

Venue 13

Harry Younger Hall - Lochend Close - Edinburgh, Scotland, EH8 8BL

PRESS RELEASE

Title: Venue 13 Returns to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2025!

- After four years away, Venue 13, a cornerstone of emerging and innovative work on the Fringe since 1980, is back.
- Venue 13 proudly holds the record for being the longest continuously named venue in Fringe history, maintaining its iconic number for 45 years. Its return reinforces its reputation as a vital space for creativity and meaningful performance experiences.
- Bringing Hope in Uncertain Times, its return as a small independent venue is a sign of the ongoing recovery and evolution of the Fringe after its COVID19 hiatus.
- Venue 13 will be helmed by Ian Garrett, a 17-year fringe veteran and expert in technological and place-based storytelling, as the new venue manager and producer.
- Media images link:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1CL1ge9F1IZVgmBdnLxWC_YtJ2cZnFtkd?usp=sharing

Edinburgh, 15th January 2025 — After a six-year hiatus, Venue 13, one of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe's most beloved independent small spaces, is thrilled to announce its return for the 2025 festival. Remaining at its historic location in Harry Younger Hall on Lochend Close at the foot of the Royal Mile, Venue 13 will continue its legacy of showcasing bold, emerging talent.

Operating as a venue since 1980, Venue 13 has been run was managed in relationship with the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, with RWCMD as the primary manager since 1996. It has been synonymous with innovation and artistry, presenting theatre, contemporary dance, and physical performance that resonates far beyond the Fringe. Recognised by The Scotsman as a “serene little venue,” and described by Three Weeks as “the Fringe as God intended,” Venue 13 has been a cornerstone for audiences and artists seeking work that pushes boundaries from independent and emerging talent from the UK, US, and Canada.

Venue 13 holds a unique place in Fringe history. It proudly received a certificate of accomplishment by “The Butlers” in 2013 in recognition of its honoured place in the rich annals of the Edinburgh Fringe (1947–2013). During those diverse and historic years, it bore the singular distinction of maintaining the same venue number—13—for 34 consecutive years (1980–2013), longer than any other venue. By 2020, Venue 13 celebrated 40 years as the longest-numbered venue in Fringe history.



Evening Line-up outside Venue 13 in 2019

Its return in 2025 not only marks a new chapter but reinforces its legacy in the world's largest arts festival. The Edinburgh Fringe has faced significant challenges in recent years, highlighted by the recent announcement from organisers of the financial troubles at Summerhall (Venue 26). With box office money withheld from artists and companies due to the risk of liquidation, the uncertainty surrounding one of the Fringe's key venues is a stark reminder of the pressures the festival faces.

Venue 13 stands ready to bring much-needed optimism to this climate of uncertainty. By revitalising this cherished venue, Venue 13 aims to foster stability, creativity, and community for both artists and audiences, delivering the good news that the Fringe community so desperately needs.



Load in of Venue 13 2014

Guiding Venue 13's return is its new Producer, Ian Garrett, a Fringe Veteran who began his work on the Fringe at Venue 13 in 2008. He continued to bring projects, and those of students he taught at California Insitute of the Arts and York University (Toronto) through 2018. After taking 2019 off,

Garrett have planned to return in 2020, but saw these plans cancelled by the global closures catalysed by the COVID19 pandemic. In addition to his work supporting projects at Venue 13, Garrett has also been part of notable Fringe productions at Summerhall, Assembly, ZOO, and Greenside. He was the lighting director for the immersive, Fringe-First winning *Counting Sheep* which took over King's Hall in 2016 and led the 29-site specific Augmented Reality project *Transmission* at Assembly as part of the FuturePlay festival in 2017. As the director of Canadian non-profit Centre for Sustainable Practice in the Arts, he co-directed the Fringe Sustainable Practice Award with partners Culture for Climate Scotland (formerly Creative Carbon Scotland) from 2010-2017, helped to develop sustainability resources for the Fringe, and has led dozens of workshops about how to be more sustainable when presenting work at in Edinburgh.

As an artist and producer for Toasterlab, Garrett is known for his groundbreaking work at the intersection of performance, technology, and place-based storytelling. His interactive projects have been featured at major festivals and events, including the Venice Biennale, World Stage Design Taipei, Maria Island (Tasmania), Scotiabank Nuit Blanche, and Maker Faire. As a regular speaker on technological ghosts and mixed-reality experiences, Garrett's expertise uniquely positions Venue 13 to embrace the future while honouring its storied past. His work with Toasterlab further exemplifies this vision. Many of Toasterlab's most notable projects have premiered in Edinburgh, including 2017's *Transmission* and 2023's *Aionos* at ZOO Venues.

Garrett commented: "Venue 13 is where my Fringe journey began. I'm honored to help bring this iconic venue back to life and build on its legacy while creating a space that inspires both artists and audiences."



The Bacchae adapted by Allain Rochel for CalArts Festival Theater 2009

In 2025, Venue 13 will continue its proud tradition of offering a platform for emerging artists while exploring new approaches to performance and storytelling. With a revitalised team and a renewed commitment to bold programming, Venue 13 is set to reignite the spark of creativity that has defined it for decades as it ramps up its unique approach. It will serve as the home for *Parallel Play*, Toasterlab's next mobile Augmented Reality project, become the host to the Climate Change Theatre Action's first ever performance series commemorating its 10-year anniversary of commissioning over 250 new climate plays, and it plans to bring celebrated Canadian performance artists and vegan

chef Aisha Lesley Bentham to host a unique dinner event entitled *Planetary OUDH* for limited performances during August. Stay tuned for updates on programming and ticket information in early 2025.

Media images link:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1CL1ge9F1IZVgmBdnLxWC_YtJ2cZnFtkd?usp=sharing

For media inquiries, interviews, or further information, please contact:

Vanesa Kelly

Venue 13 Producer and Proprietor of V-Kind, Sustainable Events and PR Consultancy

Email: vk@v-kind.co.uk

Website: www.v-kind.co.uk

Follow us online and on social media for updates:

www.venue13.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/venue13fringe>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/venue13fringe>

bluesky: <https://bsky.app/profile/venue13fringe.bsky.social>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/venue13fringe>

Ends

Additional Information

Ian Garrett is a designer, producer, educator, and researcher in the field of sustainability in arts and culture. He is producer for Toasterlab, a mixed reality performance collective and media production company; the director of the Centre for Sustainable Practice in the Arts; and Associate Professor of Ecological Design for Performance at York University in Toronto. He has a research and performance design practice focused on ecology and accessible mixed reality technologies.

He has been involved with the Edinburgh Festival Fringe since 2008 as Producer for CalArts Festival Theater, YUFFA Fringe, and Toasterlab with shows at Venue 13, Assembly, Summerhall, ZOO Venues, and Greenside. As a champion for sustainability, he initiated the Fringe Sustainable Practice Award in 2010 and co-directed it with partners Creative Carbon Scotland until 2017.

Toasterlab creates immersive, place-based extended reality (XR) experiences that deepen connections with history, community, and imagination. By blending storytelling, live performance, media production, and cutting-edge technology, Toasterlab delivers impactful narratives that collapse time and space. Their work spans site-specific performances, bespoke mobile applications, and VR films, offering innovative ways for audiences to engage with the world around them. From major festivals to community workshops, Toasterlab bridges the tangible and digital to craft meaningful, accessible storytelling experiences.

Recent projects exemplify ToasterLab's transformative approach. *Aionos*, (ZOO Venue 2023) a collaboration with York University and Single Thread Theatre, immersed audiences in a mixed-reality journey through Ancient Egypt and science fiction. Meanwhile, *I am the Child of...*, created with Kaeja d'Dance (Harbourfront Centre 2022), integrated augmented reality into a multimedia exploration of resilience and memory. By pushing the boundaries of performance and technology, Toasterlab continues to reshape how stories are told and experienced.

V-Kind is dedicated to transforming the landscape of public relations and event strategy, with a core focus on sustainability and net-zero artistic projects. Run by Vanesa, she works closely with clients

and organisations to create the perfect strategy for your company to grow, bringing her extensive experience in events, public relations and corporate relations. "Together, we'll craft bespoke strategies that resonate, engage, and ensure your brand not only shines but also stands for something meaningful."