

Edinburgh International Festival 2015 – The Edinburgh Reporter speaks to the Festival Director

✘ Today Fergus Linehan introduced his first programme here in Edinburgh, but the Irishman is far from a novice. His previous roles have included directing the Sydney Festival, the Dublin Theatre Festival and Vivid LIVE. Today he revealed big international stars across the performing arts, and new areas of programming for the International Festival including more diverse genres of music and family focused shows.

The Edinburgh Reporter spoke to him after the launch:

Celebrating its role in supporting and **commissioning great artists** from around the world to create **new work**, the Festival this year hosts new productions from **Robert Lepage and Ex Machina, Complicite and Simon McBurney, Enda Walsh and Donnacha Dennehy, Ivo van Hove and Anne Carson, Scotland's Citizens Theatre, Akram Khan and Russell Maliphant.**

Looking to **develop future audiences** for the Festival, the introduction of work conceived for young people into the main programme sees incredible experiences being offered in *Dragon* by **Vox Motus, National Theatre of Scotland and Tianjin Children's Arts Theatre**; and in a family concert the day before the Virgin Money Fireworks Concert in which the **Scottish Chamber Orchestra** and Parisian technologists **Chevalvert**, specialists in creating visual spectacular concerts, join in presenting music from across the Festival.

The Festival continues to offer great value for young ticket buyers (18 or under, or 26 or under and in full time education) with a **discount of 50%** available on all tickets from the opening of ticket sales.

A new series of late night music events, **Hub Sessions** sees the Festival debuts of **Anna Calvi**, **Oneohtrix Point Never**, **Bryce Dessner** and **Richard Reed Parry**. **Max Richter** and **Daniel Hope** join the **BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra** for a concert at the Playhouse featuring *Recomposed* and *Memoryhouse*, **Sufjan Stevens** kicks off his European tour at the Festival, and **Franz Ferdinand & Sparks** come together for a rare live performance alongside the launch of their album.

Celebrating **great Scottish work and artists**, this year's Festival offers people the world premiere of **Alasdair Gray's *Lanark*** in a production by the **Citizens Theatre** written and directed by **David Greig** and **Graham Eatough** and supported through the Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund, alongside opportunities for locals and international visitors to see two existing, very successful works, ***Dragon*** and Untitled Project's and the National Theatre of Scotland's ***Paul Bright's Confessions of a Justified Sinner*** directed by **Stewart Laing**, showcased at the Festival.

Scotland's three fine orchestras, the **Royal Scottish National Orchestra**, the **Scottish Chamber Orchestra** and the **BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra** are not only playing central roles in the Usher Hall series, but also teaming up with international artists at the Playhouse, Festival Theatre and The Hub. RSNO plays Mahler's Symphony No 7 for Ballett am Rhein in ***Seven***, choreographed by Martin Schläpfer. The BBC SSO is joined by **Max Richter** and **Daniel Hope** in the Playhouse

for *Recomposed* and *Memoryhouse*. The Scottish Chamber Orchestra performs *Wave Movements*, composed by Richard Reed Parry and Bryce Dessner with images by Hiroshi Sugimoto in Hub Sessions.

Remaining **one of the world's largest and most diverse curated festivals**, as well as one of the **most accessible** with substantial discounts and a low entry price tickets, the Edinburgh International Festival continues to attract people from across the globe, expecting its **audiences to travel from around 70 nations** this year to be part of the global cultural celebration in Edinburgh.

A new partnership with **BBC Arts online** reconceives the Festival's artists' conversations to make them available to a wider audience online. The free tickets will be announced and issued on twitter, more information can be found at eif.co.uk/artistsconversations

2015 also marks the **realignment** of the International Festival with the dates of the other August festivals in Edinburgh, including the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, the Art Festival, the Edinburgh International Book Festival and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.