

# Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2018 – Henry Box Brown – A Musical Journey

The cream of New York gospel and R&B singers, plus leading Off Broadway performers, are coming to the Edinburgh Fringe with a new musical telling the true story of an 1850s Virginia slave who was shipped to freedom in a box.

Henry Box Brown is directed by Tony Award winner Ben Harney (Broadway's Dream Girls) and has been created by co-composers Oscar nominee – Best Original Score, Jack Lenz (Mel Gibson's Passion of Christ)writer, Mehr Mansuri and and New York City composer, Frank Sanchez. The spirituals have been arranged by Gospel Music Directors, Eric Dozier and Renee Reid.

Born into slavery in Louisa County, Brown worked in a Richmond tobacco factory. In 1848 his children and pregnant wife were sold to new owners in North Carolina. Brown resolved to escape slavery and enlisted the help of a white churchman and a slave-owning gambler. In later life Brown became a prominent abolitionist, a performer, musician and a published author. He spent many years in Britain.



Mansuri says: "This is Les Misérables set in the American south, but the good guys are not so obvious. The show is driven by original songs blending gospel, R&B, bluegrass as well as 'a capella' original negro spirituals. It's a crowd-pleaser that shines a light on the human ability to transcend."

While US history is rich with African American heroes there is next to nothing in the American musical theatre cannon that puts any of them centre stage. After 19 years of working in NYC public schools in deprived areas, and creating theatre for African American audiences, Mehr decided the time had come to change this.

She set up the Henry Box Musical Project to allow African American students and young audiences to celebrate their own history and celebrate the triumph of the human spirit from a distinctly African American experience.

The musical is championed by the Baha'i Unity Center and New York University's Office of Governance and Community Affairs. It has grown into a thrilling a 16-person production with fabulous singers from New York's Christian Cultural Center where it had a brief run which attracted praise from many quarters.

Venue: Assembly Rooms, Music Hall, George Street, EH2 2LR

Time: 14:30. Running Time: 90 mins

Dates: 02-26 AUG PREVIEWS:02-05 August. NO SHOWS:Wed 8, Mon 13, Mon 20 – August.

Tickets: £7 previews, £13 for midweek; £15 on weekends

Bookings:[assemblyfestival.com](http://assemblyfestival.com) 0131 623 3030