

Underbelly fundraiser for Fringe artists

Today Underbelly has begun a fundraiser to support Fringe artists booked to appear in Edinburgh this summer.

All donations which are received will go straight to those artists who are now facing challenging times.

Underbelly has closed its doors at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe for the first time in 20 years. All venues have been silenced, and all artists performers and technicians who usually spend months getting ready for the Fringe now have no work.

The cancellation of the fringe will bring with it financial challenges for the artists involved as well as the behind the scenes staff. Underbelly had planned 220 shows this year with countless numbers of artists.

Now if you can donate just a little over the cost of a ticket to the fundraiser the balance will go to those who might have made you laugh or catch your breath this August.

www.underbellyedinburgh.co.uk/donate

Ed Bartlam and Charlie Wood, directors of Underbelly said: "Edinburgh is where it all started, in a dingy cave, twenty years ago. It's our life blood, our home, a place where genuinely anything can happen and incredible memories have been made. To not be there this year is heart-breakingly devastating but it is also a time for reflection and understanding that for this year, we must step back and put

the safety of others first.

"We would love to support and help everyone but what we feel we should do at this time is to support those artists that were due to perform at the Underbelly this year. We are asking you to help us support these artists to get through this most difficult of all times and more importantly keep them working in an industry that needs and values them. Without them there is no Underbelly, there is no Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

"Our deepest sympathies go out to all of those have been affected by Covid-19 and our most heartfelt thank-yous to those on the frontline who have been working tirelessly to keep our country moving. We will be offering a special discount on all tickets to UK NHS staff at next year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe by way of thank you."

For those who can afford to donate a little more than the £12 cost of a ticket to the fundraiser there are lots of rewards on offer including a named thank you in the 2021 programme (£20 or more), **Gold membership of Abattoir**, the private artists bar in George Square (£50 or more), 10 tickets to the 10 hottest shows curated by the programming team (£70 or more), **Backstage Meet and Greet** with the artist of choice, tickets and fizz (£100 or more), Fleabag Poster from the first show performed in Edinburgh at Underbelly in 2013 signed by **Phoebe Waller Bridge**(£400 or more), **Cocktail Party for 10 in Abattoir with mixologists Ed Bartlam and Charlie Wood** (£400 or more), All expenses paid trip to Edinburgh for a Fringe weekend like no other (£800 or more), or for £1000 (or more) **free tickets to any Underbelly shows at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe for the next two years.**

Jason Byrne added: "This is such a hard time for so many on the circuit, and the cancellation of the Fringe this year has been a massive blow to us all. This is a cracking fundraiser. Underbelly is making sure that 100% goes to the artists and there are some great rewards on offer. Who wouldn't want to

donate and secure all those tickets, backstage access and signed posters! Please do give what you can whether it is the price of a ticket, or a few pints too."