

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe is widely acknowledged to be the biggest arts festival in the world and takes place every August for three weeks in Scotland's capital city.



Every year thousands of performers take to a multitude of stages all over Edinburgh to present shows for every taste. From big names in the world of entertainment to unknown artists looking to build their careers, the festival caters for everyone and includes theatre, comedy, dance, physical theatre, musicals, operas, music, exhibitions and events.

Going Back in Time

Our story dates back to 1947, when eight theatre groups turned up uninvited to perform at the (then newly formed) Edinburgh International Festival, an initiative created to celebrate and enrich European cultural life in the wake of the Second World War. Not being part of the official programme of the International festival didn't stop these performers – they just went ahead and staged their shows anyway. Year on year more and more performers followed their example and in 1959 the Festival Fringe Society was created in response to the success of this growing trend.

The Society formalised the existence of this collective of performances, provided information to artists, published the Fringe programme and created a central box office. Its constitution was written in line with the ethos that brought these theatre companies to Edinburgh back in 1947: that the Society was to take no part in vetting the festival's programme. To this day that policy remains at the core of our festival and we're proud to include in our programme anyone with a story to tell and a venue willing to host them. So come on in and join us in this celebration of arts and entertainment!



This Year's Festival

The 64th Edinburgh Festival Fringe running between 6 and 30 August 2010 announced an estimated attendance of 1,955,913 at the final reconciliation. Speaking about the great successes that the Edinburgh Festival Fringe has enjoyed in 2010, Fringe Society Chief Executive, Kath M Mainland said:

“Audiences have come to know the Edinburgh Festival Fringe as the place to see every kind of art; from the most imaginative children’s theatre to topical and incisive comedy and theatre which challenges audiences to discuss and re–consider their world. Edinburgh is without doubt the world’s leading festival destination and audiences continued to be inspired and enthralled by the many and varied events on offer.”

“I have seen and met performers from all over world from established names to those make their first foray into the industry. They have attended the Fringe for every possible reason, to make audiences laugh, think and imagine, and to get their work seen and develop their creative skills. The Fringe Society exists to support performers, directors, producers and venues and to allow them to make their own creative choices and tell their own stories. That every person who has performed as part of the 2010 Edinburgh Festival Fringe chose to be here is exactly why the Fringe is greatest show on earth.”



Performers & VIPs

This year’s Fringe programme boasted 2,453 companies and more performances than ever before. Amongst the companies attending the festival in 2010 the range of work included new writing for theatre and comedy, performances of much loved classics and many new and returning companies.

The Fringe High Street Events team registered 662 acts from street performers to buskers and Fringe performers. Famous names at this year’s Fringe included Clarke Peters, Gyles Brandreth, Carol Ann Duffy, Abi Titmuss, Simon Callow, Caroline Rhea, Jennifer Coolidge, Arj Barker, Paul Merton and a returning contingent from BBC Radio including Scott Mills from Radio 1 and Richard Bacon from 5 Live and Radio 4 Comedy live from the Royal Mile.

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www.edfringe.com

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