

The Stage Edinburgh Awards – a Fringe First!



The Stage Edinburgh Awards are first awards of the festival – again

Theatre publication fires the starting gun for Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2016 silverware

In Edinburgh around Festival time there are many awards but the gong goes to The Stage, the world's oldest and best theatre publication, which has announced the first winners of its iconic Edinburgh Awards for 2016, and once again is first to champion acting excellence on the fringe.

Awards have been announced for Liam Brennan at the Traverse for *Diary of a Madman*, and Kill the Beast as an ensemble for *Don't Wake the Damp*. The two shows are among dozens of shows already reviewed by the theatre newspaper in the first week of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.



Don't Wake the Damp was recently awarded a five-star review by The Stage, describing it as the team's "best show yet".

Brennan is currently starring as Pop Sheeran in *Diary of a Madman*. In her four-star review of the play, The Stage reviews editor Natasha Tripney states Brennan gives 'a strong, anchoring performance'.

Now in their 21st year, the awards have developed a reputation for spotting acting excellence at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and for being the bellwether for the year's hottest shows. Being first to publicly award talent each year, The

Stage Edinburgh Awards have come to be known for setting the pace for later awards.

Founded in 1995 by The Stage to celebrate the best performances each year at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe – and formerly known as The Stage Awards for Acting Excellence at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe – the awards celebrate the richness and diversity of acting on the fringe, from solo shows to ensemble pieces. The awards recognise individual performers as well as companies. Since 2014, they have been handed out on a rolling basis throughout the festival.

Winners in 2015 included:

- Molly Vevers, for Ross and Rachel
- Jade Anouka for Chef
- Luke Wright for What I Learned About Jonny Bevan
- Sophie Melville for Iphigenia in Splott

Previous winners of the awards include:

- Daniel Kitson
- Guy Masterson
- Caroline Horton
- Nichola McAuliffe

This year's assessors consist of The Stage's Edinburgh Fringe review team: Nick Awde, Natasha Tripney, Thom Dibdin, Gerald Berkowitz, Paul Vale and Stewart Pringle.

Since 2014, [The Stage](#) has awarded a Special Award for a performer or theatremaker in recognition of sustained excellence over a number of festivals and an overall contribution to the Edinburgh Fringe landscape. It was given for the first time in 2014 to Chris Goode and last year was presented to Pip Utton.

The Stage Edinburgh Podcast is being launched this year, a six-part series of top picks and interviews with theatremakers

taking work to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The podcast is available via the Podcasts app on Apple devices, SoundCloud or The Stage website.

[The Stage](#) is the industry's trade publication and The Stage team will be reviewing more shows than any other national publication over the course of the Fringe. Check The Stage website for reviews, comment, picks and podcasts throughout the Fringe.

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