

Eddie Izzard hosts 'Please Don't Go' gig at Festival Theatre



Comedy legend Eddie Izzard will be hosting a one off gig on Friday, April 4th at the Festival Theatre Edinburgh to launch a campaign for people in England, Wales and Northern Ireland who don't want Scotland to leave the UK.

'Please Don't Go' is the title of the special gig, but also the name of the campaign that will run between now and September's vote.

Speaking as he announced the special show, Eddie Izzard said: "I won't have a vote in the Scottish referendum. What I do have is a view and a voice. I totally respect that this will be a decision for the Scottish people but I love Scotland far too much to stay quiet about how I feel.

"From Stornoway and Lerwick to Glasgow and Edinburgh, I have been lucky enough to play more venues in Scotland than most Scottish comedians. As I did my marathons around the UK I felt really proud to be able to run in Scotland holding aloft the Saltire and to still feel that this was my country.

"I think most people across the UK would feel a deep sense of loss if Scotland left. Opinion polls in Scotland and elsewhere in the UK show a majority of people want the UK to stay together.

"There are economic and practical reasons for sticking together. Sharing risks, resources and rewards makes us all stronger. Whether it's paying the pensions of our old people

or helping young people into a job, working together across 63 million people makes sense.

“That’s important but there is something deeper that binds us together. Not as easily measured but just as real. Britain would be diminished geographically without Scotland, but as a nation we would be so much smaller.

“I’m proud to be British but I am also proud of Britain. I love the vibrant, tolerant, diverse, confident, country we have become. British patriotism is so quiet and understated that it is flexible enough to bring people together. It has always been possible to feel British while being proudly Scottish, Welsh or English. Today our country embraces Mo Farah, a Somali-born distance runner as a British Olympic hero without a second thought. We can even cheer a far-slower marathon-running transvestite comedian.

“The contrast between that quiet, inclusive patriotism and Alex Salmond’s divisive nationalism couldn’t be greater. Most people don’t need to hide a flag in their wife’s handbag to show how much they love their country.

“All the problems we have as human beings, we can deal with them all, but we have to be able to work together. Everywhere I go around the world that is what people are struggling to find: a way to work together. We have had that for three centuries in our United Kingdom. It is a precious thing and worth standing up for.

“It is a decision for Scots, but before Scotland votes people should know that we want them to stay. Next month I will be joining the campaign with a special show in Edinburgh. I want people from the rest of the UK to join me in saying to people of Scotland “please don’t go.”