



## EDINBURGH FESTIVALS 2026

Edinburgh is the world's leading festival city and the month of August sees an explosion of arts events across the city. Within the thousands of performances, you'll find a wide choice of creative ageing events and productions.

This list highlights the shows and events that we have identified which are presented by older artists or have themes connected to ageing and begins with a section on dementia inclusive activities. It is not intended to be a list of recommendations.

Enjoy the festivals!

### DEMENTIA INCLUSIVE EVENTS ACROSS THE FESTIVALS

#### *Edinburgh International Festival - Dementia Friendly Concert*

Two Dementia-Friendly concerts by Scottish Rising Stars of Jazz and presenter Lucy Drever. These relaxed performances are especially for people living with dementia and their caregivers, family and friends to enjoy.

[Dementia-Friendly Concert | Edinburgh International Festival](#)

#### *Sing-a-Long Scotland*

A relaxing feel-good afternoon show at the LifeCare community space in Stockbridge. Johnny Collington plays his guitar and sings a selection of well-loved Scottish sing-a-long songs, for those living with dementia, their families, friends and carers.

[Sing-a-Long Scotland | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

# EDINBURGH FESTIVAL FRINGE

## ***Cabaret and Variety***

### *Hot Flush*

This burlesque show celebrates performers aged 40+ reclaiming space, visibility and power. Hot Flush challenges ageism, beauty standards and the idea that women “fade” as they get older.

[Hot Flush – A Bold, We’re Old\(ish\) Burlesque Show | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

## ***Children’s Shows***

### *Heimer*

Grandpa Heimer loves the ocean. Together with grandchild Charlie, they transform everyday objects into grand maritime adventures. But as Heimer's dementia progresses the 'storms' grow wilder. Can Charlie find a way to steer them safely through the waves?

[Heimer | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

## ***Comedy***

### *Ageing Disgracefully*

A showcase show featuring some of the finest new acts over the grand old age of 35. The entertainment industry has glass ceilings. Come and help us smash them open...

[Ageing Disgracefully: A Glass Ceiling-Smashing Comedy Showcase | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Bloomin’ Late*

Do you love getting older? Do you hate getting older? Then this line-up show is for you! International comedians unpack the laugh-or-you'll-cry experience of middle age.

[Bloomin' Late | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Comedy Through the Ages*

Stand-up comedy from every generation, every day. Comedy Through The Ages brings together fresh-faced comics, battle-hardened veterans and everything in between.

[Comedy Through The Ages | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Cordelia Graham: Faint Heart Never F\*cked A Pig*

My father had a mantra: faint heart never f\*cked a pig. In 2025 my dad died from dementia, now I’m trying to live up to his motto without taking it literally. An hour of stand-up about how I reconciled the identity of my father, my hero, with my own.

[Cordelia Graham: Faint Heart Never F\\*cked A Pig | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

*Dave Chawner: Dry Humour*

Dave is getting older. Everyone is. Now sober, he's worried about being beige. A sharp, self-deprecating look at ageing, outlook and identity.

[Dave Chawner: Dry Humour | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

*Davina Bentley: Dancing While Old*

With 1.7m likes online for her viral parodies, Davina's doing what she swore she never would: getting older and talking about it. A debut about raging against the dying of the light, in the face of crushing middle age.

[Davina Bentley: Dancing While Old | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

*Ellie Summerling's Tomato Soup*

A reimagining of my caregiving experience with my great aunt, starting with the awkwardness of living with someone new and taking the audience on a journey of care.

[Ellie Summerling's Tomato Soup | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

*Funeral Show*

Elena Martinez's one-woman dark comedy pokes the wound of when your parental relationship becomes terminal. You're invited to a musical, drag, clown spectacle that seeks closure when your parent is neither gone, forgotten... nor in your life.

[Funeral Show | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

*Gerry Carroll: Young*

Long ago, the warrior-poet Oisín rode off to the Land of the Young. Three years later he returned... and became old instantly. Gerry Carroll (age 73) mixes Oisín's story with his own – and song, dance, clowning and shot glasses.

[Gerry Carroll: Young | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

*Grandad & Me Do Stand Up Comedy*

A grandson and his grandad perform stand-up together. Sweet in theory. Risky in practice. Very funny in reality.

[Grandad & Me Do Stand Up Comedy | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

*Gyles Brandreth: Up Memory Lane!*

Award-winning legend Gyles is back! The Just A Minute, Celebrity Gogglebox, QI, and This Morning star is unpacking his childhood memories and sharing stories of the best (and worst!) moments of his unlikely life – when he can remember them.

[Gyles Brandreth: Up Memory Lane! | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

*Liam Tulley: Adult-ish*

On the brink of turning 40, Liam doesn't feel like a proper adult. By a certain age you're meant to have a good career, a nice car, a place of your own and a settled family life. Adult-ish explores what happens when those expectations don't quite match reality.

[Liam Tulley: Adult-ish | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Lou Wall: Where Are All The Tall Grandmas?*

Be honest, you've never seen one, have you? Do they shrink? Die young? Lou dives head first into the disappearance of tall old women everywhere.

[Lou Wall: Where Are All The Tall Grandmas? | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Old Comedians Are Funny*

Every day there will be a rotating list of the very best ones!

[Old Comedians Are Funny | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Still Got It: Back Again!*

For our fourth year at the Fringe, team of older comedians share their love of life with you. Join us for wit, infectious energy and perhaps a touch of nostalgia. We'll prove that age is just a number and that laughter has no expiration date.

[Still Got It: Back Again! | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *The Beat Goes On*

David Harmer and Ray Globe, the Glummer Twins, are back with an irreverent trawl through the fads, fashions and music that made them what they are today. Old. Expect sharp-tongued nostalgia and brutally honest takes on the indignities of ageing.

[The Beat Goes On | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *The Devil Wears Primark*

Rachael Milne delivers sharp, funny and unfiltered stand-up about ageing, identity, body image and the quiet panic of trying to "have it all" in midlife. Blending observational comedy with raw personal storytelling, expect big laughs and uncomfortable truths.

[The Devil Wears Primark | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Three Bird Roast*

We are stand-ups Clare McCartney, Poetry Bird, and Derya Yildirim as Bob The Builder from Turkey, cooking you up a Three Bird Roast with MC Tara Bates. We are working class women of a certain age – the age where leggings tell the truth.

[Three Bird Roast | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

## ***Dance, Physical Theatre and Circus***

### ***SAND***

SAND follows Dylan and Heather as they navigate the complexities of living with dementia. They uncover profound truths about love, memory and resilience, while coastal erosion symbolises life's inevitable changes.

[SAND | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *PRIME: We Are*

Who are we when we're together? When we're alone? When we fight for what we believe in? Dance Base's in-house company for dancers over 60, PRIME explores the ways we can keep going, overcoming obstacles, and when we choose to surrender and accept.

[PRIME: We Are | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Common Ground*

Dance Base's two in-house companies: PRIME (for over 60s) and Lothian Youth Dance Company (for 14-21 year-olds) come together to explore the pressures we all face.

[Common Ground | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *More tales From Your Queer Elder*

Acclaimed performer Lucia August delivers a vibrant dance/spoken word show. 70+, plus-sized lesbian artist shares intimate, queer-centred stories that celebrate inclusivity and urge audiences to chase their dreams.

[More Tales From Your Queer Elder | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *40/40*

An inspiring celebration of Katherina Radeva's 40 years as a woman, a migrant and an artist. From the little girl dancing at her parents' student parties, to the creative who refuses to be categorised we see a choreography of all the joys and sorrows of 40 years.

[40/40 | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *The Last Life of Pinocchio*

It's been ages since Pinocchio became a "real boy". Now nearing life's end, he faces his toughest quest: rescuing daughter Carla from the adventure-less modern world. Joined by old friends – greatly changed over decades – it's a daunting task

[The Last Lie of Pinocchio | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

## **Events**

### *Creating a Sonic Haven: Music, Connection and Equality*

Dr Claire Garabedian brings experience as a cellist, music educator and researcher in arts and dementia. Using research examples, anecdotes and live music, Claire offers accessible ways to use music creatively in care and community settings.

[Creating a Sonic Haven: Music, Connection and Equality | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

## ***Musicals and Opera***

### *Doing Time with Lavinia*

Lavinia Draper, alcohol-soaked performer of a certain age, faces the strife of ageing artists - unrepentant discrimination. But Lavinia is the dreamer who never gives up. A one-woman show performed by Susan Campanaro.

[Doing Time with Lavinia | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *The Bloody Ballad of Bette Davis*

A glittering horror-musical fantasia about Bette Davis battling ageism on the 1975 set of *Burnt Offerings*. Camp, dread and show-business vengeance collide in a theatrical fever dream about fame, ambition, motherhood and the brutal cost of being seen.

[The Bloody Ballad of Bette Davis | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

## ***Spoken Word***

### *Loft Clearance*

Join Eileen as she rummages through a hundred years' worth of possessions that have accumulated in her loft. 50 minutes of light-hearted despair as the clearance unfolds.

[Loft Clearance | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Mariella Frostrup: Cracking the Menopause*

For centuries menopause has been shrouded in secrecy and shame. Now, Mariella Frostrup, joined by Gina Bellman is cracking the topic wide open!

[Mariella Frostrup: Cracking the Menopause | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

*The Provocateurs: take top academics, some thought-provoking ideas, add one comedian.... Join us for a spirited debate with some of Scotland's sharpest intellects. Forget the Alzheimer's Test? Professor Tara Spires-Jones (The University of Edinburgh) explores the neuroscience behind a new blood test for Alzheimer's disease.*

[The Provocateurs: A Disease by Any Other Name / Forget the Alzheimer's Test? | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

[The Provocateurs: Forget the Alzheimer's Test? / Artificial Wombs | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

Brain Health Roulette - Professor Alan Gow (Heriot-Watt University) explores stacking the odds in favour of being brain healthy as we age.

[The Provocateurs: Brain Health Roulette / Satellites Destroy Privacy | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

[The Provocateurs: The Weakness of Vulnerability / Brain Health Roulette | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

## **Theatre**

### *A Better Memory*

Eleanor switches on an AI replica of her late husband but discovers memories that don't match her own. Mia is in love with an AI chatbot. When secrets surface and the past begins to unravel, both women are forced to question what they thought they knew. Written by Lubna Kerr, who was awarded an older artist bursary by Luminate in 2019.

[A Better Memory | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *A Public Display of Affection*

At a queer community event, an "inspirational" elder steps up to deliver the speech everyone expects: warm, wise and reassuring. Instead, he tells the truth. A sharp, unsentimental reckoning with queer history and intergenerational memory.

[A Public Display of Affection | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *After Party*

From acclaimed playwright Morna Young, After Party is a bold and life-affirming story about a life-ending decision. Summoning her family for her 80th birthday party, matriarch Vivienne Blackwood's reasons for gathering them soon unravel.

[After Party | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Amnesia*

Kelly, a dementia carer in Rhyl, is brilliant at her job. Proudly raised on ClubLand, waltzers, and summers snogging Scousers, she's furious that her best friend is leaving for a city with a Pret. Written/performed by Kimberly Hart-Simpson (Coronation Street).

[Amnesia | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *An Evening with Gerald Lloyd-Davies*

Aspiring national treasure Gerald Lloyd-Davies amuses the audience and himself in a career retrospective, but when confronted with an inconvenient opinion about his past, Gerald must adapt in order to secure his future.

[An Evening with Gerald Lloyd-Davies | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Body Parts*

An older woman, her daughters and the eldest's on-and-off partner orbit around love, loss, faith, Catholicism and self-worth. Body Parts is a bold, character-led production that dissolves boundaries between theatrical narrative and live performance art.

[Body Parts | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Broads in the Attic*

Celia and Mavis are two zany old NYC broads, who secretly live in an Edinburgh attic and maybe killed their husband. Now they're on the search for a third roommate. You cast the deciding vote in this hilariously interactive sketch, improv and character show!

[Broads in the Attic | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Grandma's Shop*

Loveable, eccentric septuagenarian, Hilda, has run a second-hand clothes shop for decades. The profits feed 30 stray cats. One day, a journalist from The Guardian walks in... A solo, multi-character show about family history subverting expectations.

[Grandma's Shop | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Jesse North is Broken*

Jesse is a carer on minimum wage, keeping older people alive while trying to hold together her own chaotic life. We follow her from care shift to dance floor, as she battles a system that undervalues her whilst her mind refuses to slow down.

[Jesse North Is Broken | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Krapp's Last Tape*

A journey through an old man's life, filled with hilarious memories and hopes for the future, coupled with the mourning of lost love and unfulfilled ambition. Directed by Academy Award nominee Stockard Channing and starring David Westhead.

[Krapp's Last Tape | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Love in the Cracks*

Seeking to extend her care, a terminally-ill mother transfers her memories and habits into an embodied AI presence. In an age where technology can replicate memory and behaviour, can love remain unique?

[Love in the Cracks | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Me and the D.O.G.*

By comparing the loneliness of a single woman approaching 30 and a widowed older man, this one-woman show explores rejection, romance, friendship, loneliness, loyalty and heartbreak through one woman and a pair of feet sticking out from under her bed.

[Me and the D.O.G | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *One Man Poe: The Black Cat and The Raven*

Arguably Edgar Allan Poe's darkest tale, The Black Cat depicts an alcoholic's confession on the eve of his death. Then, The Raven. In the midnight hour, an older man laments the loss of his love, when an ominous visitor is heard tapping on his chamber door.

[One Man Poe: The Black Cat and The Raven | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *One More Time*

A paper boat becomes the path through which an older woman revisits the regrets she left unresolved. With humour and heartbreak, she finally comes to terms with her past.

[One More Time | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Overtone*

When two teenagers meet after choir practice, they begin the most important relationship of their lives. An unflinching play about love and getting older – the adventures we were promised, the choices we made, and the cost of being honest.

[Overtone | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Sister Sophia Kicks the Habit*

The humorous and serious revelations of Sister Sophia, an ageing nun in crisis. As she grieves the loss of her friend, she grapples with her own restless night of the soul.

[Sister Sophia Kicks the Habit | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *The Cut of Her Jib*

A wicked, gin-soaked dark comedy set on a stormy Edinburgh Hogmanay. Belinda Crabbs' husband disappears, leaving behind police tape and three decades of marital fatigue. Widowhood, it turns out, can be an upgrade and menopause absolute murder.

[The Cut of Her Jib | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *The Last Audition*

A once-celebrated actor returns to an empty stage to rehearse King Lear and prove he can live independently. As memory falters, voices from his past intrude. This intimate play explores ageing, caregiving, and the courage to keep stepping into the light.

[The Last Audition | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *The Woman in the Mirror*

An honest, biting witty and unexpectedly uplifting true story of a mother and daughter navigating the realities of caregiving. An award-winning play based on the best-selling book *Surviving Alzheimer's with Friends, Facebook and a Really Big Glass of Wine*.

[The Woman in the Mirror | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

### *Who We Become: The Moonshot tape*

In this compelling monologue, Diane, a successful writer, returns to her Missouri hometown to help her ageing mother. Responding to questions from an unseen local interviewer, she revisits pivotal moments from her past.

[Who We Become: The Moonshot Tape by Lanford Wilson | Edinburgh Festival Fringe](#)

## **EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL**

### *Anne Enright: Attention*

For 30 years, Anne Enright has been paying attention – to literature, to Ireland, to the voices and bodies of women – and writing about it all in insightful and exuberant prose. The Booker Prize-winning author discusses craft, memory, and the art of looking closely.

[Anne Enright: Attention | Edinburgh International Book Festival](#)

*Brenda Hale: With the Law on Our Side*

Baroness Hale of Richmond was the first woman to serve as President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom. Join Lady Hale to learn how the law works, why we should care about it, and how it can be used to protect all of our rights.

[Brenda Hale: With the Law on Our Side | Edinburgh International Book Festival](#)

*Daisy Fancourt & Wayne McGregor: The Art of Health*

This fascinating discussion between world-leading scientist Daisy Fancourt and world-renowned choreographer Wayne McGregor draws on science, research, and lived experience to explore the power of art.

[Daisy Fancourt & Wayne McGregor: The Art of Health | Edinburgh International Book Festival](#)

*Margaret Drabble: The Great Good Places*

Childhood homes, cherished libraries, coastal sanctuaries – how do the places we remember shape us? Margaret Drabble brings her astonishing wit and intelligence to discuss the pleasures and complexities of looking back on a life deeply lived.

[Margaret Drabble: The Great Good Places | Edinburgh International Book Festival](#)

*Patrick Gale & Lisa Ridzen: Before It's Too Late*

Family frailty and how ageing fathers ache for connection as the clock ticks down: these are the threads linking Patrick Gale's *Love Lane* and Lisa Ridzén's heartrending debut, *When the Cranes Fly South*. Is it ever too late for reconciliation?

[Patrick Gale & Lisa Ridzén: Before It's Too Late | Edinburgh International Book Festival](#)

*Peter Meades & Frank Tallis: Midlife, Masculinity, and Meaning*

How do you keep going when the old ways of coping no longer work? Clinical psychologist Tallis approaches this through the psychology of ageing, and integrative psychotherapist Meades through the current crisis in men's mental health.

[Peter Meades & Frank Tallis: Midlife, Masculinity, and Meaning | Edinburgh International Book Festival](#)

*Prue Leith: Being Old and Learning to Love It*

Only the lucky grow old – so why is the thought of ageing filled with fear? Former judge of The Great British Bake Off and culinary legend Prue Leith is on a mission to change that. She shares the many unexpected joys of getting older, as well as its taboos.

[Prue Leith: Being Old and Learning to Love It | Edinburgh International Book Festival](#)

*John Grisham*

The original legal thriller sensation, John Grisham has written 52 number one bestsellers. He speaks to award-winning crime writer Ian Rankin about his incredible career, and the relationship between the high-stakes fiction and stark reality of the law.

[The Front List: Special Edition – John Grisham | Edinburgh International Book Festival](#)

# EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

## ***Shorts programmes***

### *Animation Shorts*

Includes *The Flesh Dress*, an emotionally complex work following a grieving man who becomes obsessed with the mysterious, resurrective powers of a peculiar dress.

[Animation Shorts - Edinburgh International Film Festival](#)

### *Experimental Shorts*

Includes *Kontrewers*, a richly layered and unusual film in which a 102 year-old grandmother enters into a surreal dialogue with the ghost of a possessed girl.

[Experimental Shorts - Edinburgh International Film Festival](#)

### *Out of Competition Shorts*

Includes *Geronto*, in which an older man is taken aback to discover he is desired by a younger man, and *Three*, in which a wealthy couple proposition a young man for their strange pleasure.

[Out of Competition Shorts - Edinburgh International Film Festival](#)

## ***Out of competition strand***

### *Queen at Sea and Amaretti*

*Queen at Sea* is an emotionally devastating and utterly gripping film which asks us to question our preconceptions, our ideas and our treatment of older people. It is accompanied by short film *Amaretti*, in which septuagenarian Lenny's reality is devastated by a crime committed against her by her own son.

[Queen at Sea - Edinburgh International Film Festival](#)

### *Dingo*

A short film (accompanying feature-length film *Douglas Gordon*) in which an 81-year-old undiscovered street photographer and his daughter confront how photography affects their memories and grief.

[Douglas Gordon by Douglas Gordon - Edinburgh International Film Festival](#)

### *Sea of Glass*

After experiencing family turmoil in the wake of her husband's death, an older woman forms an unexpected bond with a young woman facing her own struggles.

[Sea of Glass - Edinburgh International Film Festival](#)