

## JOHN MCGRATH

### Writer

Born in Merseyside, 1935, of an Irish immigrant family and brought up in North Wales. His first plays were performed when he was at Oxford and after THE TENT was presented at the Royal Court, John spent several years in television, writing and directing. He directed the first episode of Z-CARS, which ran for seventeen years. Much of his writing and directing in television has been experimental and he has made many documentaries on film and video.

He has written over forty stage plays, including THE CHEVIOT THE STAG AND THE BLACK BLACK OIL, FISH IN THE SEA, BAKKE'S NIGHT OF FAME, COMRADE JACOB, RANDOM HAPPENINGS IN THE HEBRIDES and EVENTS WHILE HOLDING THE BOFORS GUN. The latter was filmed for Universal as THE BOFORS GUN with Nicol Williamson. He also wrote the screenplay THE RECKONING (Columbia) for Nicol Williamson and the screenplay for Ken Russell's film BILLION DOLLAR BRAIN (United Artists).

In 1971 he founded the 7:84 Theatre Company (so called because John had read that 84% of Britain's wealth was owned by just 7% of the population), and was involved in writing and directing plays with them for seventeen years. During that time he also wrote and directed several plays for Today for the BBC. Also BLOOD RED ROSES, a three part serial for Channel Four and Lorimar.

His stage works include BORDER WARFARE and JOHN BROWN'S BODY, both of which were subsequently produced on television as part of a nine hour trilogy entitled THERE IS A HAPPY LAND, presented as a popular history of Scotland. John wrote the screenplay for Beryl Bainbridge's THE DRESSMAKER (Freeway Films) with Billie Whitelaw. John re-wrote ROBIN HOOD for Twentieth Century Fox, dir John Irvin, 1991.

As a producer John's credits include CARRINGTON (Freeway Films) Christopher Hampton's directional debut starring Emma Thompson and Jonathan Pryce, 1995 co-produced with Ronnie Shedlo. LIQUID LIPS 1976, MAIRI MHOR 1993, TELL THEM JOHNNY WADD IS HERE 1975 and more recently MA VIE EN ROSE.

Books include A GOOD NIGHT OUT and THE BONE WON'T BREAK (Methuen) John was awarded the BAFTA Writers Guild Lifetime Achievement Award. In 1998 John created and was the Artistic Director of the MOONSTONE FESTIVAL – A Screenwriter's Laboratory.

1992 - THE WICKED OLD MAN, West Yorkshire Playhouse  
1992/3 - THE LONG ROADS, BBC/Screen II  
1996 - HALF THE PICTURE, BBC/Screen Two  
1995/6 - THE CLEARANCES, Edinburgh Film and Video Production  
1996/7 - THE SILVER DARLINGS, Original screenplay and Producer

John was working on various screenplay, including 'BYRON'S MARRIAGE', up until his death in January 2002.

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