

# 2018 International Festival. A celebration of inclusion and Scotland's Year of Young People

The 2018 Edinburgh International Festival ended last evening with the Virgin Money Fireworks Concert. Drawing hundreds of thousands of Festival-goers from more than 80 countries, the three-week International Festival staged some of the world's finest work across multiple artforms with a special emphasis on Scotland's Year of Young People.



Hocus-Pocus

In all, 2,800 artists from 60 nations performed in 85 productions across 180 performances, filling auditoriums across Edinburgh, this year stretching to Leith where the new season of Light on the Shore with Edinburgh Gin Seaside celebrated Scotland's most influential contemporary musicians, drawing attendances of 16,000 to the newly re-opened Leith Theatre. Overall attendance was very strong and met

expectations with performances reaching an average of 85% of total capacity across the programme. Following the International Festival's largescale 70th anniversary celebrations in 2017, the 2018 Festival focussed on inclusivity and the development of future audiences.



The Prisoner

The International Festival spearheaded its celebrations of Scotland's Year of Young People with the Aberdeen Standard Investments Opening Event: Five Telegrams. 2,500 tickets were given to young people, approximately 1,000 of whom were from areas of multiple deprivation. In addition, 40 young people were employed at the event as Wardrobe Assistants, Film Coordinator & Editor, Camera Operators, Event Assistants and Digital Marketing Assistants. At the Palace of Holyrood House, Akram Khan Company's Kadamati marked the centenary of the end of the First World War, with 300 young dancers from across Scotland performing to an audience of 1,500.

The Classical Music programme also shone a spotlight on young talent, featuring over 600 young musicians from 50 nations performing in youth ensembles including the National Youth

Orchestra of Canada, The Orchestra of the Americas, The Colburn Orchestra, the National Youth Jazz Orchestra (USA) and the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, plus a four-concert residency from the National Youth Choir of Scotland. Over 1,000 free tickets were claimed by community and youth groups through targeted invitations to these concerts, with the International Festival's Young Musicians Passport scheme issuing a further 600 free concert tickets to young musicians living in Edinburgh.



La Cenerentola

Other highlights included UK choreographer Akram Khan performing in his final full-length work, XENOS; Glasgow's mastermind SOPHIE playing at Light on the Shore; Sir Simon Rattle's return to the Festival with the London Symphony Orchestra; Druid Theatre's exceptional Waiting for Godot; Greg Lawson and the GRIT Orchestra's joyful celebration of Martyn Bennett's Bothy Culture; Richard Wagner's Siegfried with a stellar cast led by Christine Goerke and Simon O'Neill; and three performances from artist in residence Pierre-Laurent Aimard.

With a major commitment to audience development, the International Festival continued its year-round work to grow community reach and audience diversity. This year, 46,095

tickets to the value of £569,750, were issued free of charge or at discounted rates to young people, seniors, customers with disabilities and groups identified as having a lower income. With just the Virgin Money Fireworks Concerts still include, the final ticket sales income is estimated at £3.8M.

**Festival Director, Fergus Linehan** said: 'As the 2018 International Festival draws to a close, we thank the many artists, staff members and audiences whose enthusiasm and tireless generosity make the Festival possible. We were grateful for the many young people who joined us from across the world to perform and participate in their thousands. And of course, we thank our Managing Director, Joanna Baker, who we say farewell to later this year after 27 years of extraordinary leadership.'



The Beggar's Opera



OCD Love



Midsummer

**Alan Morrison, Head of Music at Creative Scotland** commented: 'It's incredible to think that one of the world's longest-running and most revered festivals can still be so adventurous, energetic and downright entertaining. This year's Edinburgh International Festival welcomed the world with open arms and brought the best of global culture to the city. It showcased the talent of the future in a series of concerts that marked Scotland's Year of Young People and presented breath-taking work from some of Scotland's finest artists. From the shores of Leith to the heart of the city centre and beyond, the International Festival proved yet again that the only place to be in August is Edinburgh. Creative Scotland is proud to support an event that is the envy of the world.'

**Councillor Donald Wilson, Culture & Communities Convener for the City of Edinburgh Council** said: 'Edinburgh in August is for everyone and I am delighted that this year's International Festival has built on its 70 years of success to become more inclusive and international than ever. This year's events have enabled tens of thousands of people from all over the Capital, from all walks of life – young and old – to take part in and enjoy incredible art, theatre, dance and music. The International Festival's return to the heart of the Leith community for the first time in 30 years has been a huge success locally, both at the Leith Theatre and with pupils from Leith Academy. With artists from 60 different nations and audiences from 80, it is clear Edinburgh remains home to one of the most multicultural, far-reaching and adored Festivals on earth. The Council is proud to continue its support.'