



Underbelly Enjoys Another Outstanding Year

29 Aug 2016

August 2016 marks the end of another outstanding year for Underbelly at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, both critically and at the box office, bringing to an end a number of award-winning shows, five-star reviews and a dazzling programme enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of ticket buyers!

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Scotsman Fringe First for JOAN.
- Scotsman Fringe First for FABRIC.
- Edinburgh Comedy Award Nominees for 'Best Show' – Randy Writes a Novel and Zoe Coombs Marr.
- John Robertson's 'The Dark Room' and Abandoman - Arts Award's Voice - Pick Of The Fringe 2016.
- The Stage Edinburgh Awards 2016 for JOAN, FABRIC and BLUSH.
- Total Theatre Award Nominations for Lucy McCormick: Triple Threat, Ada / Ava and Perhaps Hope.
- Dear Home Office - nominated for an Amnesty International's 'Freedom Of Expression' Award.
- 8% increase in ticket sales from 2015.

Both Zoe Coombs Marr and Randy Writes a Novel were nominated for 'Best Show' at this year's Edinburgh Comedy Awards, with Ireland's top comedy hip hop improv team Abandoman and John Robertson's 'The Dark Room' both taking home an Arts Award's Voice 'Pick Of The Fringe' for 2016.

It was an incredible year for Underbelly's theatre programme with Lucy Jane Parkinson's JOAN and Abi Zakarian's FABRIC taking home both The Stage Edinburgh Award and prestigious Scotsman Fringe Firsts.

Snuff Box Theatre's BLUSH also took home The Stage Edinburgh Award, with Lucky McCormick's Triple Threat, Ada / Ava and Perhaps Hope scooping up Total Theatre Award nominations - topping off another wonderful year for Underbelly's theatre programme.

Finally, Phosphoros Theatre's groundbreaking Dear Home Office was nominated for Amnesty International's 'Freedom Of Expression' Award, a huge development in recognising collaborative theatre and alternative perspectives.

Elsewhere Underbelly continued to enhance its reputation as one of the UK's most exciting producers of circus, with the Circus Hub returning to the Meadows for a second year. 2016 saw the best of home grown talent from the UK and Ireland take centre stage alongside Australia's most spectacular circus troupes, selling approximately 31,000 tickets.

Underbelly is delighted to report an 8% increase in ticket sales from the 2015 Fringe, with 249,000 tickets sold, demonstrating that Underbelly continues to attract a paying audience in the context of a growing, wider Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

Underbelly programmed 143 shows over 17 venues and employed 400 staff for the duration of the festival.

Charlie Wood and Ed Bartlam of Underbelly said *"Did anyone 70 years ago - the first Fringe producers in the world - have any idea what they were unleashing? Well, there are about 2.3m people applauding their genius now. As we head into the Fringe's 70th anniversary next year, this year has been one of the best, for tickets sales yes but also for creativity. We're delighted and excited to be a part of it and we'd like to thank all of the wonderful shows and audiences that chose to make a date with Underbelly this year."*