



An Edinburgh Festival Punter

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Creative Scotland 3-year funding (2015-2018)

posted October 30th, 2014.

[Creative Scotland](#) has announced details of its stable 3-year funding for 2015-2018. £100m will be made available. The Festival & King's theatres will receive funding for the first time under this scheme while the Royal Lyceum and Traverse see reductions in their grants of 17.5% and 11.1% respectively.

St. Stephen's is back

posted October 15th, 2014.

[Thom Dibdin](#) (alledinburghtheatre.com) reports that St. Stephen's is up and running as a community centre. A tenant is currently being sought to run the building during the 2015 festival. It had previously been used as a Fringe venue for a number of years by Aurora Nova, and more recently by Northern Stage and The Traverse.

End of Jonathan Mills' reign at the EIF

posted October 3rd, 2014.

Sir Jonathan Mills' time as Artistic Director of the Edinburgh International Festival came to an end this week. The EIF website has produced [this celebration of his tenure](#). Fergus Linehan officially took over the role with effect from October 1st.

Chris Fujiwara steps down from role as EIFF's Artistic Director

posted September 16th, 2014.

[The Edinburgh International Film Festival](#) has announced that Artistic Director Chris Fujiwara is stepping down from the role to pursue other activities.

Comedy fans see more than 300 Fringe shows

posted September 9th, 2014.

[The British Comedy Guide](#) has an interview with comedy fans David and Carole Chapple who managed to see over 300 shows during this year's Fringe festival.

EIF box office takings for 2014 exceed £3m

posted August 31st, 2014.

[The Scotsman](#) reports that box office takings at the 2014 Edinburgh International Festival exceeded £3m for the first time.

Fringe declares that 2m tickets issued barrier broken

posted August 26th, 2014.

[In its closing press release](#) the Edinburgh Festival Fringe states that an estimated 2.18m tickets were issued during the 2014 festival.

Thundering Hooves version 2

posted August 24th, 2014.

[The Stage](#) reports that a £50k study is to be carried out to help Edinburgh's key festivals maintain their position as world leaders. [Thundering Hooves](#) was the report that was issued back in 2006 to investigate the problems which faced the festivals at that time.

Fringe registers small surplus for year ending Nov 2013

posted August 24th, 2014.

As far as I can see there is no article on the recent Fringe AGM which mentions the accounts. For the record, the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society registered a surplus of £166k for the year that ended on November 30th, 2013. Members of the Fringe Society have access to the accounts via its website.

Festival funding essential

posted August 22nd, 2014.

Faith Liddell, director of the umbrella body Festivals Edinburgh, has told MSPs that it is essential that levels of financial backing for the festivals are maintained in the face of wider budget cuts if Edinburgh is to retain its crown as the world's leading festival city. [See this article in The Scotsman.](#)

Lyn Gardner disagrees with Demarco

posted August 22nd, 2014.

Lyn Gardner, Guardian critic, disagrees with Richard Demarco on his criticism of modern festivals. She considers that [the spirit of the Fringe is alive and well.](#)

Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society's 2014 AGM

posted August 21st, 2014.

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society's Annual General Meeting was held on Tuesday, August 19th, 2014. Coverage in the media has so far centred on the reaction to the cancellation of the Israeli show from Incubator Theatre after protest demonstrations by pro-Palestinian campaigners. See the articles in [The Stage](#) and [The Scotsman](#). The results of the voting for places on the Board of Directors [have now been announced on the Fringe website.](#)

Demarco decries modern Edinburgh festivals

posted August 17th, 2014.

[The Scotsman reports](#) that Richard Demarco, the veteran arts impresario, believes that the festivals have become too bloated and obsessed with awards. He feels that the Fringe has lost its founding spirit.

Warning of need for additional EIF funding

posted August 7th, 2014.

[The Scotsman reports](#) that outgoing EIF artistic director Sir Jonathan Mills has warned that the international festival will need to secure extra funding in the coming years if it is to maintain its position in the competitive world of festivals.

Fireworks concert sponsorship extended to 2017

posted July 30th, 2014.

[The Scotsman reports](#) that Virgin Money's sponsorship of the Edinburgh International Festival's fireworks concert will continue until at least 2017.

Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society's 2014 AGM

posted July 25th, 2014.

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society's Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 19th, 2014. Voting has opened for election to the Board of Directors in the venue and open categories. Voting will close at 10.30am on Tuesday, August 19th, 2014, i.e. the morning of the AGM. Pip Utton is the only candidate in the show participant category, and he will be elected unopposed.

Edinburgh Fringe shows to be beamed to Odeon cinemas

posted July 18th, 2014.

[The Guardian reports](#) that Hibrow, the digital arts company, has announced a deal whereby eight Fringe shows will be beamed to Odeon cinema screens across Britain.

Edinburgh Festival Carnival

posted July 17th, 2014.

The Edinburgh Festival Carnival is the traditional introduction to the city's summer festivals. It will be held from 2pm on Sunday July 20th, 2014. [See the article in EdinburghGuide.com.](#)

Modest attendance increase at 2014 Film Festival

posted July 3rd, 2014.

[The Scotsman reports](#) that attendance at the 2014 Edinburgh Film Festival was 46,000, 4% up on last year's figure.

Purchaser of St. Stephen's Church revealed

posted June 28th, 2014.

[The Stage reports](#) that Leslie Benzies is the purchaser of St. Stephen's Church. Benzies is the president of Rockstar North, developers of the video game series Grand Theft Auto. Benzies, a resident of

Stockbridge for 10 years, plans to use the decommissioned church as a community venue. It had been used as a Fringe venue for a number of years by Aurora Nova, and more recently by Northern Stage and The Traverse.

Forest Fringe Edinburgh 2014

posted June 15th, 2014.

Forest Fringe will once again be based in Out of the Blue Drill Hall in Leith. Details of the programme, which runs from August 6th to the 17th, are gradually appearing. [Check the Edinburgh 2014 page on their website](#) periodically for the latest information.

Giant Ferris wheel for Princes Street

posted June 14th, 2014.

[The Edinburgh Evening News reports](#) that festival promoters Underbelly will run a giant ferris wheel on Princes Street, next to the Scott Monument, during the summer festival season. It is identical to the one that is used in the Edinburgh Winter Wonderland.

Edinburgh Book Festival's 2014 programme unveiled

posted June 11th, 2014.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival has unveiled its 2014 programme. Information on the programme launch plus links to initial articles [can be found here on the Pre-Festival Stuff page](#).

Edinburgh Festival Fringe's 2014 programme unveiled

posted June 5th, 2014.

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe has officially unveiled the 2014 programme. I say "officially" ... the vast majority of shows had already been announced by the venues, and tickets have been on sale, some as far back as January. Information on the programme launch plus links to initial articles [can be found here on the Pre-Festival Stuff page](#).

Paines Plough to launch portable theatre at the Fringe

posted June 5th, 2014.

[As previously mentioned back in January](#), Paines Plough will launch its 175-seater portable in-the-round theatre in August. It will be at the Summerhall venue where Paines Plough will partner with Northern Stage to present a series of performances. [See the latest article in The Stage](#).

Summerhall's 2014 festival programme launched

posted June 5th, 2014.

Summerhall joined the Fringe pre-announcers' club yesterday evening. [Details of its programme are available on its website](#).

Traverse Theatre's 2014 festival programme launched

posted June 4th, 2014.

[The Traverse Theatre announced its 2014 festival programme](#) last night. The details will be available on its [website](#) from 10am today when tickets can be purchased. The online version of the programme can be viewed [here](#).

Edinburgh International Film Festival's 2014 programme launched

posted May 28th, 2014.

The complete 2014 programme for the Edinburgh International Film Festival has been announced. Information on the programme plus links to initial articles on the launch [can be found here on the Pre-Festival Stuff page](#).

Made in Scotland 2014 Announcement

posted May 27th, 2014.

The list of Fringe shows which constitute the [Made in Scotland Showcase for 2014 has been announced](#). Made in Scotland is a curated showcase of some of the best dance, theatre and music productions from Scotland at the Fringe. It was originally set up to raise the international profile of Scottish dance and theatre, with music being added last year. It is a joint initiative between the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, Creative Scotland and the Federation of Scottish Theatre - supported by the Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund.

Additional £1m funding for Edinburgh's festivals

posted May 22nd, 2014.

[The Herald reports](#) that Edinburgh's festivals will benefit from an additional £1m funding this year. It will come from the Culture 2014 Programme, Homecoming Scotland 2014, Edinburgh City Council and

More on St Andrew Square Garden Fringe venue

posted May 21st, 2014.

[Thom Dibdin](#) provides further information on the use of St Andrew Square Garden as a Fringe venue by [Assembly Rooms](#). It will house The Famous Spiegeltent, a 150-seater Mongolian yurt housing plus a free stage which will be built at the base of the central column.

Fringe ticket collection point at Edinburgh Airport

posted May 19th, 2014.

[The Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#) will have a ticket collection point in operation at Edinburgh Airport from July 28th, 2014.

Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival's 2014 programme launched

posted May 14th, 2014.

The complete 2014 programme for the Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival has been announced. Information on the programme plus links to initial articles on the launch [can be found here on the Pre-Festival Stuff page](#).

Yet another tranche of Fringe shows announced

posted May 13th, 2014.

[The Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#) has made another tranche of shows available. This is the final tranche before the (so called) official launch on June 5th, 2014.

EIF and Fringe dates to be aligned

posted May 8th, 2014. updated May 17th, 2014.

Fergus Linehan, the incoming artistic director of the Edinburgh International Festival (EIF), has announced that from 2015 the festival dates will be brought in line with those of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. [See the report in The Scotsman](#). Further news ... new genres of music to be included in 2015 and (to the joy of some) no festival theme!

Former Royal High School to be used as a venue

posted May 8th, 2014.

The former Royal High School building will be used as a venue in this year's Edinburgh Art Festival, [as reported in The Scotsman](#).

Edinburgh Art Festival commissions

posted May 7th, 2014.

[The Edinburgh Art Festival](#) has announced details of this year's commissions plus further information on the festival exhibition *Where do I end and you begin*.

George Street cafe culture

posted April 26th, 2014.

Based on the success of the trial last summer to make George Street one-way which allowed the creation of a cafe culture, Edinburgh City Council has given approval for the trial to be extended. This time it will run for one year. [The Edinburgh Evening News](#) gives details of the upcoming experiment.

Edinburgh Magic Festival's 2014 programme unveiled

posted April 22nd, 2014.

The programme for the 2014 Edinburgh Magic Festival was unveiled today. Further information can be found [on its website](#). The press release [can be found here on the Pre-Festival Stuff page](#).

George Street marquees

posted April 18th, 2014.

[The Edinburgh Evening News](#) reports that Buckingham Palace-style marquees are to be set up in George Street from July in an attempt to establish a year-round cafe culture.

Book Festival's annual review of 2013 available

posted April 12th, 2014.

The Edinburgh International Book Festival's annual review of 2013 is now [available to download from this page](#).

Registration opens for World Fringe Congress

posted April 9th, 2014.

[The Courier reports](#) that registration is now open for the second World Fringe Congress which will be hosted by the Edinburgh Festival Fringe from August 15th to the 17th, 2014. This year's Congress is part of the Culture 2014 programme which accompanies the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Crombie to quit as chair of Creative Scotland

posted April 3rd, 2014.

[The Scotsman reports](#) that Sir Sandy Crombie will not seek a second 4 year spell as chairman of Creative Scotland in July. However, he has been asked to stay on until the end of the year while a replacement is found. Crombie quickly became a controversial figure with many in the arts community early in his tenure by encouraging organisations to become more business-aware.

St Andrew Square Garden to become Fringe venue

posted March 25th, 2014.

[The Scotsman reports](#) that St Andrew Square Garden will become a Fringe venue this year. It will host three performance areas, including the Famous Spiegeltent.

Richard Demarco receives the Edinburgh Award

posted March 25th, 2014.

Richard Demarco, arguably Edinburgh's foremost cultural figure over the last 60 years, [has received The Edinburgh Award](#) from the City Fathers. [The Scotsman reports](#) that talks are underway to find a permanent home for his archive, a vast collection of artworks, memorabilia and photographs.

Edinburgh Comedy Festival scrapped

posted March 21st, 2014.

The Edinburgh Comedy Festival, an attempted breakaway from the Fringe by the super venues or a re-branding of the comedy label - whichever you believed, is being ditched, [according to The Scotsman](#). It first came into existence in 2008 and has struggled to have any impact whatsoever, a bit of damp squib really.

Edinburgh International Festival's 2014 programme launched

posted March 18th, 2014.

The 2014 programme for the Edinburgh International Festival has been announced. Information on the programme plus links to initial articles on the launch [can be found here on the Pre-Festival Stuff page](#).

Second tranche of Fringe shows on sale

posted March 15th, 2014.

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe has announced that a second tranche of shows are now on sale. [Details can be found here](#). Two further tranches will be made available on April 10th and May 13th before the full programme is launched on June 5th.

Edinburgh Art Festival's 2014 programme unveiled

posted March 13th, 2014.

The Edinburgh Art Festival is the first out of the blocks with the [announcement of its 2014 festival](#). Further details can be found on its [website](#). Information on the programme plus links to initial articles on the launch [can be found here on the Pre-Festival Stuff page](#).

Offer by unnamed philanthropist for St. Stephen's accepted

posted February 28th, 2014.

An unnamed philanthropist has put in the highest bid for St. Stephen's church. He / she will not be named until the deal is successfully completed. It is understood that the building will be set aside for community use and for the performing arts. [Thom Dibdin's article](#) provides further information, as does [this one in The Scotsman](#).

Increased demand for Free Fringe venues

posted February 19th, 2014.

[The Scotsman reports](#) a 60% increase in applications to perform at the Free Fringe this summer. Promoter Peter Buckley Hill is concerned that he may have to turn some performers away due to a lack of available venues in the city centre.

Save St. Stephen's

posted February 7th, 2014.

The iconic, disused church of St. Stephen's is up for sale with a guide price of £500,000. The building has been used as a Fringe venue in recent years, most notably by Aurora Nova and the Northern Theatre. The St. Stephen's Playfair Trust is keen for it to remain as a community facility, [and it held a meeting last night](#), which attracted 300 or so people, to gauge public opinion. The overwhelming majority at the meeting was in favour of the trust purchasing the property.

Festival Fringe Society Review of 2013 available

posted February 7th, 2014.

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society's annual review of 2013 is now [available to download from this page](#).

First tickets on sale from Edinburgh Fringe

posted February 6th, 2014.

Tickets are now on sale for an initial set of shows at Edinburgh Fringe 2014. Similar to last year, tickets for further tranches of shows will become available each month. The dates will be March 13th, April 10th and May 13th. The full programme and box office launch will take place on June 5th, 2014.

Paines Plough, 40th anniversary and its "pop-up" theatre

posted January 29th, 2014.

[The Stage reports](#) that the new writing drama company [Paines Plough](#) will have an extended touring schedule in 2014 to celebrate its 40th anniversary. This will be possible through the use of a portable 175-seater Roundabout auditorium at some under-represented locations. This "pop-up theatre" will be launched at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

James Plays at EIF 2014

posted January 21st, 2014.

[The National Theatre of Scotland has announced](#) that three plays written by Rona Munro on the Scottish kings James I, James II and James III will be performed at the 2014 Edinburgh International Festival. The plays will subsequently be staged at the National Theatre in London during the early autumn period.

Scottish Government latest Expo funding for festivals

posted January 21st, 2014.

The Scottish Government has been providing funding to the twelve Edinburgh festivals since 2008, with the emphasis on assisting Scottish works. [It has announced](#) that £2.25m will be made available in the 2014-2015 financial year. £200k will awarded to the James Plays by Rona Munro at the Edinburgh International Festival while £250k will go to Festivals Edinburgh.

Edinburgh Art Festival 2014 - call for submissions

posted January 13th, 2014.

The Edinburgh Art Festival has today launched its annual call for submissions. [Artists can find details here](#). The deadline for applications is Monday 10th February 2014 at noon.

Festival - ticket sales vs income

posted December 18th, 2013.

[The Scotsman reports](#) that although Edinburgh's 2013 summer festivals showed an increase of around 5% in ticket sales there was no matching increase in income. This was due to cut-price deals, last minute offers and even some free tickets.

2014 Fringe show registration deadline dates

posted December 18th, 2013.

Deadline dates for registering shows for the 2014 Fringe and details of registration fees [have been announced](#). The final date for inclusion in the printed programme brochure is Wednesday April 9th, 2014.

Free Fringe breakaway group

posted December 8th, 2013.

[Chortle reports](#) that a group of comedians plans to break away from the PBH Free Fringe to form a separate group, probably to be called Freestival. This would make three organisations offering free Fringe shows: Laughing Horse, PBH Free Fringe and Freestival. [Here is one comedian](#) who is not convinced that this is a good idea.

Applications open for Ideas Tap Underbelly 2014 award

posted December 5th, 2013.

[Ideas Tap](#) is teaming up with [Underbelly](#) once again in 2014 to help selected young companies with their Fringe productions. A total of £25K in funding will be made available. If you are between 18 and 30 [you can apply](#). The closing date for applications is January 14th, 2014.

Annual review and changes to *The August Feast* ...

posted December 5th, 2013.

I have just completed my annual review of *The August Feast: A Punter's Perspective on Edinburgh and its Festivals* and made a few minor changes. This tome includes a summary of [my favourite shows over the years](#). Last year I added Mies Julie and Watt. This year's additions are Quietly and Grounded.

Edinburgh to host second International Culture Summit

posted December 4th, 2013.

After the successful inaugural International Culture Summit which was held in Edinburgh in August 2012 [the Scottish Government has announced](#) that the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh will host a second summit from August 10th-12th, 2014.

Fringe Society - Participants' Council election result

posted November 29th, 2013.

Dec Munro has won the recent election to fill the current vacancy in the Performer category on the Participants' Council.

Fringe roadshows - dates

posted November 26th, 2013.

Dates for the various Fringe roadshows can now be found [here on the Fringe website](#). One notable addition to the original announcement is a live streamed roadshow from Edinburgh which will take place from 1900 to 2100 GMT on Thursday 23rd January, 2014.

First tickets for Fringe 2014 on sale!

posted November 18th, 2013.

[Chortle reports](#) that the first tickets for Fringe 2014 are on sale. Stand-ups Daniel Sloss and Jimeoin have confirmed their shows for 2014 at Venue 150 @ The Edinburgh International Conference Centre. What odds that we eventually reach the stage where tickets for next year's Fringe will be available before this year's event has finished?

Fringe roadshows - early information

posted November 5th, 2013.

An informal "Meet the Venues" session will take place at the Quaker Meeting House in Edinburgh on November 30th, 2013. An initial roadshow for would-be Edinburgh Fringe 2014 participants will take place in the Platform Theatre at Central St. Martins behind Kings Cross station in London on December 14th, 2013. Further roadshows in early 2014 are currently planned for New York, Adelaide, Orlando, Leicester and Edinburgh. Details of these events will be posted when they become available. [See this page on the Fringe website](#) to keep abreast of the latest information.

EIFF 2014 to introduce new strands

posted November 4th, 2013.

The Edinburgh International Film Festival has started to accept submissions for next year's festival. [It has announced](#) that there will be a number of new strands in 2014. The Gala strand will feature major UK premieres of both British and international films; For the Family is fairly self-explanatory; and New Perspectives will showcase new fiction and documentary filmmaking that raises challenging questions about the medium. There will also be a focus on the best of German cinema in EIFF 2014.

Next Traverse Associate Director

posted October 24th, 2013.

[Thom Dibdin reports](#) that Emma Callander will become the next Traverse Associate Director, taking over from Hamish Pirie who will leave in March 2014. Emma is a freelance director and co-artistic director of Theatre Uncut.

Fringe Society - Participants' Council vacancy

posted October 15th, 2013.

Gareth Morinan's recent election to the Fringe Society's Board of Directors has resulted in a vacancy in the Performer category on the Participants' Council. Nominations are now being accepted for this position.

They will close on October 30th, 2013. Further details can be found [here on the Fringe website](#).

Comedy conference discusses Edinburgh Festival costs

posted October 5th, 2013.

The comedy industry has this week held its latest conference in London. One of the topics on the agenda was the rising costs of putting a show on in Edinburgh. [Chortle reports](#) on the debate which included concerns on the cost of publicity.

Creative Scotland senior management shake-up

posted October 3rd, 2013.

Creative Scotland has announced a major restructuring of its senior management. The current three directors of creative development will be replaced by three more specific director roles: arts and engagement; film and media; and creative industries. [The Stage provides an overview of the changes](#) while [The Scotsman focuses on the changes and possible effects on the film industry](#).

Edinburgh City Council proposes static cultural budgets for 2014-2015

posted October 1st, 2013.

[The Stage reports](#) that Edinburgh City Council proposes to keep its cultural budget for 2014-2015 at the same level as 2013-2014. This is despite cuts in other areas. Culture, which includes grants to Edinburgh's various festivals, accounts for about 1% of council expenditure.

Virgin Money extends Fringe sponsorship

posted September 25th, 2013.

[The Edinburgh Festival Fringe has announced](#) that Virgin Money is to extend its sponsorship of 'Fringe on the High Street' until 2016.

Scottish government's proposed arts funding for 2014-2015

posted September 14th, 2013.

Details from the Scottish government's draft budget for 2014-2015 indicate an 8.2% reduction in the capital and revenue spending of the five national performing companies but quite modest decreases elsewhere across the arts sector according to [Thom Dibdin's article in The Stage](#).

New chair for NTS

posted September 11th, 2013.

[The Stage reports](#) that Seona Reid has been appointed chair of the National Theatre of Scotland, replacing Richard Findlay, the inaugural chair of the 7 year-old company.

Post festival and draft 2014 dates

posted September 3rd, 2013.

I have penned some very brief [post festival notes](#) and I have made an initial stab at dates for 2014 on the home page.

Edinburgh International Festival 2013 statistics

posted September 2nd, 2013. updated September 3rd, 2013.

[Edinburghguide.com provides the released figures for the 2013 festival](#). In essence, the number of tickets issued rose from 141,544 in 2012 to 158,500 this year. However, box office income was down from £2.83m in 2012 to £2.43m. It is claimed that a greater number of free and discounted tickets account for these changes. The EIF states that 80% of all tickets were "sold" with 48% of performances being sold out. [A later article appeared in The Stage](#).

Venue news from Summerhall, Assembly Roxy & Traverse

posted August 30th, 2013.

[The Herald has been reporting](#) over the last couple of days that the company which runs the Summerhall venue is currently being pursued by HMRC for unpaid income tax and VAT amounting to around £200K. [Thom Dibdin mentions that Assembly Roxy is to receive a grant of £30K from Creative Scotland](#) to help it to turn the venue into a permanent 200 seater theatre. He also relays the statement made by Orla O'Loughlin on the BBC's programme to celebrate 50 years of the Traverse that they are considering a new home. [The programme can be found on the BBC's iPlayer](#).

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2013 statistics

posted August 27th, 2013.

The 2013 Edinburgh Festival Fringe finished yesterday. As has become traditional [the Fringe Society](#)

[published this year's statistics](#) part way through the final day. 45,464 performances of 2,871 shows took place in 273 performing spaces. An estimated 1,943,493 tickets have been issued which represents a 4.6% rise over 2012. As a cynic of the first water I once again question precisely what the terms "estimated" and "tickets issued" mean. [Thom Dibdin also points out](#) that while the number of shows is growing the average number of tickets issued per performance is falling ... by 22% when measured over the last 10 years. However, it would be churlish to deny that the Fringe continues to grow. Is this good? Is it sustainable? The answers are almost certainly no in both cases but let us leave the debate for another day.

Edinburgh International Book Festival 2013 statistics

posted August 27th, 2013.

The 2013 Book Festival also finished yesterday. [The closing press release revealed](#) that it is in rude health. 225,000 visits were made to Charlotte Square, with tickets sales and book sales both up by 6% on 2012.

Festival awards in full flow

posted August 23rd, 2013.

As we approach the end of the Fringe the awards (and there are quite a few) start to be dished out. A summary of these awards can be found [here](#).

Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society election results

posted August 21st, 2013.

The Fringe Society has announced the election results for the vacant positions on the Board of Directors. In the show participant category Susan Morrison was elected. In the venue category Gareth Morinan was elected while Richard Wiseman won election in the open category. They will each serve a term of four years on the board. 44.4% of the Fringe membership of 620 individuals voted.

Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society AGM

posted August 21st, 2013.

[The Scotsman reports](#) that the main theme from yesterday's AGM was a call from venue managers, producers and performers to take action to stem the soaring costs of putting shows on. Meanwhile, it was noted that the society recorded a surplus of £166k last year.

Hoo ha on Scottish independence debate at festivals

posted August 15th, 2013.

[The Scotsman does a bit of stirring](#) by announcing that Jonathan Mills is banning productions that may touch on the subject of Scottish independence at EIF 2014. Mills rightly says that the Fringe will provide a better forum. However, the obvious place for such debates is the Book Festival.

Mark Ravenhill gives Fringe opening address

posted August 3rd, 2013. rewritten later the same day

Playwright Mark Ravenhill gave the first ever opening address at the Edinburgh Fringe. I have (eventually) read his speech ... [thanks to Thom Dibdin for publishing it in The Stage](#). Andrew Eaton-Lewis has said "I get the impression that some of the nuances in Mark Ravenhill's Fringe speech are missing from the media coverage". I agree ... so read the speech for yourself.



An Edinburgh Festival Punter

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Pre-Festival Stuff for 2014

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This page is split into two halves. The top section covers the launch of each festival programme for 2014 as they take place plus any early critical feedback:

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[Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)
[Edinburgh International Book Festival](#)
[Edinburgh International Film Festival](#)
[Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival](#)
[Edinburgh Art Festival](#)
[Forest Fringe](#)
[Edinburgh Magic Festival](#)

The second half of the page is called [Picks and Previews](#). It contains links to media views on the individual programme launches plus, from June to early August, a digest of links to the critics' recommendations and useful preview articles.

Edinburgh International Festival

Tuesday March 18th 2014 is much more spring-like than the equivalent time last year when the Edinburgh International Festival was launched. [There is a YouTube trailer](#) which gives a very quick rundown of performers and productions in the 2014 festival .. don't blink or you might miss some of it!

The programme brochure can be [viewed online](#) or [downloaded in pdf format](#). The major theme this year is war and peace. Many Scottish critics are unhappy that the subject of (Scottish) independence is not being addressed.

The first article on the highlights of the programme can be found in [The List](#). It was closely followed by [The Scotsman](#), [The Guardian](#), [The Herald](#), [EdinburghGuide.com](#), [The Edinburgh Reporter](#) and [stv Edinburgh](#).

An initial critics' guide appeared in [The Scotsman](#) on the next day, as well as early feedback in [The Herald](#).

Links to previews, critics' recommendations, etc across all the summer festivals can be found in the [Picks and Previews](#) section at the bottom of [this page](#), as they become available.

Susan's initial thoughts

My American friend Susan, who has been coming to the festival with her husband Cal for over 30 years, has been kind enough in previous years to let me have her thoughts on the International Festival programme. I am particularly grateful for her views this year, as she has not been well recently.

Susan and Cal consider that the 2014 festival programme is the best that Jonathan Mills has produced during his eight year tenure. They plan to see all three of the James Plays. On the music and opera front Susan has produced a comprehensive list of performances that she would, ideally, like to attend.

Holst's The Planets-Donald Runnicles
Scottish Chamber Orchesra-Robin Ticciati
Nicola Benedetti (already hard to get tickets)
The Sixteen
Ian Bostridge

Collegium Vocale Gent-Phillippe Herreweghe
Nordic Savall-Les Concert des Nation, La Capella Reial de Catalunya
Stephen Osborne
The Hilliard Ensemble
Britten's War Requiem, Sir Andrew Davis
Piotr Anerszewski
Ute Lempur
Arditti Quartet
Bach's Mass in B Minor, Collegium Vocale Gent, Philippe Herreweghe
Shostakovich's Leningrad Symphony. I CULTURE Orchestra
Kronos Quartet
London Philharmonic, Vladimir Jurowski
The Tallis Scholars
Simon Keenlyside
River Car Consort
Concerto Italiano
Takacs Quartet
Czech Philharmonic
Anne Sophie Von Otter
Andreas Schiff
William Tell
Royal Concertgebouw
Frank Peter Zimmerman
Les Troyens, Marinsky Opera
Mahler's Symphony 6, Yannick Nezet-Seguind
Daniel Trifonov

This punter's initial twopenneth

The James Plays are at the top of my list. We may not be able to see all three productions. It depends on our schedule. However, the plays will move to the Royal National Theatre in London after the festival, so we will have another opportunity to see any of them there. Ganesh Versus The Third Reich is another probable.

The Sixteen, and possibly The Tallis Scholars, will fill our choral music slots.

There is nothing on the Dance programme that grabs me just now, but I may reconsider as we get closer to August.

Edinburgh Festival Fringe

[The 2014 Edinburgh Festival Fringe programme was unveiled on Thursday June 5th, 2014 ... or was it?](#) The vast majority of the shows at this year's festival had already been announced by the venues, and tickets have been available for purchase, some as far back as January.

An online version of the programme brochure can be viewed with the Fringe website's interactive reader. Alternatively, a pdf version can be downloaded. Both facilities can be located on [this page on the Fringe website](#).

The Edinburgh Fringe continues its inexorable growth, giving the Society its annual opportunity to trot out a range of yet higher statistics. The 414 page programme brochure which weighs in at 616 grams indicates that there will be 3,193 shows this year at 299 venues with a total of 50,771 performances. The number of shows is an 11% increase over the 2013 figure. At 34% Comedy contributes the largest number of shows to the overall total, followed by Theatre (27%), Music (13%) and Children's Shows (5%). There will be over 800 free shows. Finally, 47 countries will be represented this year. Enough facts and figures!

At least the Traverse Theatre and Summerhall left it until the last minute before jumping the gun. [The Traverse announcement](#) was on Tuesday June 3rd. [The online version of its programme can be viewed here](#). While [Summerhall](#) left it even later, the evening of Wednesday June 4th, 2014. [An article on the](#)

Summerhall programme announcement can be found in [The Edinburgh Reporter](#).

Articles on the programme unveiling can be found in various places across the media, including [The Guardian](#), [EdinburghGuide.com](#), [The Herald](#), [The Scotsman](#), [The Stage](#) and [BBC News](#).

As there is a lot to digest, initial recommendations from the critics will no doubt take a day or three to appear, while ideas from this particular punter will take somewhat longer (at least a week to 10 days). They will all appear here in due course.

I am glad to report that our Fringe programme brochure has arrived in the post this morning (the day of the unveiling), as did the Traverse programme brochure. So no excuses for not making a start on the long haul that is our initial investigation of what's on!

Obviously wrong about waiting a day or three for some recommendations from the critics. Lyn Gardner had [her initial recommendations in The Guardian](#) on the day of the launch!

Links to previews, critics' recommendations, etc across all the summer festivals can be found in the [Picks and Previews section at the bottom of this page](#), as they become available.

This punter's initial thoughts

We have completed our first pass of the ever-growing Fringe programme brochure. We are just the 10 days behind Lyn Gardner, the Guardian theatre critic, who had her initial thoughts in print on the day of the launch. I did tweet Lyn to enquire if she gave courses on speed browsing ... but seemingly not. Much relief that, after the absolute dearth last year, there are three productions of *Antigone* this year. Normal service is resumed!

Our early choices tend to be driven by previous experience of performers, companies and venues. In no particular order then ... *Unfaithful*, *Spoiling*, *SmallWar* and *Cuckooed* (all at the Traverse) ... *The Initiate and Lungs* (Paines Plough at Summerhall) ... *Anthem for a Doomed Youth* (Guy Masterson at Assembly Roxy) ... *Missing* by David Bolger (Coisceim at Dance Base) ... and that "punner extraordinaire" Tim Vine at Pleasance Courtyard.

There are 30 shows on our possibles list so far but further choices are likely to be delayed until just before the Fringe starts, after we have perused what the critics say. And, of course, final choices will not be made until we are there in the thick of it and have had a chance to read reviews.

Good luck with your own trawling through the programme. I have mentioned [Lyn Gardner's early thoughts](#) which provide much useful information on theatre. [The Fringe's programme launch announcement](#) is another useful source of help. Finally, have a look at the [Made in Scotland Showcase 2014](#).

Edinburgh International Book Festival

The 2014 programme was launched on Wednesday June 11th, 2014. It can be viewed online at [the Book Festival's website](#) or a pdf version can be downloaded.

The overall theme this year is "Let's Talk ...". There will be over 900 participants from 47 countries. I will bypass all the big names which you will readily find elsewhere, and limit myself to two areas. Scotland's Future is a series of events which will hopefully show how the subject of Scottish Independence can be discussed without undue rancour. Secondly, the Spoken Word will be featured strongly this year, comprising new poetry from Simon Armitage and Rowan Williams, and the Babble On series which has been created in partnership with performance poet Luke Wright and will be produced by Becky Fincham.

Initial articles on the launch can be found in [The Guardian](#), [The Scotsman](#), [The Bookseller](#), [stv.tv](#) and [The Edinburgh Reporter](#).

Links to previews, critics' recommendations, etc across all the summer festivals can be found in the [Picks and Previews section at the bottom of this page](#) as they become available.

Edinburgh International Film Festival

The 2014 programme was launched on Wednesday May 28th, 2014. A [preview reel](#) of the programme can be viewed. There is an [online version of the brochure](#), as well as the normal printed version.

This is the 68th Edinburgh Film Festival and it will showcase 156 features from 47 countries, including 11 World premieres, 8 International premieres and a range of special screenings and events. The Festival strands include the popular Animation, Shorts and the Director's Showcase. New additions include Films on Film, Wicked and Wild plus a new take on Teen Spirit. Several special focuses are in the programme - Focus on Germany and Focus on Iran.

Various items had been pre-announced, including Hyena (the opening night gala) and We'll Never Have Paris (the closing gala).

Articles on the programme launch can be found in various places, including [Empire Online](#), [Screen International](#), [The List](#), [The Scotsman](#), [stv.tv](#) and [BBC News](#).

Links to previews, critics' recommendations, etc across all the summer festivals can be found in the [Picks and Previews section at the bottom of this page](#).

Edinburgh Art Festival

The 2014 programme for the 11th Edinburgh Art Festival was unveiled on Thursday March 13th, 2014. Further details can be found on the festival's website.

On Wednesday May 7th, details of this year's commissions and further information on the festival exhibition, which is mentioned below, were announced. Also, [see the article in artlyst](#).

Where do I end and you begin will bring together curators from New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, India and the UK plus 20 international artists. This will be the first major festival-programmed exhibition. It will be held at The City Art Centre to coincide with the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and the year of Homecoming Scotland.

GENERATION will celebrate 25 years of contemporary art in Scotland. It will feature work from a range of Scottish artists.

New Media Scotland will show new works by artists who are experimenting with technology in art.

Major exhibitions by leading artists will include new work from German artist Isa Genzken and Scottish artist John Byrne.

Exhibitions at the National Galleries of Scotland will include **American Impressionism: A New Vision** at The Scottish Gallery of Modern Art.

Initial articles on the festival's programme launch can be found on [the BBC website](#), [The Edinburgh Reporter](#) and [The Skinny](#).

Links to previews, critics' recommendations, etc across all the summer festivals can be found in the [Picks and Previews section at the bottom of this page](#) as they become available.

Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival

The complete 2014 programme was launched on Wednesday May 14th, 2014. Van Morrison and Jools Holland head the names who will be appearing at the festival, which will consist of more than 140 concerts spread over 13 venues and lasting 10 days. Mardi Gras will take place on Saturday July 19th and the festival carnival will be on Sunday July 20th. Full details of the programme can be found on the [Edinburgh Jazz & Blues website](#). The programme brochure can be [downloaded from here](#).

Articles on the launch can be found in [Edinburgh.stv.tv](#) and the [Edinburgh Reporter](#).

Links to previews, critics' recommendations, etc across all the summer festivals can be found in the [Picks and Previews section at the bottom of this page](#) as they become available.

Forest Fringe

The line-up for the 2014 programme is gradually being drip-fed. [See the Edinburgh 2014 page on the Forest Fringe website](#) for details as they emerge.

Edinburgh Magic Festival

The programme for the 2014 Edinburgh Magic Festival was launched on Tuesday April 22nd, 2014. Further details can be found on the [Magic Festival website](#).

Early coverage of the launch can be found in [The Edinburgh Reporter](#), [STV Edinburgh](#) and [Thom Dibdin's AE](#).

Here follows the press release.

The fifth Edinburgh International Magic Festival will once again bring the most innovative and talented performers from all over the world to Edinburgh from 27 June - 4 July 2014.

This year magic collides with theatre, science, comedy, history, sideshow, technology and psychology as performers from the widest fields of interest come together in Edinburgh to give festival goers the most magical experience possible.

In the Year of Homecoming Scotland, local magicians feature prominently in the main programme. Glasgow magician Michael Neto, who represented Scotland at FISM World Championships of Magic in 2012, brings his new theatre and magic production, in collaboration with Sonic Boom Theatre Company, to MagicFest. Harthill's Colin Cloud is a master of deduction; he explores the snap judgements we all make about other people and life's scenarios in his new show Forensic Mind Reader. Actor and magician Scott Smith from Edinburgh makes his MagicFest debut in the main programme. After a sell show at the Fringe last year, Scott performs at new venue MagicFest venue Adam House Theatre. London Magic Circle Competition finalist Billy Reid from Glasgow is one of the UK's most devilishly brilliant close-up magicians and an expert sleight of hand artist.

Kevin McMahon, Edinburgh International Magic Festival Director, said: "Five years ago we waded into the busy Edinburgh festival market aiming to get live magic in front of public and to find acts that didn't just amaze but also excited and inspired. Now over 5000 people come to MagicFest each summer. In the last few years there's been a groundswell in the Scottish magic community of performers willing and able to create innovative shows and I'm delighted to programme so many quality Scottish acts this year."

Each year a wide array of international artists also feature in the programme. This year the award winning line-up includes Lukas from South Korea who brings a sense of poetic artistry and visual manipulation techniques to Scotland for the first time, USA's Rob Zabrecky a Magic Castle illusionist and character actor who has been twice voted 'Stage Magician of the Year' by the Academy of Magical Arts and Xavier Tapias from Spain, whose amazing animatronics act evokes the story of Pinocchio as he magically builds a boy from household rubbish.

Magician and psychologist Professor Richard Wiseman makes his MagicFest debut. An international bestselling author, Richard's YouTube channel has over 1 million subscribers and 200 million views. Join him as he takes you backstage to discover the secret science of sorcery. MagicFest are delighted to welcome German artist Johan Lorbeer to Edinburgh for the first time. He is famous for his public "Still-Life" performances, which feature Lorbeer in an apparently impossible position, standing in mid-air 'leaning' against a wall with one hand.

In addition to bringing magic acts from around the world to Edinburgh, MagicFest produce unique events and develop new show concepts. Last year's sell show The Secret Room at Lauriston Castle is back with three of Scotland's finest magicians who animate the castle's intriguing past with stories, performances and illusions. Magic Dinner at The Royal Scots Club also returns with an evening of fine dining and immersive magical entertainment. Magic School wizardry workshops offer 7-10 year olds the choice of either a 2.5 hour workshop or 5-day course with fun show for parents. Street Magic Masterclass gives 11-15 year olds the chance to learn some mind-blowing techniques and the secrets behind sleight-of-hand. Brand new show Tower of Illusion at Camera Obscura takes you on a magical journey where you must work together to defy illusion, solve riddles, challenge mystery and confront the unknown in a unique treasure hunt.

Since conception in 2010, MagicFest now produces one of the UK's largest magic events, has consulted for the National Theatre of Scotland, broken a Guinness World Record and put together a series of shows and workshops as part of the celebration of Shakespeare's birthday at the Globe Theatre in London. The Edinburgh International Magic Festival is leading the charge in the newly developing market of Magic Festivals appearing around the world, and aims to be the world leader in programming and producing innovative, cutting edge magic.

MagicFest works with various organisations that have supported the festival development and collaborated on some exciting projects and events. Among them are Point Hotel Edinburgh (now Double Tree by Hilton), IDEAS, MagicDirecet.com, Lothian Buses, Jenners and Tree of Knowledge.

Kevin added: "In addition to our longstanding principal sponsors, we're very excited to announce a new partnership with Krispy Kreme this year. I think it's a wonderful match up and I'm looking forward to a very sweet relationship. Watch out for some in store magic at Hermiston Gait this summer!"

Open up to magic at the fifth Edinburgh International Magic Festival from the 27 June till the 4 July.

Picks and Previews for 2014

Links to programme launches, preview articles, critics' recommendations and any other relevant info will be posted below until early August.

Date posted	Item Details
19th March 2014	Initial critics' guide to Edinburgh International Festival in The Scotsman
19th March 2014	Initial feedback on Edinburgh International Festival programme in The Herald
20th March 2014	Preview of the Edinburgh International Festival in Music OMH
30th March 2014	Review of "Titian and the Golden Age of Venetian Art" in the FT
5th June 2014	Initial Fringe recommendations from Lyn Gardner in The Guardian
6th June 2014	12 of the best hot ticket shows from The Scotsman
12th June 2014	Initial Scotsman recommendations for the Edinburgh International Book Festival
24th June 2014	Five things to see at the Edinburgh Magic Festival in The List
25th June 2014	Unmissable standups in The Guardian
8th July 2014	Preview of the Edinburgh International Festival in The Scotsman
8th July 2014	Pick of the Fringe and EIF in Whatsonstage.com
15th July 2014	10 essential exhibitions and events at the Edinburgh Art Festival in The Scotsman
16th July 2014	Catherine Love's top Fringe picks in Whatsonstage.com
16th July 2014	Cabaret Highlights from the 2014 Edinburgh Festival Fringe in The List
16th July 2014	Ten of the weirdest acts heading to the Edinburgh Fringe in Chortle
16th July 2014	The 20 best shows at the 2014 Edinburgh Festivals in The List
16th July 2014	10 essential shows to see at the 2014 Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival in The Scotsman
20th July 2014	8 must-see comedy sketch shows at the Fringe in The Scotsman
20th July 2014	Programme Highlights from the 2014 Edinburgh Book Festival in The List
20th July 2014	American Impressionism in the FT
23rd July 2014	Edinburgh Art Festival 2014: Ten must-see exhibitions in The List
24th July 2014	Three to see: Threeweeks endorsed theatre
26th July 2014	10 children's shows to delight young audiences at the Fringe in The Scotsman
26th July 2014	Edinburgh Fringe 2014: The comedy highlights ... in The Independent
27th July 2014	Edinburgh Festival 2014: Books and art events ... in The Independent
27th July 2014	3 to see ED2014: Art Festival
28th July 2014	Fringe Highlights: The Scotsman critics choose 30 great shows to see
29th July 2014	Edinburgh Festival Fringe: South African theatre shows in The List
29th July 2014	Edinburgh Festival Fringe: three Scottish theatre productions in The List
29th July 2014	Edinburgh Festival Fringe: three stage productions from New Zealand in The List
29th July 2014	Edinburgh Festival Fringe: top five thought-provoking shows in The List
29th July 2014	Folk and jazz highlights on the Fringe in The Scotsman
29th July 2014	Edinburgh Festival 2014: best dance and music ... in The Independent
30th July 2014	Edinburgh Festival 2014: best theatre shows ... in The Independent
30th July 2014	Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2014: top 5 Free Fringe theatre shows in The List
30th July 2014	Fest 2014 Preview Guide
1st August 2014	Edinburgh Festival 2014: essential theatre picks from Lyn Gardner in The Guardian
1st August 2014	Edinburgh picks 2014 in suchsmallportions.com
1st August 2014	5 musicians at the book fest in The List
2nd August 2014	10 best things to see on the Edinburgh Fringe 2014 in the Radio Times
2nd August 2014	First Book award: top speakers at the Edinburgh Book Festival in The List



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Info on Reviews of Shows at the 2014 Festival

2013 | [2012](#) | [2011](#)

The main objectives of this page are to:

- provide links to selected Visual Arts, Jazz & Blues and Film festival reviews
- tell you where you can find reviews of EIF and Fringe performances on the web. There are simply too many shows to provide links to specific reviews
- provide a list of those shows on the EIF and Fringe which have scored most marks with the critics
- summarise our own thoughts on the shows that we managed to see
- detail some of this year's awards
- provide links to selected postmortems of the summer festivals by the critics.

Where to Find 2014 Reviews

There are a plethora of sources to satisfy even the most voracious consumer of reviews. Of course the critics vary from the professional to the semi-pro, the student, the enthusiastic theatregoer ... and all shades in between. Beware the wide range of criteria for giving star ratings among the critics. For example, The Guardian may give a very occasional 5 star rating whereas some sites spray them around like confetti.

Some of the following links change from year to year. I will make any necessary corrections as soon as I can.

I think that they are all ok now for 2014.

Scotsman
The List
The Guardian
The Stage
EdinburghGuide.com
Chortle (comedy)
Fest
Whatsonstage.com
BritishTheatreGuide
The Herald
The Telegraph
The Independent
thepublicreviews
FringeReview
ThreeWeeks
BroadwayBaby
Edinburgh Festivals Magazine

For tweeters here are a few to follow.

@lyngardner
@EdinburghStage
@MarkFFisher
@ThomDibdin
joycemcmillan
Julian Hall

Most Critically Acclaimed Shows (Fringe and EIF)

There are simply too many shows on the Edinburgh Fringe and the Edinburgh International Festival and far too many reviews to attempt a list of links to them, even an abbreviated version.

Instead, I focus on producing periodic lists of those shows that the critics liked best. In 2014 they will be based on the star ratings in reviews from 10 sources, varying from mainstream media outlets to established festival websites.

The subject of using star ratings, particularly the dislike of them by some actors, directors and many critics, has been bashed around endlessly in recent years. I see them as a necessary evil for festival punters during August. If you are interested, [here is my witter on the subject](#) along with lots of links to other contributions on the subject.

Let me repeat one of my obvious annual mantras: there are many enjoyable shows which never make these lists. We have seen many "minor classics" in Edinburgh over the years that went largely unnoticed by the critics. Indeed, we have a number of shows in our planned schedule for this year that have had little publicity during the "preview season". So, do not be a complete slave to reviews: listen to the "word on the street" or "the ubiquitous tweet" and perhaps try something different – you might be pleasantly surprised.

This is the twenty-second and final iteration of the 2014 list, posted at 7.30am on Sunday 31st August, 2014.

Drama. The James Plays, Ganesh Versus The Third Reich, Front, Beowulf the Blockbuster, All Back to Bowies, City of the Blind, Chef, Spine, Dalloway, The Object Lesson, Confirmation, Janis Joplin: Full Tilt, Cuckooed, Unfaithful, Dr. Longitude's Marvellous Imaginary Menagerie, Return to the Voice, Every Brilliant Thing, Pioneer, Sirens, The Curing Room, Freak, Race, Title and Deed, Hiraeth, The Generation of Z, Guinea Pigs on Trial, Milk Presents: Self Service, Normal / Madness, He Had Hairy Hands, The Capone Trilogy - Loki, The Capone Trilogy - Vindici, Last Christmas, Riverrun, Hunter & Johnny, The Carousel, Ablutions, Hancock's Last Half Hour, Letters Home, Britannia Waves The Rules, Swing, So It Goes, Nothing, Swimming, #myway, Wingman, Product, Manuelita, Minetti and Men in the Cities.

Comedy. Josie Long, Bridget Christie, Adam of the Riches, Will Adamsdale, What Does The Title Matter Anyway?, Alex Horne, Angela Barnes, Andrew O'Neill, Des Bishop, Nish Kumar, Glenn Wool, Marcel Lucont, Katherine Ryan, Celia Pacquola, Liam Williams, Andrew Maxwell, Mark Watson: Flaws, Mr Swallow - The Musical, Frank Skinner, Voca People, Gein's Family Giftshop, Maria Addolorata, BEASTS, David O'Doherty, Harvey, Garvey & Kane, Stuart Black, Backstage in Biscuit Land, Sheeps, The Pin, Lorraine and Alan, Sara Pascoe, Kraken, Dangerfield, John-Luke Roberts, Sam Simmons, Luisa Omielan, John Kearns and Carl Donnelly.

Dance and Physical Theatre. Sweet Mambo, Gnosis, Inala, Circa Beyond, Circus Incognitus, Bromance and Black Grace.

Music / Opera. Opening Concert - RSNO, Concerto Italiano / Alessandrini, William Tell, The Addams Family, Siddhartha the Musical, Peter Straker Black Magic, Collegium Vocale Gent: Bach's Mass in B Minor, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, I Culture and Ute Lemper with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

Cabaret. Christeene and Lady Rizo.

Spoken Word. Anthem for a Doomed Youth.

Children's shows. Emily Brown & The Thing, HUFF, Pirate Gran, Potted Sherlock and Chalk About.

Miscellaneous. Exhibit B.

Several notes ...

- the minimum criterion for a show to be considered for the list is that it must have had at least three reviews ... which is not easy.
- the drama section tends to be dominated by shows at the Traverse for the first couple of iterations simply because this is where a lot of critics tend to start - things will settle down after that with some of the Traverse shows dropping off the list;
- shows can drop off the list when later reviews are less flattering than the earlier ones;
- established comedians tend not to get many reviews and so may well not appear in the list - presumably it is assumed that they will get full houses whatever;
- successful shows returning for a second year also tend to get few reviews;
- music on the Fringe and performances on the International Festival often struggle to get three reviews and so may not appear on the list;
- and finally, in general I use the categories that shows appear in the programme brochures - which can sometimes seem a bit strange, e.g. the occasional comedian in the drama section, poet in the comedy section *et cetera*.

For your information - [The List has also been collating star ratings in the last two years](#). I have been saying that perhaps I will leave this task to them ... next year maybe?

2014 Awards

There are a growing number of awards at the festival which all started with The Scotsman Fringe First awards for new writing back in 1973.

[This page on the Fringe website](#) contains a list of all award winners on the Fringe so far this festival.

Punter's 2014 Visit

The weather was arguably the worst that we have experienced in Edinburgh at festival time, which is not to say that it was poor all the time.

While our 2014 festival experience was enjoyable, it did not live up to the standard of the previous two years.

We managed to fit in 27 shows and 4 art exhibitions this year. It would have been 5 art exhibitions but the weather put paid to our proposed trip to the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art for the American Impressionism show.

We particularly enjoyed the Roundabout (Paines Plough's new portable theatre which was sited at Summerhall) where we saw three very good shows ... **Lungs**, **The Initiate** and **Britannia Waves The Rules**. Other major highlights this year were **Cuckooed**, **James I**, **Ganesh Versus The Third Reich**, **The Sixteen**, **Tim Vine**, **The Eradication of Schizophrenia in Western Lapland** and **Spine**.

We saw two plays which covered the imminent Scottish Referendum. **Spoiling** was a short 50 minute piece which assumed that independence had been achieved. It covered some of the political questions that would need to be resolved. **The Pitiless Storm** was based on an old Labour Union man who converted himself from a No man to a Yes man in the space of an hour. It was a sentimental piece (voting with the heart?). Both shows played to full houses when we were there. The rapturous applause which both received appeared (to my cynical eye) to be 80% sentiment and 20% for the merits of the productions.

As usual, there are a host of shows which we were unable to find space in our schedule to see. They include (in no particular order): Title & Deed, Swing, Letters Home, Chef, Every Brilliant Thing, Freak and Last Christmas.

Postmortem on the 2014 Edinburgh Summer Festivals

Coverage of the festivals in the mainstream media continues to decline. It was particularly noticeable to me this year in the run-up period to the various festivals when previews were few and far between, and "must see" recommendations seldom bore the stamp of recognised critics.

With the exception of the Fringe, the number of reviews was also down. In the case of the Fringe, gaps that are left by the mainstream media continue to be plugged by the plethora of festival websites where the standard of criticism can, and does, vary wildly. Meanwhile, I thought that BBC Television's coverage this year was generally unimpressive.

And after the party? .. I see no sign of any festival postmortems. Normally there would be several articles to ruminate upon. However, they also seem to have disappeared in recent years. I will provide links here if I do manage to locate any.

A favourite phrase among journalists and politicians, when discussing the imminent Scottish independence referendum, is "the elephant in the room" to describe topics that are being quietly ignored. I do hope that this room is large enough to accommodate my own particular elephant. While it may well only be of interest to a minority, what effect will a yes vote have on the festivals, particularly the Fringe? Apart from one tweet that made a half-hearted attempt to stir up some debate, I have seen no mention of this subject at all.

What about this festival year? In general, I felt that it was an average sort of year with a modest number of highlights, most notably the James Plays on the International Festival. I grow ever more cynical (if that is possible) about the murky world that is festival statistics. I am tempted to use Disraeli's famous quotation but I shall resist. Suffice it to say that all the summer festivals have reported a successful year at the box office.

Posted on September 2nd, 2014.

Addendum (dated September 8th, 2014). I have spotted [one article in The Scotsman on the possible effects on the festivals of Scottish independence](#). Unfortunately, it comes across as a sort of "we need something to fill this space" type of article. I still see no sign of any postmortems on the 2014 festivals although there are a couple of "shows that I did and did not like" articles.

Edinburgh Art Festival

Links to selected reviews:

Date Posted	Review
March 30th 2014	Review of "Titian and the Golden Age of Venetian Art" in the FT
July 3rd, 2014	Generation: 25 Years of Contemporary Art in Scotland in The Scotsman
July 6th, 2014	John Ruskin: Artist and Observer in the FT

Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival

Links to selected reviews:

Date Posted	Review
July 24th 2014	Kaiser Bill Invented Jazz! in The Herald
July 24th 2014	Van Morrison in The Herald
July 25th 2014	Conal Fowkes Solo / Stephanie Trick Trio in The Herald
July 25th 2014	Ken Mathieson's Classic Jazz Orchestra in The Herald
July 28th 2014	Martin Taylor Great Guitars in The Herald
July 28th 2014	Commonwealth Jazz Orchestra in The Herald
July 28th, 2014	Niki King: The Songs of Duke Ellington in The Scotsman

Edinburgh Film Festival

Links to selected reviews:

Date Posted	Review
19th June 2014	Hyena in The Guardian
20th June 2014	Palo Alto in The Scotsman
20th June 2014	We are Monster in CineVue
20th June 2014	Aberdeen in CineVue
21st June 2014	'Til Madness Do Us Part in CineVue
21st June 2014	Snowpiercer in The Scotsman
22nd June 2014	Life May Be in The Guardian
22nd June 2014	Stray Dogs in CineVue
22nd June 2014	The Sketleton Twins in Digital Spy
23rd June 2014	Hellion in The Scotsman
23rd June 2014	Sorrow and Joy in CineVue
24th June 2014	Set Fire to the Stars in CineVue
25th June 2014	Joe in The Scotsman
25th June 2014	A Dangerous Game in The Scotsman
25th June 2014	Finsterworld in Front Row Reviews
26th June 2014	Life after Beth in The List
26th June 2014	Welcome to New York in The Scotsman
27th June 2014	To Kill a Man in CineVue
27th June 2014	Castles in the Sky in ScreenDaily
28th June 2014	We'll Never Have Paris in CineVue
29th June 2014	Shorts strand review in Cinevue
29th June 2014	Hide and Seek in Front Row Reviews

Details of the 2014 Film Festival awards can be found [here](#).

A postmortem on the Film Festival can be found in [The Scotsman](#).

Edinburgh Magic Festival

Links to selected reviews:

Date Posted	Review
30th June 2014	Magic and Variety Gala Show in AllEdinburgh Theatre
3rd July 2014	Tragic Magic in AllEdinburgh Theatre
3rd July 2014	Colin Cloud - Forensic Mind Reader in Edinburgh Evening News
