

Leith On The Fringe 5-29 August 2011

(By Giulia Mattei and Ben Graham)

This year, for the first time, Leith will take part in the [Edinburgh Fringe Festival](#) this August, with an exciting programme of events to be enjoyed by every age group.

The [Out Of The Blue Drill Hall](#), on 36 Dalmeny Street, will be the main venue for [Leith On The Fringe](#) from the 5th to the 29th of August. The project is part of a five year plan, created to offer entertainment to tourists and locals alike during the Fringe and aims to bring economic benefits to the area of Leith. The LOTF will offer circus, aerial, street art, physical theatre and dance shows.



Cafe, Out Of The Blue
Drill Hall

The venue will be packed with locals and volunteers putting on their own Edinburgh artistry, with the entire hall a hum of activity. It is instantly clear that this is a project that has captured the interest and imagination of its residents.

We met the producer of the event, Natasha Lee-Walsh, and technical director, John Diamond, first creators of the project, to hear more about it. Natasha explained:-“There will be a variety of events. We will start in the morning, offering shows and activities for children, going on to have entertainment suitable for teenagers during the early hours of the afternoon, and then end with shows which can be enjoyed by adults in the late afternoon and evening”.

John Diamond told us that the area of Leith has not been fully appreciated in the past years and that he believes it is an area which has a lot to offer. He and Natasha started working

on the idea of Leith On The Fringe about five or six months ago and John said:- “The input given to us by the enthusiasm of the people we spoke to about our idea made it more real, and gave us the energy and will to go all the way with it.”

The event is intended to make Leith a more popular area during the Fringe, to encourage tourists to explore an area of Edinburgh often neglected, and offer all Edinburgh residents the chance to appreciate the capital’s waterfront. The Leith community is participating and supporting the plan; local business -such as Diamond Event Services- are providing the funding for the many art exhibitions and theatrical plays, and residents are sharing the general enthusiasm and looking forward to August.



Studio, Out Of The Blue
Drill Hall

“This will be year zero of a five year plan,” said John Diamond, “and we are very optimistic for the five years to come. We believe that if the project goes well this year, we will receive more funding from different businesses from next year”. He goes on to explain that the aim is not to only offer an “alternative entertainment to the usual Fringe” but to also bring more people over to Leith, where they will be able to enjoy meals in three of the best restaurants in town – [The Kitchin](#), [Martin Wishart](#), [Plumed Horse](#) – and discover a part of the city that is new to them.

John Diamond says “Leith will have its own identity during the Fringe, it will be a unique experience for the city of Edinburgh”. But they say that they are also hoping to expand the project and keep community activities happening during the rest of the year, in order to offer support for young people in Leith from a social point of view.

Leith On The Fringe is an innovative project, which will offer

a new area of entertainment during the Edinburgh Festival and will not only benefit the area of Leith but the whole city. To learn more about Leith On The Fringe and take part in this exciting side of this year's Fringe, please [visit the website.](#)