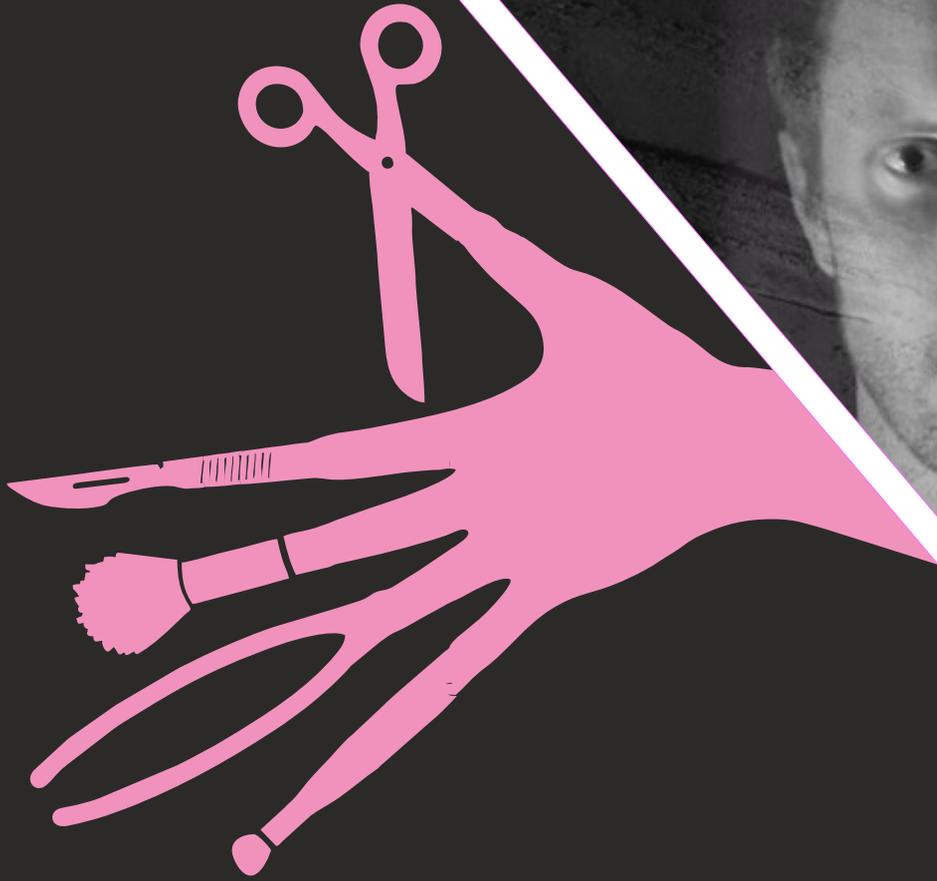


\*INSERT A GOOD  
REVIEW HERE

THE **gallery**  
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# BULLY BOY

a play by Sandi Toksvig



THE  
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SISTERS**

A NEW PLAY BY JAZZ ELY

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