

**Who actually wrote Shakespeare's plays? A new, international show has a (really) surprising answer!**

*Matchmaker Theatre Productions presents*

## **The Real William Shakespeare... As Told By Christopher Marlowe**

Debating at this year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe is a unique show that explores national identity and the Shakespeare authorship debate in a truly original way. Created by artists from Iran, Canada, France, and Scotland, and featuring live music from celebrated Scottish theatre-maker John Kielty (Runrig's *The Stamping Ground*, 2023), this production is international, irreverent, and has already caused controversy at rehearsed readings in Los Angeles.

Laura, a 21st century student of Renaissance literature, is visited by the eccentric ghost of Christopher Marlowe. Shakespeare didn't write Shakespeare's plays, Marlowe claims extravagantly; the real truth is bound up with Marlowe, murder, and... Morocco?! While Laura attempts to complete her thesis with increasing frantiness, Marlowe adds more and more to his extraordinary story of spies, scripts, and a theatrical Moroccan diplomat, Ahmed Bilqasim, whose writing changes the course of Marlowe's life and literature forever. What's the real truth? Can Marlowe find peace with his past? And will Laura ever complete her thesis?

Shaul Ezer's wry and provocative script is inspired by the authorship debate around Shakespeare's work, including [claims](#) that Shakespeare's plays originated from writer Emilia Bassano. As a Canadian playwright with Iraqi ancestry who was born and raised in Iran, Ezer is fascinated by Shakespeare's connection to national identity, and he plays creatively with this theme in *The Real William Shakespeare... As Told By Christopher Marlowe*. Speaking about the controversy generated at early read-throughs by the play's take on authorship, Ezer comments: "*The response has been fascinating and instructive. I'm proposing a theory about Shakespeare that, to my knowledge, has never been proposed before, and I knew it would provoke strong opinions. I'm looking forward to seeing the response at the Fringe and the conversations it hopefully inspires about literature and identity.*"

Matchmaker Theatre Productions is an international theatre company, producing new writing with literary themes. Founded by playwright Shaul Ezer, and led by artists from across the globe, the company works directly with Edinburgh-based creatives to bring work to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The company's Fringe debut in 2022, *The Masks Of Oscar Wilde*, received four star reviews, positive audience feedback, and a critically acclaimed revival at the Scottish Storytelling Centre in April 2023. Matchmaker Theatre Productions are proud to be back at the Fringe, exploring themes of national identity and authorship in this witty new drama.

*'A wonderfully achieved production, beautifully directed and acted.'*

**Hugh Simpson, All Edinburgh Theatre, The Masks Of Oscar Wilde, EdFringe 2022 ★★★★★**

*'Chaotic playfulness... mixing in heaps of Queer history and theory'*

**Dominic Corr, Corr Blimey Reviews, The Masks Of Oscar Wilde, Scottish Storytelling Centre 2023 ★★★★★**

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### **Listings Information**

**Venue:** Greenside, Riddles Court, EH1 2PG (Venue 16)

**Tickets:** £5.50 - £14

**Dates:** 4-12, 14-19 Aug 2023

**Time:** 13:50 (0h 55min)

**Box Office:** 0131 226 0026

**Online Box Office:** <https://tickets.edfringe.com/whats-on/real-william-shakespeare-as-told-by-christopher-marlowe>

**Press Pack (including production images):** [www.dropbox.com/sh/2kvjvo6ii3icup9/AAAGKzvOzEQtEnwTP7zpOgC4a?dl=0](http://www.dropbox.com/sh/2kvjvo6ii3icup9/AAAGKzvOzEQtEnwTP7zpOgC4a?dl=0)

For further information, interview and feature requests, or to request a media ticket please contact **publicist Emily Ingram (Stage Dormouse PR)** on [matchmakerpress@gmail.com](mailto:matchmakerpress@gmail.com) or **07758732949**.

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