

# Edinburgh in August – Things you must not miss – our recommendations

In August there is just so much to see, and the fear of missing the important is all the greater. Here is our list of recommendations of what to see and do. If you have any then please do add them in the comments below.

First start with a perusal of our previews in our Culture section here. We have gathered some information about a few of the interesting shows which will be on the bill here in Edinburgh in the next few weeks.

Look out in particular for our interview with Jack Docherty who began his stellar career here in Edinburgh on the Fringe.

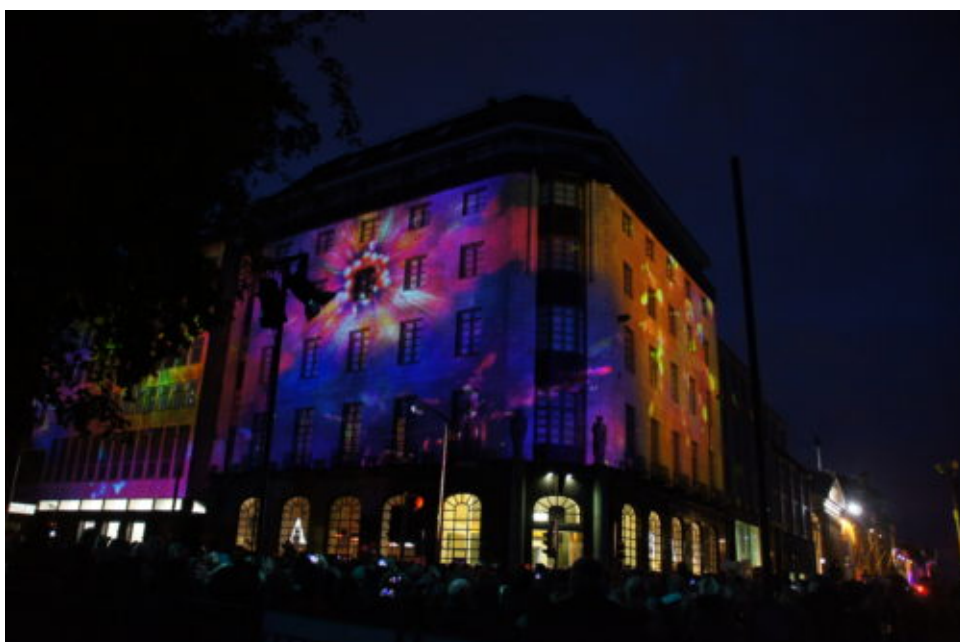
**Start off with Five Telegrams**



The Aberdeen Standard Investments Opening Event – Five

Telegrams will be a sound and light spectacular that we are now quite used to in Edinburgh. In his inaugural year Festival Director Fergus Linehan introduced us to the light show spectacular at Usher Hall.

In the following year there was a sound and vision spectacle focussed on Castle Rock. To mark the 70th anniversary last year the light show moved quite fabulously to St Andrew Square.



Bloom the 2017 opening event in St Andrew Square

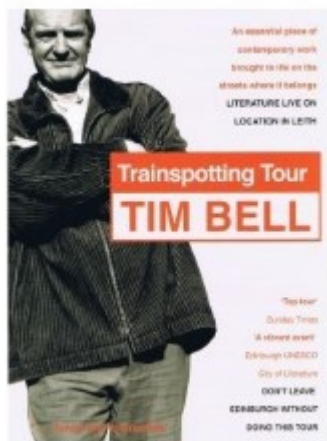
This year it will be back at Usher Hall, and if you saw the opening night of The Proms at the Albert Hall you will have an idea of what it will look like. The show on 3 August is free and will include illuminations on a big scale as before with projections onto the facade of Usher Hall. The light show by 59 Productions will be accompanied by a new work for orchestra and chorus composed by Edinburgh's Anna Meredith. Hundreds of young people will feature in the opening event with live performance running alongside the music and illuminations.

It is one hundred years since the end of World War One and the event is a collaboration between the EIF, 14-18 NOW the UK's arts programme for the centenary and for the very first time,

BBC Proms. The production on 3 August will be similar to that produced for the first night of The BBC Proms at the Albert Hall, but we are assured it will be quite different in both capitals.

[More details of where and when here.](#)

## Tim Bell's Trainspotting Tour



Tim Bell invites you to Choose Life, Choose Leith on the Trainspotting on Location tour, and perhaps also buy the book he has just published bearing the same title. The guided tour coincides with the 25th anniversary of the original publication of Trainspotting, and his critical analysis and geographical account of Leith will bring it all to

life.

Tim said : “What began in Leith left Leith and became something much larger. Trainspotting is now three things : a three-fold art form, a cultural reference point that combines heroin and social history – they talk about ‘the Trainspotting generation’ and with Welsh and Boyle creating updates, a growing cult, of which Leith is HQ.”

[Book tickets here.](#)

## Photography



Pop up studio used for West End Character Project

**West End Character Project** also features daily walking tours More information on these and the photographic exhibition which forms part of Edinburgh's West End Character Project is

[here](#).

Wander into the Peacock Alley of the Waldorf Astoria to see where the Princes Street railway station used to be, and admire David Maclean's Lost Edinburgh photos. The special summer exhibition runs until 31 August and is entitled **'Uncovering Edinburgh's Lost Station'**. David's own grandfather, Andrew Boyd who worked at the station in the Sixties as a wheeltapper, and so he is really keen that people remember the station. There is an aerial shot of the city before the grand terminal was built following a fire in 1890, and another photo of the crowds gathering round the Christmas tree and model railway in the station. We loved the cute little cupcakes with trains on top that they served at the opening evening! Well worth a look.

## Comedy Car

**You might like to go for a ride in an Uber which is vying to be the smallest Fringe venue...**



Comedy lovers at this year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe will be able to book a free intimate gig with Live at the Apollo and Have I got News for you star, Andrew Maxwell... in the back of a car. Uber will be offering gigs with the double Edinburgh

award nominee and King of Comedy winner from Wednesday 8 to Friday 10 August, booked through the app or via the [Fringe website](#).

The 'Comedy Car' gigs will last for 15 minutes, giving passengers an uproarious taste of Andrew's cutting-edge observational comedy and acerbic social commentary while taking in the sights of the Scottish capital from the back of a car.

## **At Summerhall**

Start your day off with a morning show at Summerhall. At 10.50 climate change is centre stage as Belgian companies land on the North Pole.

The Focus Company and the Chaliwaté Company are collaborating for the first time on BACKUP, a physical theatre performance hybrid exploring social lethargy as we creep increasingly close to being unable to undo the damage to our planet.

In BACKUP, presented at Summerhall as part of a showcase of work from the Wallonia region of Belgium, humanity has been unable to operate an ecological transition when faced with a fast-moving and ever-accelerating climate imbalance.

On the road, travelling the world, three reporters witness the blooming apocalypse. They film, with the little they have at hand, the last living species, slowly disappearing around them.

The Focus Company and the Chaliwaté Company work meticulously to create a singular visual, metaphoric and poetic language, which grows from daily life, the personal and intimate experience, the "infra-ordinary", aiming to touch the universal and question that which no longer seems to concern us.





## Love Song to Lavender Menace

Love Song to Lavender Menace has come from a sell-out run at the Royal Lyceum Theatre. Nostalgic bookseller Lewis and party boy Glen are back in this hit gay romantic comedy set in 1980s Edinburgh. Love Song to Lavender Menace is a funny, celebratory play about the radical, lesbian, gay and feminist bookshop which began in the cloakroom of Scotland's first gay nightclub and became the beating heart of Edinburgh's LGBT+ community. [Tickets here.](#)

Details of all other shows at Summerhall can be found [here](#).

**The Edinburgh International Book Festival** – We love the book festival.

The atmosphere in the garden is very refined and peaceful, never more so in this the centenary year of Dame Muriel Spark.

There are tickets left [for many of the events which feature her work](#)

Muriel Spark is being celebrated across the world for the astonishing breadth and diversity of her writing. But Edinburgh was special to the brilliant Bruntsfield-born writer who always considered herself 'Scottish by formation'. In the

year when all 22 novels are republished by Birlinn, the Book Festival have gathered together an array of writers to remind us of the power of her work. Partnerships with BBC Scotland, Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh and Durham University bring the author's work captivatingly to life.

But after hours the more relaxed Unbound begins in the Spiegel tent. Prepare to be surprised. The full programme of Unbound events is [here](#).

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2018 – we have a few music shows on our list and these definitely include [Dean Owens](#) and [Christine Bovill](#). Rare events these, as they only put on a few nights between them so catch them while you can.

# Scottish Storytelling Centre

scottishstorytellingcentre.co.uk



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A trip to the Scottish Storytelling Centre is always a good idea. Here is the full programme



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Tim Vincent-Smith with his Pianodrome



We want to go every day in August to the Pianodrome in the Botanic Gardens. This is a 100 seater amphitheatre constructed of over 50 upcycled pianos. Five pianos within the structure are available for playing on. Do drop in and play! Tim Vincent-Smith is behind it and when he started the crowdfunding campaign which has paid for it [we spoke to him earlier in the year.](#)

They are staging a concert every evening at 7pm with the brilliant multi instrumentalists Sink in a nightly concert with special guests. Details and tickets [here.](#)

**Enjoy a cocktail in one of our city bars**



Scotch Malt Whisky Society

**Kaleidoscope Whisky Bar:** [The Scotch Malt Whisky Society](#) may seem like a special member's club, which it is, but one of the most special things about this club is that anyone can visit their wonderful ground floor bar. Now in its 35<sup>th</sup> year, the SMWS must be doing something right with their exceptional array of the finest single cask whiskies money can buy. Oh, and their whisky cocktails aren't half bad either. Check out their fantastic array of single cask whiskies and cocktails at the SMWS Fringe pop-up bar at George Square and receive a code for £15 off membership...

*28 Queen Street, Edinburgh EH2 1JX*

<https://goo.gl/fWrgbx>

[Have a look at our article](#) where we tell you the best places to go and have a cocktail in town.

Where to go and have a tasty brunch. [Juliet Lawrence Wilson has that covered.](#)

**Edinburgh International Festival**

Try out the EIF venue at Leith Theatre where the shows make up Light on the Shore with Edinburgh Gin Seaside. Most of the shows have now been announced with highlights such as Since Yesterday: The Unsung Women Pioneers of Scottish Pop.

This will be an evening celebrating the music of all-female Scottish bands on Friday 24 August at 7pm, with the line-up supported by a session band including Vicki Cole on bass, Carla J. Easton on keys, Kate Lazda and Stacey Sievwright on guitar, and Lesley McLaren on drums making up a Since Yesterday Super Group.

They will play the backing music for a never-before-seen line up of special guests from Scotland's pioneering girl-bands including Rose McDowall of Strawberry Switchblade, Patricia 'Trash' Brown and Anne Morrison of The Etties, Jane McKeown of Lungleg, Jeanette McKinley of The McKinleys, Rachel and Gaye Bell of the Twinsets and Louise Rutkowski of Sunset Gun playing their original music with support from Adele Patrick of Sons and Daughters and Emma Pollock of the Delgados playing the music of cult favourites Sophisticated Boom Boom and His Latest Flame.

Hamish Hawk and Iain Morrison kick-start the season by supporting King Creosote on Thursday 9 August, Scottish female rap group Honey Farm will join Neu! Reekie!'s #1 night on Sunday 12 August; and Rev Magnetic take to the stage on Wednesday 22 August to support Mogwai.

Lau's all-day celebration of folk music – Lau-Land – includes new addition Big Tune Machine – an afternoon session celebrating folk music and its community, with Amy Geddes and Donald Knox of Fyne Fiddles, working with the Big Tune Machine Band, a group of community folk musicians from Edinburgh and the Lothians.

Tickets for Light on the Shore with Edinburgh Gin Seaside are available at [eif.co.uk](http://eif.co.uk) by phone on 0131 473 2000 or in person

at Hub Tickets, The Hub, Castlehill, EH1 2NE.

Here is the mini guide to the EIF for you to peruse.



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## **Festival Fireworks**

What can we say? Fireworks are commonplace in Edinburgh in August with a burst of pyrotechnics at the end of the Tattoo each night at just after 10.30 (you can usually time them within a minute or two), but the fireworks which mark the end of the three weeks of saturation in the arts in Edinburgh are unrivalled.

The fireworks which mark the end of the festivals are sponsored by Virgin Money and set against the Castle Rock. This year there will be orchestral music from the Scottish Chamber Orchestra with fireworks timed to explode exactly on the right beat.

This year is the centenary of Leonard Bernstein's death and a selection of his music will be played in his honour. After the interval, join the Orchestra for a mind-expanding journey into deepest space, with music from Gustav Holst's visionary *The Planets* – from the overwhelming power of 'Mars' to the eerie beauty of 'Venus'; from the seething energy of 'Saturn' to the majestic grandeur of 'Jupiter'. All accompanied by a jaw-dropping display of fireworks from the Edinburgh Castle ramparts.

Last year 250,000 people came to watch. Will you be there this year? Tag us in your Instagram and Twitter posts if you get some good fireworks snaps!

Tickets for the gardens range from £15.50 to £34 Details of any which may be left are [here](#).





Oh and remember to have fun!

Wear comfortable shoes, take a bottle of water with you as the venues can often be a bit warm, and use the [EdFringe app](#) to find something you would not normally go and see.

Sit in Princes Street Gardens to gather your thoughts, or find somewhere a bit more private like Dunbar's Close Garden off the Royal Mile. Or go into the galleries and see the Monarch of the Glen in the National Gallery of Scotland and the new portrait of Calvin Harris in the Portrait Gallery.

Conserve your energy by using the buses and trams with a £4 day ticket, and eat locally in some of our lovely restaurants

and cafés.