

Legendary Fringe playwright Jo Clifford performs at Edinburgh for the first time with her controversial play THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JESUS QUEEN OF HEAVEN.

Clifford's revolutionary and spiritual work reaches the Fringe for the first time since its explosive and controversial 2009 opening.

Award-winning playwright, translator, poet and performer, **Jo Clifford** presents **THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JESUS QUEEN OF HEAVEN** - a candlelit, peaceful, meditative end to a hard day on the Fringe.

2009's five-night run of **THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JESUS QUEEN OF HEAVEN** was met with 1,000 protesters from Christian groups outside the Tron Theatre and 750,000 bloggers protesting worldwide. The archbishop of Glasgow subsequently called Clifford's vision of a transgendered Jesus 'an affront to the Christian faith'. He never saw it.

Listen to those who did: 'Queen Jesus reminds us of the purity of sex and pleasure, the importance of empathy. We hold hands, and remember what it means not to be alone' (*Exeunt magazine*).

Jo Clifford said: "I didn't imagine it would be so controversial. Christianity is often used as a weapon against LGBT people to deny us our rights. I wanted to see how this could be justified by the source texts; and in "Jesus Queen of Heaven" make the simple point that Jesus never attacked us and assert our human rights to justice and respect.

I want to bring the play back now because all this still needs to be said. Prejudice, oppression and injustice are suffered by just about every trans person everywhere in the world and the global struggle against oppression of LGBT people is profoundly connected to the wider struggle for women's rights throughout the world.

I'm frightened of doing this play again. I'm frightened of arousing hostility; and I'm frightened of it being received with indifference. But whenever I ask myself why I am doing it, I think of all that controversy and hatred alongside the letters of support and thanks and I know why. I am doing it because I must."

Notes for Editors

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JESUS QUEEN OF HEAVEN

Artspace@StMarks Aug 5-9;12-16;19-23 at 22.30 (1 hour)

Tickets £12/10 available from <https://www.edfringe.com/whats-on/theatre/gospel-according-to-jesus-queen-of-heaven>

Written and performed by Jo Clifford.

Directed by Susan Worsfold.

Produced by Annabel Cooper.

Jo Clifford is an award-winning playwright, translator, poet and performer, who has also worked as a journalist and academic. With plays like LOSING VENICE, INES DE CASTRO and LIGHT IN THE VILLAGE, she helped establish the international reputation of the Traverse Theatre Company in the 1980s.

She is the author of over 70 works in every dramatic medium. Her work has been translated into many languages and has been performed all over the world and her adaptation of Charles Dickens GREAT EXPECTATIONS made her the first openly transsexual woman playwright to have her work performed in London's West End.

As a playwright, Jo has over thirty years' experience of having her work presented at the Fringe and in the International Festival. However this is her debut as a performer.

She lives in Edinburgh and is a former Professor of Theatre at Queen Margaret University. She is father of two amazing grown up daughters and such a proud Grandma!

For further details and her blog go to www.teatrodomundo.com

Follow her on Twitter @JoCliffordPlays.

Fringe website and ticket link: <https://www.edfringe.com/whats-on/theatre/gospel-according-to-jesus-queen-of-heaven>

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