

Beat: News

Edinburgh International Festival 2025

“The Truth We Seek.”

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USPA NEWS - The Edinburgh International Festival 2025 returns from 1–24 August, uniting world-class performers and audiences under the theme “The Truth We Seek.” Now in its 78th year and led by Festival Director Nicola Benedetti, the festival features an expansive and incisive programme across opera, music, dance and theatre

A Festival Shaped by Truth

Nicola Benedetti frames the festival as a response to the era of “alternative facts,” offering a “poetic and metaphorical wisdom” that cuts through manipulated narratives

Highlights include:

7 world premieres, including James Graham’s financial-crash satire *Make It Happen* starring Brian Cox

8 UK/Scottish premieres and 2 European premieres, such as *Orpheus* and *Eurydice*, a Gluck production enriched with contemporary circus from Circa

A global cast: 1,700 artists from 42 countries, across 133 performances

Key Programme Highlights

The festival revolves around a lineup curated for depth and diversity:

Opening Concert – *The Veil of the Temple*: An 8 hour choral immersion with 250 singers at Usher Hall—an experience of endurance and transcendence

Make It Happen at Festival Theatre (1–9 Aug): Brian Cox returns to the Scottish stage in a searing satire on the 2008 crash

Orpheus and *Eurydice* (13–16 Aug): A daring opera circus hybrid from Opera Queensland and Circa

Mary, Queen of Scots (15–17 Aug): Scottish Ballet’s world premiere reimagines history through fluid, haute couture inspired dance

Breaking Bach (20 Aug): Baroque instruments meet hip hop in a boundary blurring collaboration by Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment

Figures in Extinction (22–24 Aug): A powerful dance theatre response to the climate crisis from Nederlands Dans Theater

Book of Mountains and Seas (14–16 Aug): An immersive fusion of puppetry and opera crafted by Basil Twist and Huang Ruo

Shostakovich’s Fifth Symphony (18 Aug): Aurora Orchestra performs the classic from memory, marking the composer’s 50th anniversary

Music for All: Engagement & Access

Accessibility is at the festival's core:

Over 50,000 tickets at £30 or under, including £10 affordable options .

Complementary schemes and discounts for young musicians, NHS staff, and community groups, plus 4 relaxed, 7 BSL, 9 captioned,

and a dementia friendly performance .

Interactive events: mass singalong in Princes Street Gardens, real time Classical Jam sessions, choir workshops (e.g., Come and Sing Elijah) .

Beyond the Big Stage

NYO2 Family Concert & Prokofiev symphony on 3–4 Aug offer approachable, classical experiences for all ages .

Education and outreach programmes span all levels—from children to adults.

An intimate café series at The Queen’s Hall features emerging talents like María Dueñas, Alexander Malofeev, and Kaitlyn Aurelia Smith .

Festival Impact & Resonance

A strikingly compact festival this year, shaped by funding realities—but with “big ambitions,” Nicola Benedetti confirms .

Builds on creative expansion: more audience involvement, innovative formats, bold reflections on identity, truth and societal issues .

Continues the legacy: since its 1947 roots, the Festival fosters international unity through artistic excellence—making Edinburgh a global arts destination

The Edinburgh International Festival 2025 promises a profound and stirring immersion: innovative productions, historical reinterpretations, and collaborative experiences—all woven together by a theme that resonates deeply in contemporary times. Whether you’re captivated by eight hours of choral awe, a punk inflected dance retelling of Mary, Queen of Scots, or a hip hop infused Bach, this is a festival built to challenge, connect, and inspire.

Please click on the "More Information" link below

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