

Edinburgh International Children's Festival begins on Saturday

The Edinburgh International Children's Festival begins on Saturday with a full day at the National Museum of Scotland packed with circus, dance, storytelling and theatre.

The festival runs for a week and the full programme for the opening day [is here](#). The whole day is free to attend and events take place throughout the day making it ideal for a drop in visit.

This year's theme is to celebrate timely topics such as celebrating difference, the Fear Of Missing Out (FOMO), the search for identity all laced with humour and good fun to connect with children regardless of their circumstances, access needs or location.

Opening this year's festival on Saturday 24 May is the [Festival's Family Day](#) – a full day of popular, free, pop-up performances and artist interventions at the National Museum of Scotland, which has been programmed in partnership with festivals across the country including Light the Blue festival in Aberdeen, Merchant City Festival in Glasgow and the Paisley Book Festival.



Wig Waltz Minnie Crook and Dan Brown at the North Edinburgh Community Festival

Highlights from the Family Day include a second showing of ***Election***, a humorous take on politics and power, created with young people as part of Imagine's Creative Encounters project, **Wig Waltz** by Dan Brown and Minnie Crook featuring over-the-top wigs and period costumes, and **1, 2, 3 Resilient Mushrooms!** telling the story of three tiny but mighty mushrooms through physical storytelling, ceilidh dancing and Scottish traditional music.

Other pop-up shows include a spectacular aerial duet by **All or Nothing Dance Theatre** on a giant swing; a treasure hunt; and the world's biggest (and cutest!) cat.

Festival Director Noel Jordan, who will stand down at the end of the year, said: "This year's programme features exciting Scottish theatre makers, including Greg Sinclair and his new show Tongue Twister, which humorously celebrates the beauty and musicality of language through tongue twisters and gorgeous costumes, as well as Sadiq Ali and Vee Smith whose

first show for young audiences explores the power of friendship and how it can transform us from misfits into fantastical creatures ready to pursue our dreams.

“The Festival includes a number of intensely physical works that explore storytelling through acrobatics, and expands our ideas of the possibilities of what the human body can do. Ultimately, I want this festival to be about the power of creativity, celebration and fun; not as a form of escapism from all the problems we face, but as an expression of joy. Because without joy – in our bodies, and in the power of our imaginations – we will never be able to overcome those problems. And we hope that this year’s Festival truly captures that spirit, and celebrates it.”

[The Festival Family Day](#) will take place between 10am and 5pm at the National Museum of Scotland on Saturday 24 May. Free to attend, performances and events will take place throughout the day for children and their families to drop-in and enjoy.

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For tickets for the Festival and further information visit www.imagine.org.uk/festival/.

Tickets can be booked online or by calling 0131 226 0019.



L-R Front row Sage (9), Junior (9) and Madison (9) and back row Junior (10) and James (9). School children from Forthview Primary celebrated the launch of this year's Edinburgh International Children's Festival programme by recreating the cover of the Festival programme and 'launching' their own paper boats in the pond outside The Scottish Parliament.