

# The Gospel According to Jesus Queen of Heaven

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JESUS QUEEN OF HEAVEN

By Jo Clifford

Directed by Susan Worsfold

Press Report

**Edinburgh Festival Fringe**

**Summerhall 5 - 30 August 2015**

Part of the **Made In Scotland** programme



# The Gospel According to Jesus Queen of Heaven



## OVERVIEW

The Gospel According to Jesus Queen of Heaven was performed at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe as part of the Summerhall and Made in Scotland programmes.

This report lays out the press coverage highlights including the reception from the world's press who descend on the city for the world's largest arts festival.

The show received great coverage and warm support from press and media, *The Scotsman*, *Sunday Herald*, *The List*, *Guardian* and festival publications including *Fest*, *Feminist Fest* and *To Do List*.

The production also had brilliant support from the blogging community including Andrew Haydon's *Postcards From Gods*, Kieran Hurley and Andrew Eaton-Lewis for *Bella Caledonia* and Catherine Love writing for *Exeunt*.

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## REVIEWS

### Scotsgay

★★★★★

Mary Woodward

8 August

<http://sgfringe.com/2015/08/08/the-gospel-according-to-jesus-queen-of-heaven/>

*“Jo Clifford held us spellbound, effortlessly drawing us into her world, wrapping us in the warmth of her love, caressing us with her voice”*

### Fest Magazine

★★★★

Stewart Pringle

9 August

<https://www.festmag.co.uk/theatre/102703-the-gospel-according-jesus-queen-heaven>

*“a rare and beautiful reflection on the life of Jesus, a female Jesus, or perhaps a transgender one, and a meditation on a more truthful and generous interpretation of her words”*

*“a deeply spiritual, almost sacred hour, preaching kindness and bravery in the face of cruelty, ignorance and fear”*

### Guardian

Lyn Gardner

10 August

<http://www.theguardian.com/stage/theatreblog/2015/aug/10/reviewing-the-reviews-edinburgh-fringe-theatre-star-ratings>

*“Jo Clifford’s moving and infinitely graceful The Gospel According to Jesus, Queen of Heaven ... deserves more than a consumer rating”*

### The Skinny

★★★

Emma Ainley-Walker

14 August

*“Truly a play for a modern and hopefully enlightened, or to-be-enlightened society”*

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## **The List**

★★★★

Lorna Irvine

17 August

*"profound and moving, witty and filthy, a wake-up call to tolerance, love and acceptance with an intoxicating secular potency"*

*"A tender, thought-provoking piece of work"*

## **Scotsman**

★★★★

Sally Stott

25 August

*"a profound and immersive experience"*

*"a playful piece that quietly develops into something genuinely enlightening"*

## **Postcards from Gods**

### **Andrew Haydon**

(NB: this is a very personal critical response from Andrew. Worth reading in full before quoting)

<http://postcardsgods.blogspot.co.uk/2015/08/the-gospel-according-to-jesus-queen-of.html>

*"beautifully written, colloquial retelling of Christ's parables and moments from the life of Jesus"*

*"I did like this piece an awful lot. I have almost complete sympathy with what it says..."*

## **Sunday Herald**

### **Mark Brown**

23 August

*"This humanistic sermon has much to commend it... rooted meaningfully in the teaching of the New Testament"*

*"the theatrical sermon is redolent with Christ's embrace of the socially marginalized"*

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**Exeunt Magazine**

**Catherine Love**

23 August

<http://exeuntmagazine.com/features/a-question-of-faith/>

*“the blessing feels many times more meaningful than any of the empty prayers I’ve dutifully whispered on cold church pews”*

*“The whole performance – tender, thoughtful, somehow sacred – feels like a gift”*

**Scotsman On Sunday**

**Mark Fisher**

30 August

*“Jo Clifford’s beautiful morning prayer of a show is equally inspired by the joys of sex and the lust for life.”*

*“Hers is a New Testament vision of a Jesus whose message of love is uncompromising and unconditional, radical and revolutionary.”*

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## PREVIEWS

There was great support and anticipation of Jesus Queen of Heaven returning to the stage for the 2015 Festival.

**Gareth Vile**

**The List Festival Guide**

'God Only Knows'

Feature

Gareth wrote about religion as a theme at the 2015 Festival and spoke to Jo about JQH and her own faith.

**Andrew Eaton-Lewis**

Bella-Caledonia

Feature

<http://bellacaledonia.org.uk/2015/07/17/the-age-of-gendersaurus/>

**Joyce Macmillan**

**The Scotsman**

4 July

*'A notable surge in work about transgender experience and issues'*

Feature

Joyce Macmillan, chief theatre critic for the Scotsman picks the shows that make up her highlights for the Festival.

<http://www.scotsman.com/what-s-on/theatre-comedy-dance/there-s-a-fringe-show-for-that-1-3821686#axzz3ojWL034q>

**LGBT Icons**

**Jo Clifford**

7 July

Jo wrote a blog for LGBT Icons in which she detailed why she wrote JQH and told her story to the blog which is run by Edinburg couple Barry & Josef Church-Woods and well-read around the world. It's not primarily an arts blog.

<http://lgbticons.com/2015/07/08/the-gospel-according-to-jesus-queen-of-heaven/>

**Ben Walters**

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## **The Guardian**

29 July

*'Transgender Fringe'*

Feature

Ben wrote about the prevalence of trans\* stories at the 2015 festival and JQH – used as the lead picture - was featured on the home page of guardian.com

<http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2015/jul/29/edinburgh-fringe-trans-life-transgender>

## **The Scotsman**

**Susan Mansfield**

10 August

Feature

Susan met with Jo at her home in July and they spoke about bringing the play back to the festival and how Jo came to write JQH.

The piece was featured online and in the Scotsman festival guide.

<http://www.wow247.co.uk/2015/08/10/the-transgender-presence-at-the-fringe-is-stronger-than-ever/>