

EDINBURGH'S HOGMANAY 19 **an Underbelly event**

OVER 1,000 LOONY DOOKERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD BRAVE THE CHILLY DIP BY ICONIC FORTH BRIDGE

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Participants from Scotland and around the world flocked to the shores of South Queensferry, by Edinburgh on New Year's Day, Tuesday January 1 2019, to brave the chilly waters of the Firth of Forth for the Loony Dook as part of Edinburgh's Hogmanay.

1,100 'Dookers' including Charlie Wood co-director of Underbelly who produce Edinburgh's Hogmanay on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council joined the parade through the streets of South Queensferry before taking the dip into the icy waters, overlooked by the iconic Forth Bridges.

Thousands of spectators lined the streets to cheer on the brave and the bold, decked out in every manner of fancy dress imaginable ranging from the Tartan barely-clad, stripy Victorian bathers, dinosaurs, Hawaiian dancers, and zebras to a man on a toilet created by people from 23 countries who took the plunge, and raised money for a huge variety of charities in the process.

Tony Pirouet, in home-made costume as a man on a toilet, won the fancy dress prize which saw £250 donated to the charity of his choice, East Fife and Scooniehill Riding for the Disabled.

Charlie Wood and Ed Bartlam, directors of Underbelly and of Edinburgh's Hogmanay said: "Last night was absolutely spectacular, full of theatre and fantastic performances. A huge thank you to those who came from around the world and to all the artists that put on fantastic performances to entertain us through the night and in to 2019. Today, New Year's day, over 1,000 participants from 23 countries jumped from the shores of South Queensferry into the chilly waters of the Firth of Forth for the much loved Loony Dook. It was fantastic being a 'Dooker' welcoming the New Year. It's terrific how much energy and excitement the Loony Dook generates and the fantastic fancy dress costumes people make and the money generated for charity. We'd like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy New Year!"

The Loony Dook came the morning after 75,000 people from across the world gathered at the world famous Edinburgh's Hogmanay to bring in the New Year. Throughout the night Edinburgh's Hogmanay's theme, **We Love You**, celebrated Scotland's shared bonds with Europe and created a great atmosphere among new friends and old across the arena.

The world famous **Street Party** added even more drama and spectacle to the show created by some of the best international events creatives in the world. Hugely popular were the spectacular illuminated horses of **Compagnie des Quidams** which danced and popped up in unexpected places.

Stunning crazy opera divas on giant balls rolled through Princes Street as France's **Compagnie Transe Express** wowed the Street Party.

Stunning colourful puppets giant dancers from Spanish-based **El Carromato** and massive opera singers rolling along Princes Street kept the party goers entertained. And the Dutch company Close Act's colourful stilt walkers added a touch of magic along the reach of Princes Street.

Franz Ferdinand blew it out the park with a set including Take Me Out, Dark of the Matinee and an emotional rendition of Auld Lang Syne. **Metronomy** ramped up the energy in the audience with The Look and The Bay, and hair flicking, bare footed Free Love kicked off the action on the main stage.

Headlining the Waverley Stage, **Gerry Cinnamon's** fans chanted 'til he took to the stage and hands were in the air as **Snap!** delighted kicked our off 2019 with *Rhythm is a Dancer*.

Superstar **DJ Judge Jules** made his Edinburgh's Hogmanay debut, taking the audiences up to the Midnight Moment with a rocking set on the stage over Castle Street.

Taking to the St Andrew Square Stage **Elephant Sessions'** high energy folk and rock fusion, **Miracle Glass Company's** vibrant, psychedelic rock 'n' roll and Hamburg based **Meute** with their live drum and brass arrangements entertained the thousands gathered.

This year's spectacular Midnight Moment was soundtracked by **Meute** and award winning sound designer and film composer Dan Jones in collaboration with

fireworks experts Titanium who launched 3600 fireworks into the sky hundreds of meters above the Edinburgh's stunning castle.

Underbelly, the producers of Edinburgh's Hogmanay on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council, confirmed that the arena had **sold out** and a capacity crowd had enjoyed 'the best street party ever' with more performers and entertainment throughout the evening.

A limited number of early bird tickets are now on sale for Edinburgh's Hogmanay Street Party 20 at www.edinburghshogmanay.com

Chief Superintendent Kenny Macdonald, Divisional Commander for Edinburgh said: "We have been delighted with the behaviour and attitude of the vast majority of revellers in Edinburgh this Hogmanay.

"No arrests were made by our officers and we would like to thank the public for listening to safety messages and ensuring that Edinburgh welcomed in the New Year in an entertaining, but safe environment."

Tonight as dusk falls on 1 January, Edinburgh, the world's first UNESCO City of Literature, celebrates its rich literary heritage in **a unique cross artform collaboration with ten of Scotland's best artists, designers and musicians and six Scottish or Scotland based writers** who have penned a love letter to Europe. Each letter, by **Chitra Ramaswamy, Kapka Kassabova, Louise Welsh, Stef Smith, William Dalrymple and Billy Letford** is projected onto a building in Edinburgh, the world's first UNESCO City of Literature, at the start of the year in which we may leave the European Union.

Ed Bartlam & Charlie Wood, directors of Edinburgh's Hogmanay, said: "Over two hundred years ago, Burns penned the poem to Mrs Dunlop that inspired this project and wrote that "something in us never dies, on [our] frail uncertain state, hang matters of eternal weight". So it's wonderful at the start of 2019 to invite these amazing artists to Hogmanay and ask them to collaborate with other artists and respond to this "matter" and explore our ties to Europe by writing, animating and composing a love letter. These letters celebrate our deep, eternal and passionate connections with Europe and it's exciting to be able to share them with Scotland and the world as they come to celebrate Hogmanay in our capital city."

Message from the Skies **runs until 25 January 2019** in a celebration of the Bard's day too. Message from the Skies is a joint commission by Edinburgh's Hogmanay and Edinburgh International Book Festival and is developed in partnership with Edinburgh City of Literature and is supported by Creative Scotland through the Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals EXPO fund.

1 January also sees two concerts from spectacular folk talents Carlos Nunez and Capercaillie at the stunning McEwan Hall. Carlos has been described as the Jimmy Hendrix of folk music and is set on giving the audience a fantastic, fast paced night of music making. Capercaillie is one of Scotland's most popular folk outfits with a global following. Both concerts will feature a line-up of special guests.

Full details of Edinburgh's Hogmanay are available at www.edinburghshogmanay.com

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IMAGE LINK

NOTES TO EDITORS

- The bells will wave goodbye to the **Year of Young People 2018** after culminating in the brilliant youth led finale (ScotArt) to the famous Torchlight Procession on the 30th.
- Special firework display at midnight choreographed to a specially designed soundtrack by Meute and Dan Jones.
- Fantastic line up including headliner Franz Ferdinand, Judge Jules, Snap! Gerry Cinnamon. Edinburgh bands Vistas and Miracle Glass Company. Street Party hosted by Edinburgh's Mac Twins.
- **Over 160,000** attracted to city over the course of the 3 days
- Including **75,000** revellers at the street party, concert in the gardens and old town ceilidh
- **12,000** torchbearers **join the 20,000** that take part in the famous Torchlight Procession with **30,000** spectators
- **1,100** Loony Dookers
- Edinburgh's Hogmanay generates **£39.2 million** for Edinburgh's economy
- Tickets purchased by people from **80** different countries (in 2017-18)
- Images will be beamed to a potential audience of **1 billion** in **150** countries
- **26th year** of Edinburgh's Hogmanay. Second year of Underbelly Events producing on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council
- **Almost 3,000 people** are employed or contracted by Edinburgh's Hogmanay.

About Underbelly

Underbelly is a UK based live entertainment company the beginnings of which are rooted in the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2000. Its events and festivals division now operates one of the largest operations at the Fringe, selling over 460,000 tickets for over 200 shows in 22 venues over 25 days in 2018.

2019 will be the seventh Edinburgh's Christmas that Underbelly has produced for City of Edinburgh Council (2017/18 saw a record breaking 781,520 tickets issued to visitors from 47 different countries), and the second Edinburgh's Hogmanay also on behalf of City of Edinburgh Council, which in 2018 welcomed 160,000 over 3 days.

Elsewhere Underbelly also produces Underbelly Festival on the Southbank in London, this year in its 10th year and one of the biggest multi-arts offerings in

London, Christmas in Leicester Square, Udderbelly Festival in Hong Kong, West End Live in Trafalgar Square for Westminster City Council and the Society of London Theatre.

Through its Underbelly Productions arm it produces and promotes live shows in London's West End at the Edinburgh Fringe, and throughout the UK and on tour internationally.

In 2017 Underbelly sold over 1.4 million tickets to its various events.
www.underbelly.co.uk