

Underbelly invite you to run away to the circus



This year the Fringe venue at The Meadows will be one great big circus. Ed Bartlam and Charlie Wood are huge lovers of circus acts and we have enjoyed shows like Limbo and Scotch 'n Soda before in a smaller Edinburgh venue. But now they are bringing the big tents, the big acts and an opportunity for you to run away to the circus too....

Circus Hub is created and programmed by Underbelly, and forms a distinct new addition to its presence at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. They plan two big tops one called The Lafayette with 750 seats and the other The Beauty with 250 seats.

We spoke to Ed Bartlam about their plans:

[The Edinburgh Reporter News](#) from [Phyllis Stephen](#) on [Vimeo](#).

There will be a programme of 12 shows, and will include two European premieres, four UK premieres, five Fringe premieres, and will feature artists from across the globe, including Belgium, France, Czech Republic, Australia, Canada and Palestine. It will also show case the best in homegrown circus with five shows from the UK.

Directors of Underbelly, Ed Bartlam and Charlie Wood, explain the thinking behind the new venture:

'In recent years we've worked extensively in the circus scene internationally, in the UK and at the Fringe. Two things have become clear to us. Firstly, as we've seen from hit seasons of show's like Circa's *Beyond* which we produced at the festival in 2014, there's a huge appetite for circus at the Festival.

Secondly, while other international festivals have been good at presenting circus, the Edinburgh Fringe has been constrained by financial considerations and the suitability of performance spaces.

With Circus Hub, we wanted to change that, by creating a thriving focus for world class circus at the Fringe – one site presenting the largest and most technically ambitious programme of circus that the Fringe has ever seen.'

✖ **Highlights from the inaugural programme** include beautiful aerial circus with a double bill from one of the UK's leading companies Ockham's Razor, making their first ever appearance at the Fringe; renowned international circus companies Cirk La Putyka with *Dolls* and Cirque Le Roux with *The Elephant In The Room* (UK premieres); stories of immigration, freedom, society and nationality from Belgium's *Les Inouïs* and *B-Orders* from Palestinian Circus (both UK premieres); remarkable physical feats from France's *La Meute*, and *Barbu*, from red-hot Canadian circus family Cirque Alfonse. There is also family fun with *The Hogwallops* and *Trash Test Dummies*. And returning to Edinburgh are *LIMBO*, the show that electrified Edinburgh's Christmas 2013, and *Bromance*, the Total Theatre Award winning show from The Edinburgh Fringe 2014. Finally there is late-night cabaret fun from Fringe favourite *Piff the Magic Dragon: Breakfast At Piffany's*.

The two big tops will form the heart of the new venue, Circus Hub on the Meadows on the city's southside, within sight of the famous purple cow and sister venue, Udderbelly, which moves this year to George Square. These venues will provide infrastructure to present spectacular and technically ambitious circus work of a level that has not been seen before at the festival, in a venue right in the heart of the festival.

Named after one of the world's most famous circus performers and illusionists, The Great Lafayette and his dog Beauty, who

famously both died in Edinburgh in 1911, the bigger and smaller of the tents respectively each presents 6 companies from around the world.

Alongside the programme of shows there will be a programme of *Family Circus Workshops* run by Edinburgh's new centre for circus arts Full Circle. These workshops will give parents and kids aged eight and up the opportunity to try a variety of Circus skills including juggling, hula hoop, acrobatics and aerial.

Circus Hub will also host a community project called *The Summer Collective*, working together with young people from Scotland's Impact Arts 'Creative Pathways' programme, Underbelly will run a week long work placement at Circus Hub. Impact Arts are a charity who run Creative Pathways, a successful Theatre Arts programme in Edinburgh, which supports young people to attain new skills, get back into education and find work in the creative sector, with a focus on the Fringe Festival. The young people will be encouraged to develop their skills in a creative workplace while making key contacts for their future. *The Summer Collective* at Circus Hub will give the students a positive experience, working within the creative industries while improving employability skills.

Underbelly has developed a reputation for producing, presenting and supporting circus in the UK, and creatively produce *LIMBO*, which is an international collaboration between Underbelly, London's Southbank Centre and Australia's Strut & Fret Production House, and has toured internationally with sell out seasons in London, Sydney, New Zealand, Columbia, Brussels and Munich.

Circus Hub will run from **Friday 7 August to Saturday 29 August** and will be open daily from 9am to midnight with an eclectic programme for all tastes.

Tickets are on sale now from:

The Lafayette:

CIRCUS FAMILY WORKSHOPS (Full Circle) – 9.00am (80 mins),
8th-16th Aug, 22nd-23rd Aug, 29th Aug

THE HOGWALLOPS (Lost In Translation Circus) – 11.25am (60 mins)
7th-29th Aug (not 18th)

ARC and EVERY ACTION (Ockham's Razor) – 1.25pm (60 mins)
7th-27th Aug (not 13th, 20th)

DOLLS (Cirk La Putyka) – 3.25pm (60 mins)
7th-29th Aug (not 12th, 18th, 24th)

LA MEUTE (Cie La Meute) – 5.25pm (60 mins)
7th-29th Aug (not 11th, 12th, 18th, 25th)

LIMBO (Underbelly Productions, Strut & Fret Production House,
Southbank Centre) – 7.25pm (70 mins)
7th-29th Aug (not 12th, 17th, 24th)

BARBU (Cirque Alfonse) – 9.50pm (100 mins)
7th-29th Aug (not 12th, 18th, 26th)

The Beauty:

TRASH TEST DUMMIES – 12.25pm (60 mins)
7th-29th Aug (not 17th, 24th)

LES INOUIS (T1J) – 2.25pm (60 mins)
7th-29th Aug (not 13th, 17th, 24th)

B-ORDERS (Palestinian Circus) – 4.25pm (60 mins)
7th- 29th Aug (Not 13th, 18th, 25th)

BROMANCE (Barely Methodical Troupe) – 6.25pm (55 mins)

7th- 29th Aug (Not 12th, 17th, 24th)

THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM (Cirque le Roux) – 8.35pm (75 mins)

7th- 29th Aug (Not 12th, 17th, 24th)

PIFF THE MAGIC DRAGON: BREAKFAST AT PIFFANY'S – 10.40pm (75 mins)

14th- 29th Aug