



**A new 30 minute drama for BBC Radio Scotland, 2pm Thursday
12th July**

Absolutely Productions and director Marilyn Imrie, the team who produced 4 series of the critically acclaimed Edinburgh based comedy drama 'Baggage' for BBC Radio 4, produce their first play for Radio Scotland.

Written by Clare Bayley, directed by Marilyn Imrie and starring Gail Watson, Mark McDonnell and Kirstin Mclean, Portobello Beach was recorded entirely on location in Edinburgh.

Portobello Beach is a ghost story set against the world of social work and child protection.

Tess Maguire (Gail Watson) is a brilliant young social worker: feisty, funny and totally unafraid. With trainee social-worker Ken (Mark McDonnell) tagging unhelpfully behind, Tess seems to take everything in her stride. But she is haunted by a secret of her own. The frequent appearances of the stropy teenager, Kelly (Kirstin Mclean), hold the key to Tess's own dark past. As the pressure mounts, Tess begins to show the strain. She can deal with her clients' troubles, but will she be able to face up to her own? As her week begins to unravel, there's only one place she's heading - down to Portobello Beach, where the past is about to catch up with her.

Director: Marilyn Imrie

...is one of the UK's hardest working and most successful Radio Directors. Along with directing 4 series of *Baggage* and two series of the new Radio 4 hit comedy *The Go-Betweenies* for *Absolutely*, she recently directed the runaway R4 comedy success starring Brian Cox Felix Dexter and Laura Solon: *The Bob Servant Emails* by Neil Forsyth. For BBC Radio Scotland, *Sybil Law* the sitcom by Charlie Dore starring Una Maclean, and Radio 4 treasures *The Stanley Baxter Playhouse*, with the great man himself, and the *Rumpole* series starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Timothy West .

Writer: Clare Bailey

...has drawn out the amazing work that social workers perform, the difficult conditions they face in an under-funded service, and the emotional cost to them when things do go tragically wrong.

“I always wanted *Portobello Beach* to have the sound and feel of the real world. So I was really pleased when director Marilyn Imrie and producer Gordon Kennedy decided to record it entirely on location in and around Edinburgh. We survived the bracing cold of the January weather - and fortunately as the writer I didn't even have to wade out into the freezing sea for the final scene...”

Clare Bayley's 15 Minute Drama series for BBC Radio 4, *In The Van* was broadcast this April directed by Marilyn Imrie, who also directed the radio version of Clare's award-winning stage play, *The Container* for BBC Radio Scotland. Clare's other plays for Radio 4 include *The Bringer of Sweets* and *The Secret Place*. Clare wrote the English version of the 19th century Swedish play, *The Enchantment* for the National Theatre, *Cottesloe*. Her latest stage play, *Blue Sky*, was developed at the National Theatre Studio and will be a Pentabus production at Hampstead Theatre, London and the Sherman Theatre, Cardiff in October-November 2012.

Tess: Gail Watson

Gail was born and raised in Bonnyrigg near Edinburgh where she lives with her husband and 2 young sons. Her theatre credits include the sell-out show *Patsy Cline* and *a Bottle of Wine* (Oranmor) the musical based on the Proclaimers songs, *Sunshine on Leith* (Dundee Rep). She was nominated for the Best Actress award at Edinburgh Festival 2009 for *Barflies* (Grid Iron) Other Grid Iron productions are *Huxley's Lab* and *Spring Awakening*. Dundee Rep productions include *peer Gynt*, *Gypsy*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Wizard of Oz*, *Dangerous Liaisons* Gail has appeared in productions at The Royal Lyceum, Traverse Theatre, King's Theatre

Glasgow, Byre, Perth and Pitlochry Festival Theatre. She has also worked with Borderline, Communicado, Tag, Nottingham Playhouse and Eden Court.

Her television work includes 3 Taggarts, Still Game, Scottish Killers, Gary Tank Commander, Crowdie and Cream, Wedding Belles, The Near Room and most recently Blue Haven (comedy pilot) and Bob Servant Independent a new comedy series for BBC. Gail regularly works in radio also presents for BBC Radio Education Unit.

Ken; Mark McDonnell

... is currently filming *The Life and Adventures Of Nick Nickleby* for the BBC in which he is playing Wackford Squeers. Other recent TV credits include *Ideal*, *Happy Hollidays*, *Rebus*, *Taggart*, *Still Game*, *Stakeout* and two series of *Velvet Soup*. For theatre he could be seen most recently in *Of Mice And Men*, *Beauty And The Beast*, *The Importance Of Being Earnest* and *Romeo And Juliet* (all at The Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh) *One Million Tiny Plays About Britain* and *Beauty And The Beast* (Citizens Theatre, Glasgow), *Daphnis And Chloe* and *The Bones Boys* (Oran Mor, Glasgow). Mark has also appeared in more than sixty radio dramas for BBC Radio Four as well as comedies such as *Ray City Rollers* and five series of *Velvet Cabaret* for Radio Scotland.

Kelly: Kirstin Mclean

Trained at RSAMD. Kirstin's recent television work includes: *River City* (BBC), *Bob Servant Independent* (BBC4), *Doors Open* (Sprout Productions) and *Limmy's Show Series 2* (Comedy Unit). She is about to begin filming Series 3 of *Limmy's Show*.

Kirstin worked with Marilyn Imrie on *Daphnis and Chloe* in summer 2011. Other theatre work includes: *The Seagull* and *The Jean Jacques Rousseau Show* (Oran Mor), *The Last Polar Bears*, *Self Contained*, *The Recovery Position*, *Oedipus* and *The Elgin Macbeth* (NTS), *The Wall* (Borderline), *The Lesson* (Benchtoours), *Tam o'Shanter* and *The Government Inspector* (Communicado).

For radio, Kirstin has performed in *Meanwhile*, *It's Will and Greg* and *The Woman Who Out-talked the Water Kelpie* for BBC.

Sound Design, Studio Engineer, Editor: Lee McPhail

Recording on location always has its particular problems... number one being out of a nice warm and controllable, purpose built sound studio... in January. And then, when the story climaxes in the breakwater shallows off Portobello Beach... in January, well there is only one thing to do and that is to lose the socks and shoes and get in there and get some authentic background sound. Lee brought his considerable experience of years of sound design both

with BBC Scotland and as a freelancer to bear on this production to give Portobello Beach its authentic sense of place its disturbing atmosphere of people on the edge.



Full Production Credits

Production Company	Absolutely Productions
Director	Marilyn Imrie
Writer	Clare Bayley
Broadcast Assistant	Kate Brook
Sound Design, Engineering and Editing	Lee McPhail
Finance	Lil Thornley
BBC Commissioning Editor	Jeff Zycinski
Executive Producer	Chris Pye
Producer	Gordon Kennedy

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