

# St George's West Shandwick Place

Anyone who visited the venue at St George's West in Shandwick Place last year will recall how difficult it was to get there because of the roadworks – even walking along the pavement was tricky!

The show staged there last year was about the Malawian child, Mercy, being adopted by Madonna. The show was not only entertaining but rather controversial too, particularly as the audience was asked to vote on the child's fate when the story had been told. It was a good show typical of the Fringe – an overseas drama group bringing a story to Edinburgh which we might otherwise not have heard.

The [BBC news website](#) and [The Scotsman](#) relate the story about the former church which has been kept afloat as an important venue in the past with donations from Kylie Minogue and the actor Brian Cox.

Has this venue now fallen victim to the tramworks? Or are the costs of Edinburgh Fringe venues simply too high in this economic climate?

Other venues have their own problems. It was only in March this year that [The Scotsman](#) ran the story of The Assembly Rooms which faces a lack of cash for refurbishment after being turned down for National Lottery funding. The Assembly Rooms is the biggest venue during the three week period when the Fringe hits town. The ballroom could not be used last year as it needed emergency works. In the 2010/11 City of Edinburgh Council Budget the sum of £2million has been set aside for refurbishment of The Assembly Rooms. It is not yet known when the works will begin.

It is reported elsewhere that if a Fringe show breaks even it

is thought to be doing well. Ricky Gervais played to 3,000 people at a single performance last year, whilst some shows struggle to half-fill their venues unless they do really attractive flyers or employ some neat marketing.

It is well known among Edinburgh people that you can let city flats out during August for a weekly rent of about the same as you would get for a month, so accommodation charges for performers are hefty too. (No I will never forget the day I phoned some friends only to find that they really had let their flat to Tony Blair for a week or two.....or was it Clinton.....no actually it was Rory Bremner!)

The Edinburgh Fringe Festival runs from 6th to 30th August 2010, come what may.