
**Sunday 19 August 2012
FOR IMMEDIATE USE**

**The chemical generation's raconteur Irvine Welsh
talks to Doug Johnstone at the Edinburgh International Book Festival**

Irvine Welsh joined fellow author Doug Johnstone on stage at the Edinburgh International Book Festival last night in an event sponsored by Tangent Graphic, to talk about *Skagboys*, his prequel to the cult classic *Trainspotting*: "If *Trainspotting*'s a book about Renton trying to get off heroin, *Skagboys* is a book about Renton trying to get on heroin." Welsh said.

After a reading from a delightfully obscene chapter of his book, Welsh revealed that despite not wanting "to go back to the same characters again", he felt that many of his characters deserved a bit more explanation as to how and why they ended up on the paths they found themselves; to emphasise the rather "coincidental" fact that when jobs began to disappear under Thatcher's government, heroin started to become more readily available. Another incentive, he said, came from acknowledging the fact that "the characters were going to outlive" him; expressing his fear that once he was gone, there might be an attempt to create a novel out of all the disjointed and unfinished scraps of prose he had jotted down whilst completing *Trainspotting*.

Despite his supreme dexterity with the Scottish vernacular, Welsh revealed that it took a lot of practice to set an authentic tone without it becoming "gibberish", asserting that he always "starts out writing in Standard English" before translating it into the language of the Leith boys we all know and love.

So what's next in the pipeline for Mr Welsh? Well if cutting TV dramas are your thing then you'll be pleased to know that he has written the script for a new HBO series *Knuckle*, based on the hit Sundance documentary about the culture of bare knuckle fighting in Ireland. When asked if *Porno* or *Skagboys* were going to be adapted for the big screen, Welsh replied that actually the plan was to turn the whole *Trainspotting* trilogy into a three part TV series, with possible collaborations with Channel 4 or the BBC. But if, like us, it's Welsh's books which get your blood pumping, you won't be disappointed: "It's going to be a slice of lesbian noir set in Miami". We cannae wait!

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