

JAMES FRITZ – COMMENT IS FREE

WINNER OF THE IMISON & TINNISWOOD AWARDS 2017

James Fritz was a double award winner at the 2017 BBC Audio Drama Awards, winning both the Imison and Tinniswood Awards for his original audio drama script *Comment is Free*. He is the first dramatist to solely win both awards with a debut script.

The Archers writer Tim Stimpson presented Fritz with prizes totalling £5,000 at the [BBC's Audio Drama Awards](#) on 29 January 2017. The star-studded ceremony was hosted by Sir Lenny Henry.

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Imison judges said: 'A fiercely current, socially relevant and dramatic depiction of free speech and mob mentality. A skilfully crafted cacophony of hundreds of voices, the script uses social media as a powerful and contemporary means of comment'.

Tinniswood judges said: 'In the wake of the murder of Jo Cox, this diamond sharp exploration of the current state of public debate couldn't have been more prescient. Acutely observed and not without humour, we particularly admired how the scale of its construction combined with the efficiency of its storytelling. A brave and provocative Afternoon Play'.

Synopsis: Everybody hates journalist Alistair Cooper. Starring Rachael Stirling (*Capital*) and Tobias Menzies (*Game of Thrones*) alongside a cast of hundreds, Hilary watches her husband's story get chewed up and spat out by an unscrupulous media and a divided public.

Comment is Free was produced by Becky Ripley, BBC Radio & Music Bristol and was broadcast on BBC Radio 4. [Listen Again](#)

James Fritz's second audio drama *Death of a Cosmonaut* will air on BBC Radio 4 in April. His stage plays include: *Four Minutes Twelve Seconds* winner of a 2015 Critics' Circle Theatre Award; *The Fall* written for the 2016 National Youth Theatre's 60th anniversary season; *Ross & Rachel* which returns to Battersea Arts Centre in April; and the 2015 Bruntwood Prize winning *Parliament Square* which is in development with The Royal Exchange Theatre.

2017 SHORTLISTS AND JUDGES

Imison Award judges were Stefan Buczacki, Isla Gray, Christopher William Hill, Catherine Johnson, Jamila Gavin, Marcy Kahan, Hilary Robinson, Mike Walker and Elizabeth-Anne Wheal. The other shortlisted writers were James Meek for *The Virtues of Oblivion* and Jonny O'Neill for *Community Service* [more about the shortlist](#)

Tinniswood Award judges were Nicholas McNerny, Shelley Silas and Tim Stimpson. The other shortlisted writers were Timothy X Atack for *The Stroma Sessions* and Oliver Emanuel for *A History of Paper*. [More about the shortlist](#)

ABOUT THE IMISON AND TINNISWOOD AWARDS

The awards aim to promote the best scripts broadcast in the UK between 1 October 2015 and 31 October 2016 with the Imison rewarding the best debut script.



The **Imison Award** was founded in 1993 by the Society of Authors to commemorate BBC producer Richard Imison, We are very grateful to the [Peggy Ramsay Foundation](#) for their generous sponsorship of the £3,000 prize. Previous winners include Gabriel Gbadamosi, Mike Bartlett, Lee Hall and Nell Leyshon.



The Tinniswood Award was established in 2003 by the [Society of Authors](#) and the [Writers' Guild of Great Britain](#) to commemorate writer Peter Tinniswood. We are grateful to the [Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society](#) for their generous sponsorship of the Tinniswood Award, including the £2,000 prize. Previous winners include Morwenna Banks, Murray Gold, Rachel Joyce and Stephen Wyatt.

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