MULTIDISCIPLINED ARTIST BRIAN CATLING RESURRECTS HISTORICAL SCOTTISH FIGURE IN FIRST-EVER PLAY AT EDINBURGH FESTIVAL FRINGE

Praise for Brian Catling's *The Vorrh Trilogy Series*

"Brian Catling is simply a genius. His writing is so extraordinary it hurts" **Terry Gilliam**

"These are luminous and visionary novels." **Alex Preston, The Observer**

Praise for Josh Roche's *My Name is Rachel Corrie* at Young Vic

"a deeply moving human document and ... stunningly performed." ★★★★ **The Guardian**

"Humorous and humanising." ★★★★ **The Stage**

Critically acclaimed RA sculptor, poet, novelist, film maker, academician and performance artist **Brian Catling** will bring his first-ever play *Resurrecting Bobby Awl* to Edinburgh Festival Fringe from 31st July to 25th August at 4pm at Summerhall, Anatomy Lecture Theatre.

"All said he would be remembered forever."

From the creator of the *Vorrh Trilogy,* this new play charts the story of disabled street urchin Robert Kirkwood, a beggar better known as Bobby Awl who survived in the bleak gritty poverty of 19th century Edinburgh. Between Bobby's parents giving him up at birth for being less than human, and his tragic death in 1820 from a mule kick in the groin, he was famous. All said his name would live forever, but instead it was wiped out of Scottish history.

Brian Catling says: "I first discovered Bobby in a high attic museum of the Edinburgh Phrenological Collection, where a post mortem cast of his head lived alongside the famous, the infamous, the talented and the abnormal. That is where the fascination began and I soon found of a rare chap book on his life. In 2007, I rewrote the tales of his sad and fierce life and created a solo exhibition in 2008 of small egg tempera portraits of cyclopses, with the Bobby plaster cast at the Ingleby Gallery Edinburgh. This play continues to carry the aim to re-establish the identity and humanity of one of Scotland's lesser sons."

Directed by **Josh Roche** (JMK Winner 2017), through a blend of storytelling and sculpture, Brian's new play will unlock Bobby from forgetfulness, re-inserting Robert Kirkwood into Edinburgh's mythology. The piece explores society's relationship to its most marginalised members, and will be performed by an ensemble of disabled and non-disabled

actors. Produced by **Avalon** and **BBC Arts.**

Further praise for Brian Catling's *Vorrh Trilogy Series*:

"One of the most original works of visionary fiction since Mervyn Peake."
Michael Moorcock, The Guardian

"Like the best fantasy writers Catling succeeds in creating a compelling and believable parallel dimension."
Daily Mail

"'In The Vorrh we have one of the most original and stunning works of fantasy that has ever been my privilege to read." **Alan Moore**

"The English language has given birth to some great works of unbounded vision and imagination, and here is another one… a very sophisticated and subtle exploration of the decadent, the primitive and the mythical."
Philip Pullman

"I am glad to have the book as a companion on my own dark quest."
Tom Waits

Further praise for Josh Roche's *My Name is Rachel Corrie* at Young Vic:

"The brilliance of Josh Roche's JMK award-winning staging is that it balances the two – honouring Corrie's personal politics and experiences while resisting a play that wants to politicise both."
★★★★ **What's On Stage**

ENDS

For more information and press tickets, please contact: Lily Marriott at lmarriott@avalonuk.com or edinburghpress@avalonuk.com / 0207 598 7222

EDINBURGH FRINGE LISTINGS INFORMATION

Resurrecting Bobby Awl

Venue:	Summerhall, Anatomy Lecture Theatre
Date & Time:	31st July to 25th August at 4pm (excluding 1st, 12th & 19th)
Duration:	60 mins
Web:	www.festival19.summerhall.co.uk

About Summerhall

Every year, Summerhall brings a bold and challenging programme to the Edinburgh Fringe, with exciting, brand-new shows across the full spectrum of performance arts. Its past programmes have "*rewired the Fringe*" (The Stage), winning multiple Fringe First and Total Theatre awards, and bringing leading theatre-makers to the Fringe.

About BBC Arts

The BBC is the biggest creator of arts content and is Britain's creative partner – a stage for the nation to experience the very best arts; when they want, how they want.

- The nation's stage: access to arts and culture programming for all through the licence fee – we create and showcase more arts and culture than any other broadcaster

- An Innovator: constantly finding new ways to bring the best quality culture to audiences; working with the arts sector as partner and acting as a hot house for new talent
- Britain's creative partner: a bold force in the UK creative sector as creator and commissioner, also a platform for new talent
- An investor in quality: we only present the highest quality arts and culture programming, crafted by skilled production teams and shared with all audiences
- Bringing the nation together: like no other we create and amplify moments in arts and culture, cutting through with a broad audience

About Avalon

Avalon is a multi-award winning talent management, live promotion and television production group with offices in the UK and the USA.

The talent management arm has discovered and represents many artists which are household names, both in the UK, the USA, and around the world.

Through Avalon Promotions the group produced *Newman and Baddiel: Live at Wembley*, the UK's first arena comedy show; Jerry Springer: The Opera, the first West End show to win all four UK **Best New Musical** awards; and has continued to produce live shows globally, as well as promoting more winners and nominees of the prestigious Edinburgh Comedy Award than any other company.

In 2017 Avalon was named the top true independent television production company in the UK and has produced numerous ground-breaking television shows including: Emmy and Peabody award winner *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (HBO), multi-award winning and Emmy-nominated *Catastrophe* (Channel 4/Amazon Prime), RTS and Rose d'Or winning *Not Going Out* (BBC1's longest running sitcom currently on air), BAFTA and RTS-nominated Taskmaster (DAVE), multi-BAFTA award winning *TV Burp* (ITV1), *Russell Howard's Good News* (BBC2), *Fantasy Football League* (BBC/ITV) and *Workaholics* (Comedy Central USA).

Avalon Television, Liberty Bell Productions, Flame Television and Topical Television form the television arm of the company and other shows currently in production include: *The Button* (BBC One), *Not Going Out* (BBC One) *Taskmaster USA* (Comedy Central), *Man Down (C4), The Chris Ramsey Show* (Comedy Central), *Russell Howard & Mum: Road Trip* (Comedy Central), *Unspun with Matt Forde* (Dave) and *Stand Up Central with Chris Ramsey* (Comedy Central); whilst the catalogue is sold worldwide by Avalon Distribution.

For Avalon news visit: www.avalonuk.com/press, @Avalon_Press and @Avalon_Theatre