

# James McDermott

Writer

Represented by:

Jessica Stewart

James McDermott graduated from the University of East Anglia with an MA (Distinction) in Scriptwriting. He was the recipient of UEA's Malcolm Bradbury MA in Scriptwriting Bursary 2015. James trained on The Royal Court Writers Group, Soho Theatre Writers Lab, Hampstead Theatre's Inspire: The Next Playwright Programme, Criterion Theatre's New Writing Group, Menagerie Theatre's Young Writers' Workshop, Hat Trick Productions Your Voice Your Story Scheme and BBC's EastEnders Writers Shadow Scheme. James's plays published by Samuel French/Concord include 'Jab' (Finborough Theatre; nominated for an Off West End Theatre Award for Best New Play; nominated for a London Pub Theatres Standing Ovation Award), 'Time & Tide' (Park Theatre/East of England Tour; nominated for an Off West End Theatre Award for Best New Play; longlisted for the Bruntwood Playwriting Prize; shortlisted for the Snoo Wilson Playwriting Prize) and 'Rubber Ring' (Pleasance Islington/UK Tour; Winner of Pulse Festival's Suitcase Prize). James's other plays include 'More Ghost Stories By Candlelight' (HighTide; East of England tour/Sam Wanamaker Playhouse) 'Acid's Reign' (Vaults Festival 2023), 'The Birds & The Bees' (New Wolsey/UK Tour), 'Robin Good: The Politico-Panto' (Norwich Playhouse) and 'Fast Food' (Lyric Hammersmith Gala; starring Jude Law). James has written multiple episodes of BBC One soap opera 'EastEnders' and audio plays for BBC Radio 4. His short films include 'Clause', which was nominated for Best East Anglian Film at Norwich Film Festival 2023 and was part of the Official Selection at BAFTA Qualifying Norwich Film Festival 2023, Italy's Lover's Film Festival 2023, Queer Wave Cyprus LGBTQIA+ Film Festival 2023 and Beijing Queer Film Festival 2023.

## TELEVISION

DATE	PRODUCTION (ROLE)	COMPANY	PROJECT DETAILS
2021 -	EASTENDERS	BBC	Writer of multiple episodes of the BBC One soap opera

## THEATRE

DATE	PRODUCTION (ROLE)	COMPANY	PROJECT DETAILS
2024	MORE... GHOST STORIES BY CANDLELIGHT	HighTide	Play consisting of four contemporary ghost stories set in the East of England; co-written with Tassa Deparis, Eloise Pennycott and Aisha Zia; directed by Emily Ling Williams; commissioned and produced by HighTide in association with Eastern Angles and Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds; touring venues in the East of England in Autumn 2024 before transferring to Sam Wanamaker Playhouse at Shakespeare's Globe

2024	JAB	Finsborough Theatre	<p>Starred Kacey Ainsworth and Liam Tobin; directed by Scott Le Crass; produced at London's Finborough Theatre from 20th February - 16th March 2024; published by Samuel French; nominated for three Off West End Theatre Awards for Best New Play, Best Direction and Best Performance Duo; nominated for a London Pub Theatres Standing Ovation Award.</p> <p>"Jab' is going to be the COVID related play against which all others are measured" London Theatre 1</p> <p>"If plays about the pandemic are somewhat inevitable, may they all be as sensitive and sensational as 'Jab'" All That Dazzles</p> <p>"In capturing one household's experience of lockdown, McDermott has successfully captured the mood of the nation... 'Jab' is a Covid-era defining play" Theatre Weekly</p> <p>"McDermott's unique two-hander follows the breakdown of a relationship, and society, in tandem... The personal and the panoramic are mirrored effortlessly and it is impossible to remain unaffected by McDermott's writing" Spy In The Stalls</p> <p>"McDermott manages to fit the complex emotions that many of us are still trying to process into a deft and memorable 75 minutes... an important and timely reminder of the impact of COVID on our lives and our relationships" Everything Theatre</p>
2023	SHANTY	Sheringham Little Theatre	<p>Play exploring creativity, community and East of England identity through a family of Norfolk shanty singers; written on Mercury Theatre's Playwrights Programme 2020; produced at Sheringham Little Theatre in August 2023; directed by Marcus Romer.</p>
2023	ACID'S REIGN	Relish Theatre	<p>Drag cabaret play exploring the impact of climate change on the queer community; starring Scarlett Harlett (RuPaul's Drag Race UK) and Son Of A Tutu (Everybody's Talking About Jamie Movie); supported with funding from Arts Council England and The Peggy Ramsay Foundation; researched &amp; developed at Theatre Deli and Hampstead Theatre in October 2021; produced by Relish Theatre at London's Vaults Festival in March 2023.</p> <p>"McDermott's plot is clever and funny... Acid's Reign is one of the best drag shows I've seen and stands out as a highlight of Vault Festival" Centre Stage</p> <p>"This is a fun and funny show with an important message" The Reviews Hub</p> <p>"Acid's Reign is a very well written and funny play that succeeds in convincing its audience that the climate crisis is also a queer crisis" All That Dazzles</p> <p>"A brilliant show - funny, informative, entertaining and a feast for the eyes" Get The Chance</p> <p>"A cleverly written piece which brings an important topic to a well-receiving audience" Lost In Theatre Land</p>
2022	TIME AND TIDE - EAST OF ENGLAND TOUR 2022	Relish Theatre / Norwich Theatre	<p>East of England tour of the 2020 production that ran at Park Theatre; play exploring the lives of the staff of a crumbling caff on Cromer Pier; directed by Rob Ellis; co-produced by Relish Theatre and Norwich Theatre; toured East of England theatres September-October 2022</p>

2022	THE BIRDS AND THE BEES	New Wolsey / Norwich Theatre / Theatre Royal BSE / John Stalker Productions	Relocation to East Anglia of Mark Crawford's Canadian play 'The Birds And The Bees'; commissioned by New Wolsey Ipswich; co-produced by New Wolsey, Norwich Theatre, Theatre Royal BSE and John Stalker Productions; directed by Pete Rowe; toured the East of England in Spring 2022.  "Razor-sharp steamy and sexually charged comedy" WhatsOnStage  "A gentle piece about love, lust, family and farming. This comedy is as sweet as honey... the cast are the bees knees' The Times
2021	ROBIN GOOD: THE POLITICO-PANTO	Norwich Playhouse	Political LGBTQ themed pantomime commissioned and produced by Norwich Playhouse; directed by Chris Cuming; ran at Norwich Playhouse in December 2021.  "A 90 minute romp of wry non-stop gags from the acerbic pen of McDermott, Robin Good is a delightful tongue-in-cheek view of the modern world" Outline Magazine
2021	GHOSTED	Sheringham Little Theatre / St George's Theatre Great Yarmouth	Promenade theatre piece fusing live action and technology to explore teenage lives in rural Norfolk; directed by Marcus Romer; supported with funding from Arts Council England; produced at Sheringham Little Theatre and St George's Theatre Great Yarmouth in June 2021; revived at Great Yarmouth's Out There Street Art Festival in September 2021.
2021	SENSELESS	Norwich Theatre Royal / Guildhall School Of Acting / UEA	Play using live action and VR technology; co-commissioned by Norwich Theatre Royal, Guildhall School Of Acting and UEA for UEA's Future and Form: 50th Anniversary of their Literature, Drama and Creative Writing Department; supported with funding from Arts Council England; streamed as part of Norfolk and Norwich Festival in May 2021.
2020	TIME AND TIDE	Park Theatre, London	Play exploring the lives of the staff of a crumbling caff on Cromer Pier; directed by Rob Ellis; produced at Park Theatre, London in February 2020; published by Samuel French; nominated for two Off West End Theatre Awards for Best New Play and Best Supporting Performance (Elliot Liburd).  Boyz Magazine, The Gay UK, Pocket Size Theatre, The Review Chap  Reviews Hub, Theatre News, London Theatre 1, The Upcoming, Everything Theatre, QX Magazine, Morning Star "Catch it if you can. So moving, funny, truthful and compelling. Beautifully performed by a wonderful cast of four superb actors" Stephen Fry (via Twitter)
2019	CAMP!	Norwich Arts Centre / Norwich Theatre Royal	Cabaret play exploring fake news and the state-sanctioned anti-gay purges in Chechnya; co-commissioned by Norwich Arts Centre and Norwich Theatre Royal; supported with funding from Arts Council England; performed at venues in the East and Soho Theatre; directed by Lucy Farrant and James McDermott.
2019	SPARE CHANGE	HighTide / Eastern Angles	Rehearsed reading of a play exploring the lives of the staff of a Sheringham amusement arcade; co-commissioned by HighTide and Eastern Angles; supported with funding from Arts Council England; performed at HighTide Festival Aldeburgh in September 2019; directed by Scott Hurran.
2019	MIXED UP	INK's Feast From The East	Short play about music, mix tapes and trans identity; produced at INK Festival at The Cut Halesworth before a two week tour of East Anglia and a three week run at The Tristan Bates Theatre as part of INK's Feast From The East; directed by James Christopher.
2019	STREET LIFE	Norwich Theatre Royal	Verbatim play exploring homelessness in Norfolk; commissioned by Norwich Theatre Royal; produced at NTR Stage Two; directed by Laila France and Darren France.

2018	FIFTY YEARS	Criterion Theatre	Rehearsed reading of a play exploring fifty years of gay British history; produced at The Criterion Theatre in London's West End as part of their new writing showcase; directed by Nel Crouch.
2018	BASED ON A TRUE STORY		Theatre in education play exploring diversity and bullying in schools; co-written with Rob Salmon; performed at New Wolsey and toured East Anglian schools; directed by Rob Salmon.
2017	FAST FOOD	Harts Theatre Company / Lyric Hammersmith	Short play exploring gay hook ups; starred Jude Law; commissioned by Harts Theatre Company for Lyric Gala 2017; produced at Lyric Hammersmith; directed by Sean Holmes.
2017	ORDINARY BOYS	Royal Court	Short play exploring teenage life in Norfolk; produced in The Royal Court's bar as part of The Play List; directed by The Royal Court's Young Agitators.
2017	STEAM	Hart's Festival New Writing Showcase / Lyric Hammersmith	Short play exploring teenage life in Norfolk; produced at Lyric Hammersmith as part of Hart's Festival New Writing Showcase; directed by Roy Alexander Weise.
2017	MAN HUG	Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds	Winner of The Anglian Voices Playwriting Competition 2017
2017	COME YEW IN: THE PROUD HISTORY OF STRANGERS IN NORWICH (Co-writer)	The Common Lot, Norfolk County Council & Norwich Arts Centre	Co-written with Simon Floyd, Liam Offord and Mags Chalcraft Tour of Norfolk Parks and Council Estates
2017	BRO'S	Rabbit's Riot Theatre Company	Where We Are Now LGBTQ Fest, Ireland Winner of HighTide Academy Showcase Award 2016
2017	OUT140 (Co-writer)	Norfolk County Council Norwich Arts Centre & Norwich Pride	Co-written with Shelly Telly and Vince Laws Norfolk & Norwich Festival
2016	HIDE	University of East Anglia and RSPB	Co-written with Steve Waters Strumpshaw RSPB Nature Reserve, Norfolk
2016	RUBBER RING	Velvet Trumpet Theatre Company	Solo play  The Lowry Manchester, Pulse New Wolsey, Brighton Fringe, Tristan Bates, Pleasance Islington  WINNER: Pulse Festival's Suitcase Prize 2017 LONGLISTED: Verity Bargate Award 2015 & BBC Writersroom Scriptroom 11  London City Nights, Boyz Magazine  West End Wilma, Hiive, LondonTheatre1, Scatter of Opinion, Carns Theatre Passion, Auditorium Magazine
2016	HALF A PERSON	UEA's Minotaur Theatre Company	Winner of UEA Minotaur Theatre Company's Writing Competition  UEA Drama Studio

2015	BEACHED	Menagerie's Hotbed New Writing Festival	Southwark Playhouse, Latitude, Cambridge Junction Longlisted for The Kenneth Branagh Drama Award
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## AUDIO DRAMA

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DATE	PRODUCTION (ROLE)	COMPANY	PROJECT DETAILS
2022	MIXED UP	Pier Productions / BBC Radio 4	Audio drama exploring gender identity and the pop music; commissioned and produced by Pier Productions for BBC Radio 4's United Kingdoms; broadcast on BBC Radio 4 on 31st January 2022.

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## SHORT FILM

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DATE	PRODUCTION (ROLE)	PROJECT DETAILS
2023	CLAUSE	<p>Short film exploring the effects of Thatcher's Clause 28 bill on two gay school teachers in the 1980s; directed and produced by Scott Hurren.</p> <p>Nominated - Best East Anglian Film - Norwich Film Festival 2023            Official Selection &amp; UK Premiere - BAFTA Qualifying Norwich Film Festival 2023            Official Selection and World Premiere - Italy Lover's Film Festival 2023            Official Selection - Queer Wave Cyprus LGBTQIA+ Film Festival 2023            Official Selection - Beijing Queer Film Festival 2023            Official Selection - British Shorts Berlin 2024</p>

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## TRAINING

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DATE	PRODUCTION (ROLE)	COMPANY
2021	EastEnders Writers Shadow Scheme	BBC Studios
2021	BBC Studios Talentworks Sketch Comedy Writing Intensive	BBC Studios
2020	Mercury Theatre Playwrights Development Programme	Mercury Theatre
2019	HighTide First Commissions Scheme	HighTide
2019	Hampstead Theatre's Inspire: The Next Playwright Program	Hampstead Theatre
2018	Park Theatre's Script Accelerator Program	Park Theatre, London
2018	Hat Trick Productions Your Voice Your Story TV Comedy Writing Initiative	Hat Trick Productions
2018	Criterion Theatre New Writing Group	Criterion Theatre
2017	Writer's Program	Royal Court

2017	Playwriting Program	Papatango
2016-2017	Writer's Lab	Soho Theatre
2016	East of England Talent Development Scheme	BFI
2016	Young Writers Academy	HighTide
2015-2016	MA in Scriptwriting (Distinction)	University of East Anglia
2012-2015	BA Hons Scriptwriting & Performance (First Class)	University of East Anglia