

The origins of *Dementia the Musical*

Dementia the Musical was inspired by the lives of three people who were diagnosed with dementia: James McKillop, Nancy McAdam and Agnes Houston. I first met Agnes after I was diagnosed with a cognitive impairment which was then changed to Vascular Dementia. When I met Agnes, I was in a very dark place and was seeing my diagnoses as the ending point of my life. Listening to her story was a turning point for me in my own dementia Journey. Over the next couple of months, I met both James and Nancy and because of them I became who I am today.

The rationale behind it was simple if they could accept their dementia diagnoses and get on with living then so could I. Though I did not realise it at the time, this was the moment I started my own dementia activism. I started by writing poetry much of it dark and sometimes bitter and always about my dementia. It was then that I met Jon from An Lanntair Arts centre. He encouraged me to write a play about my experience with AI.

The play had its' premiere at An Lanntair and later had a short Scottish Tour which was well received – then came *Dementia the Musical*. It did not start its' life as a musical but as a play about James, Nancy, and Agnes. Very early on in the writing of the play, I gave the title of *The Ballad of the Dementia Activists*, and it was at this point that it moved away from being a play towards being a Musical.

Dementia the Musical has been a labour of love for me, but it would not have happened without the support of my home theatre An Lanntair and the Artist development Lead Sandra Kennedy who brought me into the Emerging Artist programme at the age of sixty. Helped by her and Paula Brown, I was then linked up with several people.

I need to thank the following: my mentor Laura Eaton Lewis, Colin and Gill Thomson, Mick Duke, Andrew Eaton Lewis, and Ian Bustard. Without this group of people, I would not be on this journey. Great thanks go to my family who put up with my moods, my dementia, my frustrations and still manage to give me their full support and love.

To my wife Karen I promise to slow down but just a little bit. This play celebrates not just the activism of James, Nancy, and Agnes but of every person with a diagnosis of dementia who seek to change the dominant perception of dementia and show the world we are much more than people think we are, the creatives who took the words from the page and brought them to the stage – the Director Magdalena Schamberger, the Musical Director Sophie Bancroft and Producer Gemma Greig-Kicks, all of whom believed in the project from the beginning, all the stage crew (who are often forgotten) and last but not least to the actors who are after all, the magicians of the theatre.

Ron Coleman (The Demented Poet)

CAST

Ross Allan	James
Pauline Lockhart	Rigid System
Kirsty Malone	Agnes
Fiona Wood	Nancy
Willy Gilder	Reporter

CREATIVES

Ron Coleman	Writer
Magdalena Schamberger	Director
Sophie Bancroft	Composer / Musical Director
Karen Tennent	Set / Costume Design
Colin Grenfell	Lighting Design
Tom Lyne	Sound Design
Kelman Greig-Kicks	Film / Videography
Andrew Eaton-Lewis	Additional Music
Michael Duke	Dramaturg
Chris Stuart Wilson	Choreographer
Suzie Normand	Production Manager
Francesca Fenech	Company Stage Manager
Lynn Wiseman	Technical Stage Manager
Chris Gorman	Technical Stage Manager
Gemma Greig-Kicks	Producer
Shirley Monteith	Marketing / PR

This production is supported by Creative Scotland



Ross Allan James McKillop

Ross has been performing in theatre, TV, and radio for over 20 years.

Theatre credits include various plays for the Oran Mor Play, Pie and a Pint seasons, national and international tours with Catherine Wheels, Vanishing Point, Grid Iron Theatre Company, and National Theatre Scotland. Ross has also performed in numerous pantomimes in Scotland and is a firm favourite at Eden Court in Inverness. TV Credits include *Outlander: Blood of my Blood*; *Shetland*, *Still Game*, *Taggart*, *Rebus* and Children's TV series *Me Too*.

Pauline Lockhart Rigid System

Pauline has worked with many leading theatre companies including: National Theatre Scotland, Grid Iron, Hampstead Theatre, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Improbable Theatre, Royal Lyceum Edinburgh, The Tron Theatre, Thickskin, The Traverse Theatre and Manchester Royal Exchange, (TMA Award for Best Supporting Actress and The Manchester Evening News Best Supporting Actress Award for *An Experiment With An Airpump*). TV & Film Credits Include: *Case Histories*, *Holby City*, *Casualty*, *Heartless*, *Strictly Sinatra*, *The Glass* and *Monarch of the Glen*. She co-wrote and co-directed *Strange Tales* (Grid Iron Theatre, The Traverse Theatre, The Royal Shakespeare Co, and Confucius Institute); co-wrote new musical, *Forever Home* with composer, Alan Penman (2023, Oran Mor). Pauline is also co-founder of Wildfire Theatre.

Kirsty Malone Agnes Houston

Credits include *Nailed it!* (Edinburgh Festival, Virgin Voyages, Norwegian Cruise Line), *Melania* (A Play, A Pie and A Pint, Oran Mor), *Six Black Candles* (The Glasgow Pavilion), *A Matter of Life and Death* (Citizen's Theatre), *White Christmas*, *Miracle on 34th Street* (Pitlochry Festival Theatre), *Sweeney Todd*, *The Elves and the Shoemaker* (Dundee Rep), *Sunshine on Leith* (No.1 UK tour), *Quadrophenia* (No.1 UK tour), and pantomimes at Perth Theatre, Ayr Gaiety, Brunton Theatre. TV: *Clique* (BBC). She also regularly gigs with her swing group The St. Andrews Sisters.

Fiona Wood Nancy McAdam

Theatre includes: *Keepin' the Heid* (Play, Pie and a Pint), *Metamorphosis: Unplugged* (Vanishing Point), *Peter Pan and Wendy*, *The Crucible*, *Blonde Bombshells*, *Heritage*, *Chicago*, *Quality Street*, *Before the Party* and *The Last Witch* (Pitlochry Festival Theatre) *Glory on Earth* and *The Winter's Tale* (Royal Lyceum Theatre), *The James Plays* (National Theatre of Scotland), *Gabriel's Gig* (Drake Music), *The Steamie* (Neil Laidlaw), *Cannibal Women of Mars*, *Ya Beauty and the Beast* and *Flo White* (Tron). TV/Film includes *Only an Excuse* (BBC Scotland), *Sketchland* (BBC), *Hospital 24/7* (Sky), *Scot Squad*, *Rab C Nesbitt* (Comedy Unit) and Short Films *Room 9* and *Home* (RCS).

Willy Gilder Reporter

Willy was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease in April 2021. His form of disease affects his eyesight but not his memory. As an ex-journalist he has decided to use his skills in interviewing and social media to further knowledge about dementia, in an effort to fight the stigma around the illness. During 2022 he produced a series of video interviews with people with dementia and is also working on a portrait painting project.

Ron Coleman Writer

Originally from Dundee, Ron lives on the Isle of Lewis. Following his diagnosis with dementia in 2017, Ron established Deepness Ltd a not-for-profit organisation, run by people living with dementia and cognitive impairment for people living with dementia and cognitive impairment. He has made a new life writing poetry, plays, music, and books as he thrives living with dementia. Recent written works for stage and film include *Caught in This Moment of Time* (Scottish tour 2022), *The Consultant* (2020), *Lost in Stornoway* (2021) both directed & filmed by Laura Cameron Lewis, *Hey Santa* (2021) commissioned by Luminare.

Ron has just launched the first ever Dementia Arts Festival showcase the best of music, theatre, poetry and film, all produced by those diagnosed with dementia.

Magdalena Schamberger Director

Magdalena has over 30 years of experience performing, directing, and teaching physical theatre and clowning in the UK and internationally. She co-founded Hearts & Minds in 1997 and remained its Artistic Director until December 2017. In this role she developed the unique and highly acclaimed Elderflowers programme for people living with dementia, which has influenced similar programmes across the globe. In 2014, she was awarded a Paul Hamlyn Breakthrough Fund grant to further advance her work and created Curious Shoes and In the Light of Day, collaborative performances for people living with dementia, as well as Artful Minds and Mindful Arts, experiential training initiatives for artists of all art forms. Currently working on development of *Framed*, the third part of her dementia responsive trilogy. She was appointed Honorary Professor with the School of Health Sciences at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh in 2016, was Founding Member of the Bold programme and its Creative Director until March 2024. Magdalena is a proud Trustee and EDI Champion on the Board of Directors of Love Music.

Sophie Bancroft Composer / Musical Director

Sophie is a singer and songwriter with a unique blend of jazz and folk influences. She has released nine CDs to date including Songs, one of The Herald's top 50 Scottish albums of 2015. Monday Nights, a recent release from her duo Bancroft & Lyne was listed in Jazzviews top jazz albums of 2020. Her music has been used on HBO's Six Feet Under and recorded by top jazz vocalists including Liane Carroll with the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra. Sophie co-leads The Pathhead Choir, is a founder member of the award-winning Pathhead Music Collective, and of Jazz Forward, a collective music organisation showcasing some of the original jazz being written in Scotland. In 2019 she was awarded a Masters with distinction in Creative Writing and expanded her practice to include creative writing, photography, and filmmaking. Her first short film (*S)kin* won best documentary short at the 8&HalFilm Awards and

screened at the Women Over Fifty Film Festival 2021 and Italian film festival Cinema D'Idée 2022. Her following short film, *Old Mother Blackbird*, is a story about maternal love and empty nests inspired by a brave and loyal blackbird who nested in Sophie's own garden. It was screened at the Women Over Fifty Film Festival (WOFFF) in 2023. <http://www.sophiebancroft.co.uk/>

Karen Tennent Set / Costume Design

Karen lives in Edinburgh Scotland and is a graduate of Edinburgh College of Art. Her work as a theatre designer has toured all over the UK and abroad from village halls to Sydney Opera House. Recent designs include: *Thrown* (National Theatre of Scotland), *The Celtic Story* (Regular Music), *Sean and Daro* (Traverse Theatre), *Castle Lennox* (LungHa /Lyceum Edinburgh), *Educating Rita* (Perth Theatre), *Field – something for the future now* (Curious Seed /Edinburgh International Festival / Festival Cultura Inglesa Sao Paolo, Brazil), *The Children* (Dundee Rep), *And if not Now... When*, a film installation by Philip Pinsky and Karen Lamond in the National Museum Edinburgh for COP 26, *Lots and Not Lots* (Greg Sinclair).

Colin Grenfell Lighting Design

Colin has worked for over 30 years in the industry. Theatre includes Improbable: *The Tao of Glass* (Manchester International Theatre), *Lost without words*, *Theatre of Blood*, *Lifegame* (National Theatre), *The Hanging Man*, *70 Hill Lane*, *Coma*, *The Paper Man*, *Spirit*, *Animo*, *Beauty and The Beast*, *Panic*, *No idea*, *Still No Idea*, *The Tempest* (UK & International). For the Royal Exchange Theatre: *Macbeth*, *Kes*, *Separate Tables*, *The Cherry Orchard* (also Bristol Old Vic Theatre), *Tamburlaine* (RSC), *Black Watch*, *The Bacchae*, *365*, *Men Should Weep*, *Granite* (National Theatre of Scotland), *The Village Social* (National Theatre Wales), *The Caretaker* (Liverpool Playhouse, BAM, Adelaide Festival, West End), *Stevie* (Chichester Festival Theatre), *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Theatr Clwyd, Best Lighting Award Wales Theatre Awards), *The Elephant Man* (Best Design CATS award), *The Hanging Man* (Best Design TMA awards).



Tom Lyne Sound Design

Tom is a bassist/musician, composer, and sound designer. He studied music at McGill University in Montreal and later graduated with an MSc in Sound Design from Edinburgh's Napier University. In 2020 he won an award from Creative Scotland Lottery funding to investigate and produce a significant new body of original soundscape libraries celebrating the Midlothian region. In addition to his sound design work, he also has an extensive discography as a bassist and composer from the last 4 decades as a professional musician. He was supervising sound editor and composer for the documentary film *In The Light In* (2020) by director/producer Susan Kemp. He worked again with Susan Kemp/Wendy Griffith production *The Lynda Myles Project: A Manifesto* (Official selection Dublin International Film Festival 2024 – UK premiere). He also mixed and edited (sound) for a Mark Cousins film titled, *Cinema Has Been My True Love: The Work and Times of Lynda Myles* (World Premiere at Telluride Film Festival 2023).

Kelman Greig-Kicks Film / Videography

Kelman is a filmmaker and Creative Director of Neon8, an award-winning film and immersive video production company.

Chris Stuart Wilson Choreographer

Chris has a portfolio career within the performing arts with his work ranging from theatrical choreography to performing his own international comedy act. He also has extensive experience as a dance facilitator for vulnerable and marginalised groups and his work exploring the therapeutic impact of dance for older people living with dementia received global recognition in 2017 when the BBC presented a feature, *Dancing with Dementia on Timeline*, followed by *Dancing to Happiness* in 2018, presented by Dame Darcey Bussell.

Suzie Normand Production Manager

Suzie is one half of SNC Productions, which was established in 2023 with Craig Fleming. Their mission is to offer the highest quality production and tour management support to Scotland's small and mid-scale touring sector. Suzie and Craig bring together over 50 years combined experience working across Scotland's theatre sector, most notably with Catherine Wheels Theatre Company where they created and toured multi award winning theatre productions across Scotland, the UK and Internationally. Recent clients include National Theatre of Scotland, Scottish Opera, Royal Lyceum Theatre, Freckle Productions, Lung Ha, Dundee Rep, Scottish Dance Theatre, Scottish Theatre Producers, Foresight Theatrical, Noise Maker, Macrobert Arts Centre, Platform, Curious Seed, 21 Common, Starcatchers, Guesthouse and Stellar Quines.

Gemma Greig-Kicks Producer

Gemma Greig-Kicks is a freelance Producer and Arts Manager working across the commercial and publicly funded arts, film and third sectors. Currently, through Great Leap Forward, she is General Manager for Matthew Bourne's New Adventures touring productions, independent producer for Sylvian Productions (writer Sylvia Dow), Associate Director for 1DegreeEast and is also Creative Producer for her and her husband's award-winning video & VR production company, Neon8. <https://neon8.scot/>

Gemma is also chair of the board for children's theatre company, Dirliebane.



SONGS:

- 1 **The Enemy of The High Backed Vinyl Chair**
- 2 **Rigid System**
- 3 **My Name Is James**
- 4 **Together**
- 5 **Nancy, How Does Your Garden Grow**
- 6 **We Stand Up for Ourselves**
- 7 **Agnes**
- 8 **Loud And Clear**

All Music + Lyrics written by Sophie Bancroft
except

We Stand Up For Ourselves – Lyrics written
by Ron Coleman and Howard Gordon,
Music written by Andrew Eaton Lewis
and

Loud And Clear – Lyrics written by Ron Coleman and
Howard Gordon, Music written by Sophie Bancroft
All backing tracks arranged and produced by Sophie
Bancroft and Tom Lyne and engineered by Tom Lyne

If you or someone you know is affected by the
issues presented in this production, please visit
www.deepnessdementiamedia.com.

There you will also learn more about the
organisation Deepness Dementia Media and find
more information about our education, radio/TV
service, and contact information.

Deepness Dementia Media is a platform that gives
people tools for living well with dementia designed
collaboratively with those with dementia leading
the process. We are always interested in hearing
from people with lived condition who want to
get involved.

Additionally, Meeting Centres Scotland are social
clubs which offer on-going warm and friendly
expert support to people with mild to moderate
dementia and their families. There are meeting
centres located around Scotland s please visit
www.meetingcentres.scot for more information.

Presented by Deepness Dementia Media Ltd

LOUD AND CLEAR

Upon their shoulders we stand tall
Held by them we cannot fall
Because they chose to answer the call
That's the reason we are here
The story's theirs alone to tell
Ten percent heaven, ninety hell!
They kept upright when they should have fell
That's the reason we are here

(chorus)

HEAR OUR VOICES, HEAR OUR VOICES
LOUD AND CLEAR, LOUD AND CLEAR
HEAR OUR CHOICES, HEAR OUR CHOICES
LOUD AND CLEAR, LOUD AND CLEAR

James McKillop, high command
First activist to voice our demands
Fearless fighter, dedicated man
He's the reason we are here
Nancy McAdam, Agnes Houston
Giants of the revolution
Fought the systemic order
They're the reason we are here

(chorus)

HEAR THEIR VOICES, HEAR THEIR VOICES
LOUD AND CLEAR, LOUD AND CLEAR
HEAR THEIR CHOICES, HEAR THEIR CHOICES
LOUD AND CLEAR, LOUD AND CLEAR

Standing tall, standing proud
When we're together we can shout out loud
No longer dementia sufferers is our name
We're the Scottish Dementia Activists
(chorus)
HEAR OUR VOICES, HEAR OUR VOICES
LOUD AND CLEAR, LOUD AND CLEAR
HEAR OUR CHOICES, HEAR OUR CHOICES
LOUD AND CLEAR, LOUD AND CLEAR
Standing tall, standing proud
Standing tall, standing proud

deepnessdementiamedia.com

📌 @deepnessdementiamedia

📺 @Deepnessdement1

📍 @deepnessdementiamedia



Photographs:
Kelman Greig-Kicks / Neon8

L – R: Agnes Houston, James McKillop, Nancy McAdam

Thanks for help with this production to National Theatre of Scotland, Re-set Scenery, Richard Price, Guy Bishop, Sophie Ferguson, Stuart Jenkins, all the lovely staff at LYRA.

Thanks to Capital Theatres for supporting this production.

Thanks to Sue Northrop Dementia Friendly East Lothian and Anne Gallagher Luminare for their help with the production.

Thanks to NorthLink Ferries for their support with travel for the Company to Shetland.