

# Simon Stephens and Jo Clifford among Olwen Wymark Awards winners

NEWS APR 8, 2021 BY MATTHEW HEMLEY



Playwrights Simon Stephens (photo: Helen Maybanks) and Jo Clifford

Playwrights [Simon Stephens](#) and [Jo Clifford](#) have been honoured for supporting and nurturing new writing as part of this year's Olwen Wymark Theatre Encouragement Awards, which honours teachers, producers and creatives across the industry.

The accolades are given out by the Writers' Guild of Great Britain and this year's ceremony marks the 16th outing for the awards.

In total there are 33 recipients, which the WGGB said was a record number.

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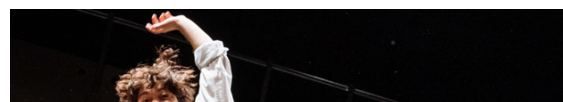
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Winners range from playwrights to community drama teachers, mentors, artistic directors, producers, dramaturgs, actors, casting agents and CEOs.

All have been recognised for nurturing and championing playwrights “during a hugely challenging year for the theatre sector”, the WGGB said.

They include: [Suzanne Bell](#), dramaturg at Manchester’s Royal Exchange Theatre, who was nominated by [Winsome Pinnock](#); theatre director Kirstie Davis, nominated by [Joyce Branagh](#); and the Royal Shakespeare Company’s head of literary Pippa Hill, nominated by [Juliet Gilkes Romero](#).

The recipients of the awards have “inspired confidence, showed sensitivity, compassion and a relentless commitment to ensure new work is made and new voices are heard”, the WGGB said.

Playwright Stephens was nominated by playwright Isla van Tricht, while Clifford was put forward by translator Katherine Mendelsohn.

The Olwen Wymark Theatre Encouragement Awards were developed by playwrights [Mark Ravenhill](#) and [David James](#), to give WGGB members the opportunity publicly to thank those who have given them a positive experience in new writing over the previous year.

Ravenhill said: “Good writers need champions, enablers, cheerleaders and door-openers if they are to reach an audience and to realise their potential. The Olwen Wymark



**Told by an Idiot’s Charlie and Stan t  
tour UK and run in West End**

Told by an Idiot’s production of Charlie and S  
has announced a national tour and West End



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APP

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Encouragement Awards are a fantastic opportunity to recognise, thank and celebrate the champions of new theatre writing across the country.”

James, who has organised the awards since 2005, described the awards as “a bright spot on the Writers’ Guild’s annual calendar”.

### **The full list of recipients:**

**Suzanne Bell**, dramaturg, the Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester. Nominated by Winsome Pinnock.

**Samir Bhamra**, chief executive, Phizzical Productions, creative director UK Asian Film Festival and 2021 senior producer Belgrade Theatre Coventry. Nominated by Shai Hussain.

**Philip Carne**, founder, the Carne Trust. Nominated by Tracy Harris.

**Alison Chaplin**, writer and manager at Arts on the Move. Nominated by Lucy Daniel Raby.

**Jo Clifford**, playwright, performer and translator. Nominated by Katherine Mendelsohn.

**Kirstie Davis**, freelance theatre director. Nominated by Joyce Branagh.

**Jessica Dromgoole**, audio drama producer. Nominated by Martin Sketchley.

**Tommo Fowler** and **Tamar Saphra**, co-founders, RoughHewn Dramaturgy. Nominated by Eve Leigh.

**Penny Gold**, former script editor, producer and literary manager, currently a playwright, literary consultant RSC, and undertaking dramaturgical work for Kali Theatre. Nominated by Seamus Finnegan.

**Grace Gummer**, director, dramaturg. Nominated by Natalie Mitchell.

**Kate Hall**, creative producer, Jumped Up



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Venues including Shakespeare's Globe, the R Opera House and Sadler's Wells have revealed the Covid-safety measures they will be implementing when audiences return in May

Theatre, Peterborough. Nominated by Nick Wood.

**Richard Hart** (Corestar Media), producer; **Jennifer Matter**, actor; **Manuel Puro**, casting director; **Karen Read**, producer and **Mark Wingett**, actor. Nominated by John Hales.

**Pippa Hill**, head of literary at the Royal Shakespeare Company. Nominated by Juliet Gilkes Romero.

**Julia Holofcener**, theatre producer. Nominated by Giles Cole.

**Gemma Jenkins**, producer, BBC Audio Drama, London. Nominated by Ian Billings.

**Coni Koepfinger**, director, AirPlay and Determined Women, playwright in residence at Cosmic Orchid Theatre, NYC, Manhattan Repertory Theatre, NYC. Nominated by Brian McAvera.

**Maria Leaf**, teacher, Green School For Boys/Francis Holland/St Marylebone Weekend School. Nominated by Susan Wokoma.

**David Mansell**, script editor/dramaturg, Professional Writing Academy. Nominated by Emily Beecher.

**Jake Murray**, artistic director, Elysium Theatre Company. Nominated by Mike Elliston.

**Julia Negus** and **Chris O'Connell**, artist-producer and writer-director, Theatre Absolute. Nominated by Alexandra Johnson.

**Stef O'Driscoll**, freelance director. Nominated by Sophie Ellerby.

**Shereen Jasmin Phillips**, director of Taking Part at the Young Vic. Nominated by Somalia Seaton.

**Léonie Scott-Matthews**, artistic director of Pentameters Theatre. Nominated by Jan Woolf.

**Zoë Simpson**, producer, PW Productions.

Nominated by Matthew Hurt.

**Paul Smith**, artistic director and joint chief executive, Middle Child Theatre, Hull.

Nominated by Luke Barnes.

**Simon Stephens**, playwright, teacher.

Nominated by Isla van Tricht.

**Chaz Webb**, stage manager. Nominated by Will Jackson.

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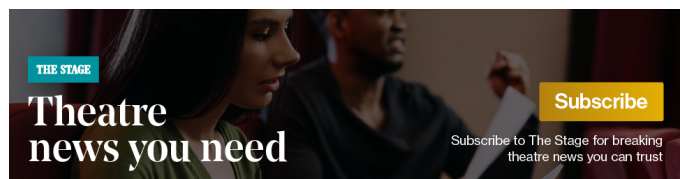
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