

# 2021 Children's Festival launches its 2021 hybrid programme

The Edinburgh International Children's Festival has announced its 2021 hybrid programme of online and outdoor theatre and dance for young people following months of planning (and re-planning).

## The digital programme.

The digital programme will include streamed performances such as *Removed* (the gripping story of a young man's experience of the care system) and innovative 'live' digital interactions such as *The University of Wonder & Imagination* (a live magic show over Zoom).



The Festival also features two brand new commissions by exciting companies and artists based in Scotland, and supported by the Scottish Government Festivals Expo Fund.

Drawing on stories and experiences of disabled children and adults, *The Super Special Disability Roadshow* by *Birds of Paradise Theatre Company* is a humorous multi-media show contrasting what it's like growing up disabled today and in the 80s by the only disabled-led theatre company in Scotland.

*Mixed Up* (co-produced by *Starcatchers*) is an interactive performance which explores the mixed-up feelings young children experience in turbulent times. Using painting, music, and hip-hop dance, artist *Katy Wilson* has created a unique experience for schools to engage online and outdoors.

## A free outdoor programme.

To complement the online offer, the Festival programme includes Family Encounters, a series of free pop-up performances happening in outdoor spaces across Edinburgh in the first and last weekend of the Festival. The specially commissioned and curated events will showcase the talent of Scotland-based artists who have created a range of innovative and inspiring site-specific encounters for families and seen the practical challenges brought on by Covid-19 as an opportunity for experimentation. Over 100 artists and freelancers will be involved in delivering the event.





The majority of the Family Encounters programme will take place in the stunning surroundings of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, as well as in site-specific venues in Granton and Craigmillar. Families can expect exciting adventure trails,

basket-ball inspired hip-hop workshop, a giant swing or a mysterious tree spirit hidden in the garden. All events are free but visitors to the Botanics will need to pre-book a time slot to comply with Covid restrictions.

Family Encounters will provide creative work for over 100 freelancers based in Scotland and making a commitment to pay them whether their performance is allowed to happen or not.

Festival Director Noel Jordan said: "There are so many things to celebrate about this year's Children's Festival. We are proud to be able to offer paid work to so many Scottish artists, freelancers and companies, from an industry that has almost been at a standstill for over a year.

"Most importantly, we are appreciative and inspired by the opportunity to be able to present much need arts and culture to children, young people and their families at this time of need. As our community re-emerges from lockdown now is the time to enjoy the world of wonder, curiosity and connectedness that the arts can offer us."

Iain Munro, Chief Executive, Creative Scotland, said: "The brilliance and resilience of Scottish artists and creatives shines through the Edinburgh International Children's Festival 2021 programme.

"Superb theatre and dance productions that offer new perspectives and inspiration to audiences are among the many highlights of a programme that will entertain and enthral both children and their families, across digital channels and as we all take our first, safe and exciting, steps back into enjoying live performance together again."





Paul Bush OBE, VisitScotland's Director of Events, said: "Events play an important role in our communities by supporting artists and performers as well as bring social and economic change. EventScotland is delighted to be supporting Family Encounters at the Edinburgh International Children's Festival through Scotland's Events Recovery Fund. With restrictions starting to ease and summer on its way, the event's free outdoor programme provides the perfect opportunity for families to enjoy a range of artistic activities in a safe, outdoor environment."

This year's Edinburgh International Children's Festival is supported by Creative Scotland, the City of Edinburgh Council, the Scottish Government Festivals Expo Fund and the Platforms for Creative Excellence (PLACE) programme.

Tickets and more information available now at [www.imaginate.org.uk/festival](http://www.imaginate.org.uk/festival)

*Family Encounters is supported by EventScotland, The Foyle Foundation, Cirrus Logic and the Walter Scott Giving Group; Removed is supported by Culture Ireland; The Super Special Disability Roadshow is supported by John Watson's Trust and*

*the Cruden Foundation; Mixed Up is supported by the Hugh Fraser Foundation and the Educational Institute of Scotland. Additional support for the 2021 Festival has been provided by the D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust and the Consulate General of Ireland in Edinburgh.*