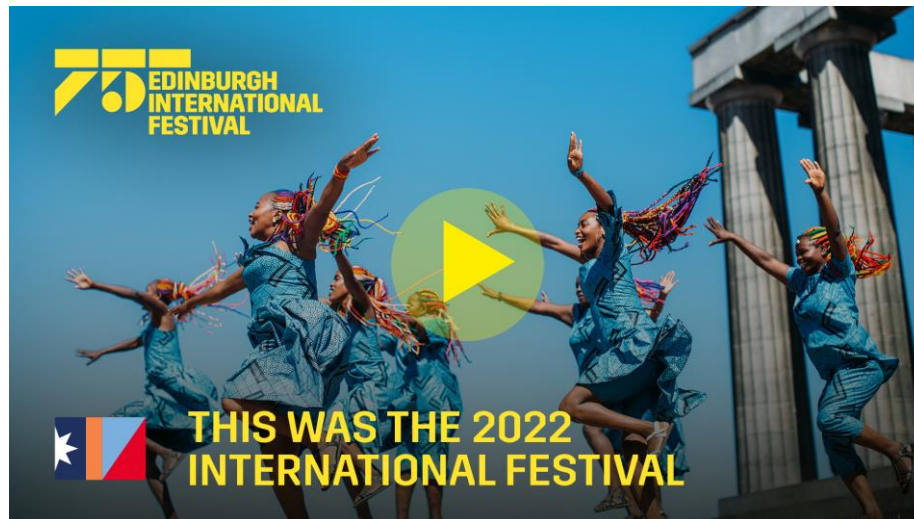


Scotland Embraces the Return of Edinburgh International Festival



- Edinburgh International Festival returned to the city's theatres and concert halls for the first time since 2019
- Scotland embraced the return of the International Festival as 70% of the over 150,000 tickets issued went to Scottish audiences
- 34,000 free tickets were snapped up in record time, mostly for four special events which had 63% Edinburgh audiences
- The 2023 International Festival takes place 4 – 27 August

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SELECTION OF 2022 FESTIVAL IMAGES – see [here](#)
FESTIVAL SUMMARY VIDEO – see [here](#)

29 August, Edinburgh: The 2022 **Edinburgh International Festival** has drawn to a close following **92** different productions featuring **over 2,400** artists from around **45 different nationalities**, returning to full theatres and concert halls with critical acclaim for the first time since 2019. The 2022 International Festival marks Fergus Linehan's last as Festival Director following an eight-year tenure, before Nicola Benedetti takes up the role in October 2022. The 2023 International Festival will take place 4 – 27 August.

Fergus Linehan, Festival Director at Edinburgh International Festival said:

“As the curtain falls on the 2022 Edinburgh International Festival and on my tenure as Director, I am awestruck by the resilience, generosity and talent of the thousands of artists who have lit up our city over the past month. I am also hugely grateful for the responsiveness and dedication of all those who delivered the Festival season, from ushers and technicians to drivers and administrators, in the most challenging of circumstances. I leave the Festival in the knowledge that it is in the best of hands and wish Nicola Benedetti every success for her future tenure.”

Over **150,000** tickets were issued during the three-week festival, marking just a 7% decrease compared to 2019. The appetite for the return of the International Festival was further demonstrated by the popularity of free, easily accessible events, given in celebration of the Festival’s 75th anniversary, which were fully booked within hours of going live.

Over **34,000** free tickets have been booked so far, mostly for the four flagship free events: the spectacular opening event **MACRO** at BT Murrayfield, the **Ukrainian Freedom Orchestra**’s only Scottish concert, **Thank You, Edinburgh** from the **Philadelphia Orchestra** and **Dreamachine**, which continues into September as part of UNBOXED 2022. 63% of the audiences for these special events have come from the city of Edinburgh.

An additional **27,000** tickets were discounted as concessions, given to community groups or allocated to young people as part of the **Young Music Pass** scheme. Local audiences in particular embraced the return of the International Festival to full strength, with **70% of the total audience coming from Scotland** and 20% from the rest of the UK.

The International Festival celebrated its 75th anniversary with a programme characterised by high profile international collaborations, including artistic residencies featuring the world-renowned **The Philadelphia Orchestra** and **Internationaal Theater Amsterdam**, the Festival’s largest ever line-up of Australian artists as part of the UK / Australia Season 2022 and a powerful performance from the **Ukrainian Freedom Orchestra** marking Edinburgh’s twinning with Kyiv.

The 2022 International Festival also explored the profound impact of refugeehood and migration on global culture, inspired by Rudolph Bing who co-founded the Festival in 1947 and was a refugee himself. **Refuge**, a season of contemporary theatre, dance, visual art, film and conversation, was created in collaboration with the **Scottish Refugee Council** and featured artists from countries including Palestine, Iran, Zimbabwe, Jamaica and Taiwan.

The 2022 International Festival was a remarkable edition for Scottish artists too, with highlights including: the world premiere of **Scottish Ballet**’s technology-inspired version of *Coppélia*, the **National Theatre of Scotland** with a thrilling staging of Liz Lochhead’s *Medea* and **Alan Cumming** with a new take on Scotland’s Bard in *Burn*, the **Scottish Chamber Orchestra** with a stunning solo appearance from **Nicola Benedetti**, and the **Royal Scottish National Orchestra** alongside conductor **Sir Andrew Davis** bringing the Festival to a close with Elgar’s *The Dream of Gerontius*.

Rt Hon. Nicola Sturgeon MSP, First Minister of Scotland said:

“This year, the experience of the Edinburgh Festivals has been particularly special, as we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Edinburgh International Festival, and the return of the full programme of festivals after three long years. Arts and culture is not just important to our

economy and people's livelihoods, but celebrating the power of arts and culture makes us a healthier and happier country.

"The Edinburgh International Festival does what can only be described as closing the gap between the festival and the city of Edinburgh, in addition to many other parts of Scotland. It brings in groups that haven't been able to experience the festival as others might have, and it works to nurture the creative talent of the next generation, which is incredibly important."

Francesca Hegyi, Executive Director at Edinburgh International Festival, said:

"It has been fantastic to see our audiences embracing the return of the Edinburgh International Festival after an absence of almost three years. We are so pleased that the Festival has bounced back with such strength and resilience, we've reached our targets this year and now look to build on this success into 2023 and beyond."

The International Festival announced the appointment of Sir Ewan Brown CBE as Honorary Vice President at the Closing Concert on 28 August. This appointment was made in recognition and acknowledgement of his support and exceptional commitment to the Festival over several decades, including a decade on the board with seven years as Deputy Chair. He joins Mrs. Carol Colburn Grigor, who became an Honorary Vice President in 2013.

The Festival extends its 75th anniversary celebrations into autumn with its **At Home** programme, available online for free from November 2022. It features five specially commissioned performances filmed in iconic locations around Edinburgh, three full-length concerts and a series of exclusive music sessions.

Visit www.eif.co.uk/at-home for full details of Edinburgh International Festival At Home in partnership with abrdn.

– ENDS –

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2022 International Festival highlights images - available [here](#)
Festival summary video – available [here](#)

About Edinburgh International Festival

Every August, the International Festival brings world-class music, opera, dance and theatre performances to Edinburgh.

Created in 1947 following WWII, the festival inspired artists and audiences to heal through international cultural collaboration. This year the International Festival celebrates 75 years of bringing world cultures together and will take place from 5-28 August 2022.

Year-round the Edinburgh International Festival connects with local communities through education projects, access programmes, and initiatives that introduce new audiences to live performance.

For more information visit www.eif.co.uk