

LEYLA AYCAN'S

GOBSTOPPER

YOU'VE GOT TO BE CHOKING ME...



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YOU'VE GOT TO BE CHOKING ME...

SKELF Theatre Co. (winners of the Prague Fringe Audience Award and Inspiration Award in 2023) return to Prague Fringe for another round!

Somewhere in small-town Scotland, an old man nearly chokes to death on a gobstopper, and chaos begins to unfold. Making one bad decision after another and armed with a natural knack for saying the wrong thing at precisely the worst moment, our protagonist learns that in her town, trouble doesn't just come knocking — it kicks the door down.

With sharp humour and raw honesty, Gobstopper by Leyla Aycan is a punch-in-the-face tale of self-discovery, accountability, and the relentless quest for redemption. This dark comedy reveals how our labels can both shape — and shatter — who we are.

A NOTE FROM THE WRITER

Gobstopper started as small, unrelated speeches, which I later realised all came from the same voice; an outspoken, impulsive, and slightly unhinged girl. This character led me to piece together a story about judgment, loneliness and how these factors can manifest into desperation - namely the desperation to be liked.

I was interested in what actions people take to impress others, and how those actions can misrepresent our intentions, or set us off course completely. Cancel culture is embedded in modern society, and whilst I strongly believe in being held accountable for your actions, I think that also it has the potential to stunt growth and limit the opportunities to learn and improve. Gobstopper investigates how our experiences shape the actions we take, and questions if cancel culture - no matter the scale - can prevent us from becoming better than we were yesterday.

This is the first thing I've ever written and I don't think I would ever have pushed myself to create the show if it had not been for the support given to me whilst undertaking the BA (Hons) Acting with Creative Enterprise at NCLAN Arts, and latterly the support from SKELF Theatre co. I am grateful for all the collaborations that made this project come to fruition.

GLOSSARY

GOBSTOPPER CONTAINS SCOTTISH SLANG THAT MIGHT BE HARD TO KEEP UP WITH IF YOU'RE UNFAMILIAR WITH THE WONDERFUL WAY WE SCOTS SPEAK.

WE IMPORE YOU TO READ THIS GUIDE BEFORE YOU SEE THE SHOW TO HELP YOU FOLLOW THE STORY.

GOBSTOPPER

[noun]

A LARGE ROUND SWEETIE (CANDY) DESIGNED TO BE SUCKED FOR HOURS - NOT CHEWED.

'MY MUM USED TO GIVE ME GOBSTOPPERS WHEN SHE NEEDED A MINUTES PEACE.'

GINGER

[adjective/noun]

A HAIR COLOUR RANGING FROM DEEP RED TO BRIGHT ORANGE. IN SCOTLAND, OFTEN A DEFINING TRAIT - AND THE SUBJECT OF ABHORRENT TEASING.

'SHUT UP YA SPECKY GINGER'

MENTAL

[adjective]

USED IN SCOTLAND TO DESCRIBE SOMETHING WILD, CHAOTIC OR HARD TO BELIEVE. CAN BE USED A COMPLIMENT, INSULT, OR BOTH AT ONCE.

"HE BROUGHT A LIVE SEAGULL TO THE PARTY - HE WAS MENTAL"

CAST & CREATIVES



LEYLA AYCAN - WRITER & PERFORMER

Leyla Aycan is a Scottish/Turkish actor and theatre maker, as well as a recent graduate in Acting with Creative Enterprise at New College Lanarkshire.

Most recently, she appeared in *Lost Girls/At Bus stops with A Play, A Pie and A Pint* (2024), and featured in the latest music video 'Circles' for *The Snuts* (2024). She also performed as part of the Chorus in National Theatre Scotland's *Medea* (2022), and as the role of 'Merry' in The Audio Story Company's festive show *Merry* (2021-2023).

Leyla is very excited to be taking 'Gobstopper' to be here in Prague to show Gobstopper to new audiences.



PHOEBE BYRNE - PRODUCER

Phoebe is a producer, writer, and theatre-maker from Clydebank.

She is a co-founder of SKELF Theatre Co., where she collaborates to create work that is honest, gritty, and inspiring of social change. Her work with SKELF includes producing, writing, and performing *The Seagull (Not That One)* - a dark comedy exploring community and isolation - at Prague Fringe Festival (2023), and Sophie Michelle's whimsical queer comedy *Three's a Crowd* (2024). In 2024, she was selected to be a part of the Emerging Producers Development Programme hosted by the Fringe Society.

Phoebe also works at National Theatre of Scotland where she has acted as production co-ordinator on various projects, such as *Thank U, Next* (2024/2025) by 21Common, *Like Flying* (2023) by Nic Green, and *Dear Billy* (2023) by Gary McNair.



JOSIE MORRISON YOUNG - ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Josie is a theatre-maker and photographer based in Glasgow.

She has a passion for supporting the work of emerging and inspiring artists and has worked in a range of creative learning contexts over the last few years. She has worked as a freelance producer on small films and young artists development productions, including *Crisis: A Rallying Cry* (2022), which premiered at the Traverse Theatre. From 2022, she worked at the Lyceum Theatre on multiple productions as a freelance youth theatre director, including *Romeo & Juliet* (2022) and *Macbeth (An Undoing)* (2023).

Currently, she works for Scottish Youth Theatre within their creative team, collaborating on various projects across Scotland throughout the year. Most recent projects include *Scratch That* (2025) at Aberdeen Arts Centre, and *Trajectories* (2025), that was presented at the Assembly Roxy at the end of April.



SOPHIE MICHELLE - DIRECTOR

Sophie Michelle is a Penicuik-made, turned Glasgow-based theatre-maker, and a co-founder of SKELF Theatre Co — dedicated to creating work that is raw and reflective, capturing the messy, human, and often uncomfortable truths that shape us.

She graduated with a BA (Hons) in Acting with Creative Enterprise from New College Lanarkshire in 2024, and also holds a Diploma in Arts and Humanities from the Open University.

Sophie's debut piece, *FOLKWHORE* (2021), was a one-woman spoken word show reimagining Scottish folklore through a modern lens, performed as part of Scottish Youth Theatre's Making Space Online Festival. Her most recent work, *Three's a Crowd* (2024), reflects her proud Lesbian identity. Sophie is passionate about creating queer theatre that explores the complexities of being young, queer, and Scottish.

SKELF THEATRE CO.

SKELF Theatre Co. is a collaborative theatre company based in Glasgow. Our focus is to create theatre that is honest, gritty, and thought-provoking.

SKELF Theatre Co. was formed out of necessity. We had identified a blatant lack of resources and opportunities to engage with the type of work we were aspiring to make. So, we decided one summer that we would do it ourselves.

As a company, we believe that artists, regardless of background or circumstance, should have the opportunity to practice a variety of creative disciplines. Because of this, our creative team is cyclical, allowing us to develop a varied skill-set whilst creating a new network of artistic alliances and cultivating creative connection.

Our work includes, *Pretty Pieces* (2018) by Charles Robertson, *The Effect* (2019) by Lucy Prebble, and *The Seagull (Not That One)* (2022 and 2023) by Phoebe Byrne and John Crooks - winner the Prague Fringe Inspiration Award for new work and the Prague Fringe Audience Award as voted for by attendees - and queer-comedy *Three's a Crowd* (2023) by Sophie Michelle.

We hope you will follow SKELF on our journey and enjoy the experience of theatre so close to the bone, it gets under your skin.

Instagram: @skelftheatreco
Facebook: SKELF Theatre Co.
Website: www.skelftheatreco.com

For further information please contact us
via email - skelftheatreco@gmail.com

CAST & CREATIVES

LEYLA AYCAN - WRITER & PERFORMER

PHOEBE BYRNE - PRODUCER

JOSIE MORRISON YOUNG - ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

JORDAN VANCE - SOUND DESIGNER

SOPHIE MICHELLE - DIRECTOR

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO

JORDAN VANCE

BRONAGH DOCHERTY

CAROLINE MCKEOWN

HARRY FRASER WATSON

ARIANA FERRIS MCLEAN

RYAN MACKAY

MADDIE GRIEVE

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NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND

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