

Edinburgh Deaf Festival urges everyone to share their culture

The second Edinburgh Deaf Festival will take place from 11 to 20 August 2023. Hearing audiences are urged to go along and enjoy the culture.

The 2023 line up consists of more than 60 events – drama, comedy, film, exhibitions, entertainment for children and young people as well as workshops and other activities.



Pictured is actor Amy Murray, who will be performing her show “Red Aphrodite” at the festival. She has appeared in the

Netflix fantasy “The Witcher: Blood Origin” alongside Sir Lenny Henry. “Red Aphrodite” is inspired by Eve Ensler’s hit show “Vagina Monologues”, and is a funny and relatable exploration of sex, passion, female empowerment and the awkward side of femininity.

Photography for Edinburgh Deaf Festival / Deaf Action from: Colin Hattersley Photography – www.colinhattersley.com – cphattersley@gmail.com – 07974 957 388.

Producing the 2023 festival on behalf of Edinburgh-based charity Deaf Action, is Glasgow multidisciplinary artist Jamie Rea who said: “As a deaf producer, I am thrilled to be bringing Edinburgh Deaf Festival back for another spectacular year. I’m proud to have curated a programme that celebrates the vibrancy of my own deaf culture, right here in Edinburgh.

“We have collaborated with talented local and international deaf artists, proving that deafness is not a limitation but a reason for celebration. We’re breaking down barriers, creating an inclusive space for the deaf community, and extending a warm welcome to hearing audiences who we would love to try something different by discovering deaf culture, language and heritage.”

Nadia Nadarajah, Edinburgh Deaf Festival Ambassador, said: “I am thrilled to be returning to Edinburgh Deaf Festival in my role as ambassador. Since last year, we’ve witnessed the remarkable growth of deaf artists and their work. This festival has played a vital role in building their confidence, and I am looking forward to seeing what they have to offer.

“This year, I hope for a greater recognition of the skills possessed by deaf artists worldwide, and an increase in new audiences venturing into the realm of deaf culture and arts.”

Fiona Mackay, Chief Operating Officer of festival supporters SignLive, added: “SignLive are delighted to be the headline sponsor for the Edinburgh Deaf Festival, 2023. The Edinburgh Deaf Festival is an accessible celebration of deaf culture,

language and heritage, which heavily reflects SignLive's values.

"It is an event we feel honoured and excited to support and promote, with the events being accessible to deaf people and mainstream audiences the Edinburgh Deaf Festival is an amazing opportunity for everyone to immerse themselves in deaf culture and enjoy the rich variety of performances."

Among the festival highlights will be:

- **Oddo the Starless:** Stand-up comedian David Sands debuts his stage production of a dark visual story from an unknown dimension, based on short films he made during lockdown.
- **Faslane:** Amy Helena presents her adaptation of a Fringe First winning show that dissects Scotland's nuclear debate. Adapted to British Sign Language (BSL) it's inspired by interviews with those close to the issue, including activists and MoD personnel.
- **Fàilte gu BSL (Welcome to BSL):** Evie Waddell's new show explores her two linguistic identities: Gaelic, and deafness. It's a welcome for deaf people to Scottish Gaelic culture, which often hasn't been accessible, and an invitation for hearing people to engage in BSL.
- **The Gavin Lilley Show:** One of the deaf community's best-known entertainers, Gavin returns to the festival with a stand-up show aimed at hearing and deaf audiences.
- **Clowning Workshop with Elf & Duffy:** A special workshop to emphasise the power of clowning and mime as a performance tool. From Elf Lyons and Brian Duffy, the duo behind the Edinburgh Comedy Award Best Show nominee *Heist*.



Pictured are members of the festival team using BSL (British sign language) signs for 'comedy', 'BSL', 'festival' and 'theatre' – clockwise from top left are: Philip Gerrard (CEO

of Deaf Action), actor Amy Murray, festival producer Jamie Rea and festival ambassador Nadia Nadarajah. Amy will be performing her show "Red Aphrodite" at the festival. She has appeared in the Netflix fantasy "The Witcher: Blood Origin" alongside Sir Lenny Henry. "Red Aphrodite" is inspired by Eve Ensler's hit show "Vagina Monologues", and is a funny and relatable exploration of sex, passion, female empowerment and the awkward side of femininity. Photography for Edinburgh Deaf Festival / Deaf Action from: Colin Hattersley Photography