

Curtain comes down on Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2015



The Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society said today that even though hundreds of performances are still to take place this afternoon and evening almost 3 million tickets have been issued for venues across the capital this year. This is an increase of just over five per cent on last years sales.

After 50,459 performances of 3,314 shows in 313 venues across Edinburgh, the curtain falls and the house lights go up on the 2015 Edinburgh Festival Fringe.





Kath M Mainland CBE, Chief Executive of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society said: “As this year’s Fringe draws to a close we can reflect on what a spectacular success it has been. Once again artists and audiences have travelled from across the globe to be a part of this unique cultural event. And with an estimated 2,298,090 tickets issued and many thousands of people attending the 800 free shows in the programme, I’ve no doubt every single person who watched a Fringe show, or experienced this wonderful festival city, will take away unforgettable memories.

“With incredible talent from 49 countries from all over the world taking part this year, the Fringe has once again demonstrated itself to be both truly international and profoundly Scottish. The 2015 season has firmly cemented Edinburgh’s reputation as the world’s leading festival city. “

Fringe Society Chair, Sir Tim O’Shea added: “On behalf of everyone who visited and enjoyed this year’s Fringe, I would like to thank all the creative souls, both onstage and backstage, who brought their work here. Their courage, creativity and sheer hard work is unrivalled anywhere in the world, and without them, the Fringe simply wouldn’t be possible.”





Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Europe and External Affairs added: “This has been another incredible year for the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The festival continues to evolve and work with the city to expand and offer more and more to audiences from across the world. The Edinburgh Festival Fringe demonstrates the innovative spirit that makes Scottish culture so vibrant. “

One new initiative this year was a scheme launched by the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, in collaboration with the City of Edinburgh Council and Virgin Money aimed at providing complimentary tickets to Fringe shows for children and young people who are being cared for by City of Edinburgh Council.

The project called *Access Fringe – Looked After Children* made £173,172.00 worth of tickets from 233 shows in 38 venues available to children and young people whose circumstances would not normally allow them to participate in cultural activity. *Access Fringe – Looked After Children* is a part of the Fringe Society’s commitment to making the Fringe accessible to all and is one of a series of initiatives over the years to come to tackle the physical, economic, social and geographic barriers that prevent people from participating.





Other highlights in 2015 included the participation of a total of fourteen new venues across the city. These included the return of the famous St Stephen's Church under the banner of Momentum Venues, Underbelly launching their Circus Hub on the Meadows in the city's southside and SpaceUK debuting a new three floor venue called SpaceTriplex in The Prince Philip Building on Hill Place.

The Fringe Society unveiled two new commercial partnerships in 2015; with Airbnb and the Caledonian Sleeper. Both these relationships offered new opportunities for Fringe participants and audiences.

The Royal Mail celebrated this year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe by issuing a special postmark, applied to stamped UK mail from 07-31 August. Royal Mail's postmarks are reserved for special occasions and are used to recognise significant events, historical anniversaries or support of charity. It was the first time in the Royal Mail's 500 year history that a festival has been featured on a postmark.

Award-winning comedian and theatre-maker Bryony Kimmings delivered the 2015 Fringe Central Welcome Address to participants, organised by the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society. The welcome address, designed to welcome and inspire participants, was attended by a record number of people.

Bryony Kimmings, an Associate Artist at Soho Theatre and a Fringe participant herself, encouraged participants to take advantage of over 85 free events hosted throughout August, to help develop performance skills, expand networks and advance careers.

A wide range of awards were on offer throughout the festival organised by a range of organisations. Euan's Guide, the disabled access review website launched their Fringe awards, acknowledging a show and a venue for their outstanding efforts to include disabled audiences at this year's Fringe.