EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

Edinburgh International Festival Welcomes Two New Department Heads

Nicolas Zekulin and Paul Sharp, Photo Credit: Nadine Boyd 2024 / Lucy Webb 2024

MEDIA IMAGES AVAILABLE HERE
2024 FESTIVAL TRAILER AVAILABLE HERE

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- **Edinburgh International Festival** appoints **Nicolas Zekulin** as the new **Head of Music Programme and Paul Sharp** as the new **Head of Artistic Management** in advance of the 2024 International Festival.

6th June 2024, Edinburgh: Two new appointments have been made to the management team of the **Edinburgh International Festival** today**.** Creative producer and former Artistic Director of the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland **Nicolas Zekulin** takes the role of Head of Music Programme, replacing former head Andrew Moore. Also, joining the International Festival's team as Head of Artistic Management is the former Director of Licensing at Directors UK, **Paul Sharp**, who takes over from Jill Jones.

Since moving to the UK from Canada, Nicolas Zekulin has worked across the Scottish arts landscape with organisations including the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Scottish Opera and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Most recently, Nicolas has been leading the award-winning chamber music collective Hebrides Ensemble as their General Manager. From 2017 to 2021, Nicolas worked as the Chief Executive and Artistic Director of the

National Youth Orchestra of Scotland leading the country's next generation of classical and jazz musicians. It was under Nicolas' direction that the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland made their triumphant return to the Edinburgh International Festival after a 30-year hiatus, performing Lili Boulanger's '*D'un Matin de Printemps'*, the first time her music had been heard at the International Festival. It was also during Nicolas' tenure that the orchestra celebrated their own 40th anniversary, performing at the Usher Hall and Glasgow Royal Concert Hall with pianist Steven Osborne under the baton of Elim Chan; both are set to appear in this year's Edinburgh International Festival.

Also joining the International Festival is Paul Sharp, who takes on the role of Head of Artistic Management. Paul joins the Edinburgh International Festival from Directors UK, where he represented the creative, economic and contractual interests of UK screen directors. Prior to this, Paul worked with the Royal Opera House for a decade, most recently overseeing the delivery of over 150 performances each year with The Royal Opera as their Contracts Manager. Paul holds degrees from The Juilliard School and Guildhall School of Music and Drama and started his career as a professional double bassist, performing, recording and touring internationally with some of the world's leading orchestras and conductors.

This year the Edinburgh International Festival takes place from 2nd - 25th August and is set to see over 2085 artists from over 42 countries around the world taking to stages across the city in August.

Nicolas Zekulin said:

"I am thrilled to be joining the Edinburgh International Festival as the new Head of Music Programme. I have always been hugely inspired by the artistic excellence and city-wide cultural curiosity that the International Festival brings to Edinburgh every year. I'm really excited to work with Festival Director Nicola Benedetti and the Festival's outstanding team going forward through August and onwards to many more Festivals to come."

Paul Sharp said:

"*I am delighted to be joining the Edinburgh International Festival and to work alongside the team in delivering and celebrating some of the world's most exciting talent and artistic programming. I'm already so impressed by the Festival's ability to look inwards as well as outwards, putting its audience at the core of what it does, seeking deeper connections and remaining committed to an international outlook."*

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For media images – see here
For the 2024 International Festival trailer – see here
For a digital version of the Programme Brochure – see here

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Edinburgh International Festival

Edinburgh International Festival is a global celebration of performing arts, bringing the finest performers of dance, opera, music and theatre from around the world to Edinburgh for three weeks every August.

The 2024 International Festival takes place from 2-25 August, under the direction of Festival Director and Scottish violinist Nicola Benedetti. Benedetti's vision is to create the deepest level of experience, through the highest quality of art, for the broadest possible audience.

The International Festival's impact also extends beyond the annual programme, with community learning, engagement and professional development programmes running throughout the year, contributing to the cultural and social life of Edinburgh and Scotland.
For more information visit www.eif.co.uk.