

With a programme of over 700 shows, Edinburgh Festival Fringe gets underway

The world-renowned Edinburgh Festival Fringe officially comes to life today, Friday 6 August, with an exciting hybrid programme of over 700 in-person and online shows as Edinburgh will once again be host to a diverse and exciting selection of work from the worlds of theatre, dance, circus, comedy, music, musicals and opera, cabaret and variety, children's shows, spoken word, exhibitions, events and more..

This year's Fringe also features a scaled-back programme of street events in managed locations; a range of community engagement work, including the return of Fringe Days Out; and a programme of activity for artists and arts industry professionals via Fringe Connect and Fringe Marketplace.

Commenting on the launch of the festival, Shona McCarthy, Chief Executive, Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, said: "The Fringe is always a remarkable feat, but this year, it's nothing short of extraordinary. In the face of complex restrictions and enormous challenges, the Fringe community has created a diverse and engaging programme of over 700 shows to

entertain us, bring us joy, and ultimately, do what culture does best: tell stories that help us understand where we are, what we've been through, and where we need to go.

"I'm enormously proud of the artists, venues, creatives and workers that have made this festival not only possible, but safe, engaging and entertaining. It's so good to be celebrating the Fringe again this August, and I'd like to thank every artist, producer, worker, audience member, funder, sponsor and supporter that has got us here today."



Barely Methodical Troupe will be appearing at Palais du Variété Spiegel tent in George Square Gardens with their show 'Bromance'.

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Councillor Amy McNeese-Mechan, the City of Edinburgh Council's Culture and Communities Vice Convener, said: "The return of live August festivals events and performances truly reflects our city's on-going recovery and, of course, our cultural DNA, and we're delighted to see an exciting Edinburgh Festival Fringe programme.

"There's no doubt it was greatly missed last year and it's so lovely for our city to be welcoming audiences again to the Festivals this August. To everyone taking part, we ask you to continue to follow the safety guidance and to enjoy this year's fantastic festival experiences safely."

In-person, online and on-demand shows

In 2021, audiences will be able to access a wide range of amazing Fringe shows through socially distanced in-person events, scheduled online performances and on-demand digital shows. Tickets and information for all kinds of registered Fringe shows – live, online, paid and free – can be found at edfringe.com.

Around 440 shows are taking place in person. Many shows are taking place in new, creative outdoor locations across

Edinburgh, including a football ground, a car park and a racecourse.

Familiar Fringe operators such as Acoustic Music Centre, Assembly, Dance Base, French Institute, Gilded Balloon, Laughing Horse Free Festival, Monkey Barrel, PBH's Free Fringe, Pleasance, Scottish Storytelling Centre, the Stand, theSpaceUK, Summerhall and Zoo are all taking part in this year's festival with physical spaces in the city.



One of the bands that appeared in 2019 playing in the Pleasance opening Gala. Back for 2021?

All in-person performances will be fully Covid compliant, following the latest guidelines on social distancing, mask wearing, ventilation and hygiene.

Currently, live events must operate at one-metre distancing. On 09 August, Scotland moves to level zero and restrictions on distancing will be dropped.

Every Fringe venue operates individually. For up to date information on capacity and distancing at individual Fringe shows, please check with the relevant venue.

In an exciting move for the festival, more than 260 shows are taking place online, providing a global platform for artists, while enhancing the Fringe's commitment to accessibility and sustainability.



The West Parliament Square performance space under construction.

There will be two kinds of online events available this year: scheduled and on demand.

With scheduled shows, audiences can buy tickets as they would to a traditional in-person event. Shows will have a dedicated start and end time and are treated as an 'appointment to view'

event. For on-demand shows, audiences can buy tickets to watch at their leisure.

Audiences can view Fringe shows on online platforms including the new Fringe Player streamed by Brightcove (NASDAQ: BCOV), the global leader in video for business. Available via edfringe.com, this bespoke digital platform offers an easy-to-use viewing experience for audiences whilst giving artists a platform to present and showcase their work digitally. The player will be accessible to audiences from 06 Aug, with auto-subtitling built in. Both on-demand and scheduled online shows are available on this platform.

Where other platforms (such as Zoom, YouTube and Vimeo) are being used to host online work, information on how to access these is clearly provided at the point of purchase.

Online shows will be available to watch from August but can be pre-booked from today.



Todd Various, Super Scott, Matt Von Trap and James James, street performers on Edinburgh High Street. Photo: © 2021, Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com

Street events

As you may have read in our [August newspaper](#) the spaces for street performers are being changed this year.

There will be a space created in West Parliament Square and a further “family-friendly” space at the foot of the Mound within the bar created by Johnnie Walker.

This means that local street performers have no access to their usual site outside the Fringe Office.