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As of 1 May 2025



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WE ARE EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

THE TRUTH WE SEEK

The original festival. We're the one that started it all, the igniting spark that established Edinburgh as the world's Festival City.

Founded in 1947, the International Festival was the inspired idea of Rudolf Bing, a cultural pioneer and Jewish refugee, working with a group of civic and artistic leaders. Together, they created a festival that transcends political boundaries through a global celebration of the performing arts.

Every August, our hand-picked programme of world-leading dance, opera, music and theatre brings people of different cultures and viewpoints together. Shining far beyond what you see on stage, we offer year-round pathways for people of all ages and backgrounds to discover and participate in live performance.

Learn more at eif.co.uk/about

WELCOME

Welcome to the 2025 Edinburgh International Festival, as we explore The Truth We Seek.

Caught in a bewildering swirl of misinformation, we are losing the discipline needed to prove fact. Meanwhile, in public discourse we see a cynical loosening of the humility required to accept that there is little we know for sure. But through great art we can find leaps of imaginative power, helping us to glimpse truth in its poetic wisdom.

We are here to witness truth-telling come alive. Our curated theatre programme dives into our relationship with truth: within ourselves, between one another, and in how we understand the world around us. Theatre, after all, holds a mirror to our times.

Through allegory and metaphor, art leads us to insights that logic cannot reach. Truth lives in our journey of discovery.

Nicola Benedetti

Festival Director
Edinburgh International Festival

EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

MAKE IT HAPPEN

NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND

DUNDEE REP THEATRE

JAMES GRAHAM WRITER
ANDREW PANTON DIRECTOR

WORLD PREMIERE

2025

Previews 30–31 Jul
1–9 Aug
Post-show talk 4 Aug

FESTIVAL THEATRE

This performance lasts approx.
2 hours 40 minutes with one interval

Contains strong language

Co-produced by **Edinburgh International Festival, National Theatre of Scotland** and **Dundee Rep Theatre**

In association with **Playful Productions** and **Neal Street Productions**

Supported by **Sir Ewan and Lady Brown** and through the **Scottish Government's Festivals Expo Fund**

© David Vintiner

James Graham Writer
Andrew Panton Director

Anna Fleischle Set Designer, Costume Co-Designer & Video Co-Designer
Emily Jane Boyle Movement Director
Martin Lowe Musical Supervisor, Composer & Arranger
Tingying Dong Sound Designer
Lewis den Hertog Video Co-Designer & Animator
Lizzie Powell Lighting Designer
Angelica Rush Costume Co-Designer & Associate Set Designer
Chris Fisher & Will Houstoun Illusions
Emily Oulton Associate Director
Mikah Smillie Associate Movement Director
Tom Penny Associate Sound Designer
Niall Casserly Musical Director
Gabriel Margolis Assistant Musical Director
Will Mortimer Dramaturg
Phij Adams Music Technology
Stuart Burt COO Casting Director
Jean Sangster Voice Consultant

Rachel Amey & Yvonne Waddell BSL Interpreters for 5 August performance

CAST

Brian Cox Adam Smith
Sandy Grierson Fred Goodwin

Sandy Batchelor, Andy Clark, Maya Bassi Curtis, Callum Cuthbertson, Charlotte Delima, Hannah Donaldson, Kirsty Findlay, Lorraine Graham, Graham Mackay-Bruce, David Mara, Ann Louise Ross, Lawrence Smith, Declan Spaine, Gavin Jon Wright

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SYNOPSIS

Edinburgh, 2008 – the world's largest bank is on the brink of collapse. *Make It Happen* explores the dramatic rise and fall of The Royal Bank of Scotland in the lead-up to the financial crash, following Fred Goodwin as he takes the reins as CEO of the 300-year-old institution. Driven by their interpretation of works by philosopher, economist and fellow Scot, Adam Smith (the 'father of capitalism'), Fred and his team grow the bank's balance sheets at a meteoric rate. But when a global recession looms and the cracks begin to show, Goodwin is visited by a ghost of fiscal past in the form of Smith himself.

This is a fictionalised satire, featuring a mixture of characters and incidents inspired by real-life events, with others entirely imagined.

NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND

Since its foundation in 2006, the Glasgow-based National Theatre of Scotland has created hundreds of productions and toured them nationally and internationally. Major successes include the quadruple Olivier Award-winner *Black Watch*; its version of *Macbeth* starring Alan Cumming, which transferred to Broadway; Rona Munro's Evening Standard Theatre Award-winner for Best Play *The James Plays*; and David Ireland's *The Fifth Step*, which premiered at the 2024 Edinburgh International Festival and transferred to the West End earlier this year.

DIVE DEEPER



Scan this QR code to read a programme note and listen to The Warm Up, our short audio introduction.

Brian Cox © Mihalja Bobovic

DUNDEE REP THEATRE

Dundee Rep Theatre has been a leading force in Scottish and UK theatre since 1982, producing numerous acclaimed and award-winning new plays, musicals and classic revivals. Recent productions include the Scottish premiere of Tracy Letts' Pulitzer Prize-winning *August: Osage County*, the Scotsman Fringe First-winner and Musical Theatre Review's Best New Musical *A History of Paper* and the world premieres of *No Love Songs* and *Tay Bridge*. It was also the home of the hit Proclaimers musical *Sunshine on Leith*.

JAMES GRAHAM

James Graham is an award-winning screenwriter and playwright whose stage work includes the Olivier Award for Best Play-winner *Dear England*, the Critics' Circle Theatre Award-winner *Best of Enemies*, the Olivier Award for Best Comedy-winner *Labour of Love*, and *Ink*, which transferred to Broadway and was nominated for six Tony Awards. For television, he created and wrote *Sherwood*, which won the Royal Television Society Award for Best Drama and two BAFTAs, the Emmy-nominated *Brexit: An Uncivil War* and *Quiz*, adapted from his own play.

ANDREW PANTON

Andrew is Artistic Director of Dundee Rep Theatre and an award-winning director. His work includes the Scottish premiere of Tracy Letts' *August: Osage County* (Dundee Rep), *Out of the Woods* starring Alan Cumming (National Theatre of Scotland) and *A History of Paper* (Dundee Rep/Traverse Theatre), which won a Scotsman Fringe First Award, Musical Theatre Review's Best New Musical and earned Andrew a CATS Award for Best Director. He was Creative Director for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony and is a Visiting Professor at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

IN THE CURATOR'S WORDS

Make It Happen is undoubtedly the landmark theatrical event of the season. The International Festival co-commissioned and co-produced this new play by James Graham with National Theatre of Scotland and Dundee Rep Theatre, in association with Playful Productions and Neal Street Productions.

Graham's recent stage successes – *Dear England* at the National Theatre and *Punch* in the West End – confirm his sharp sensitivity to the UK's political and cultural pulse. Here, he turns to an event of global financial consequence with deeply local resonance: the 2008 banking crisis. Framed as a contemporary Greek drama, the satire charts the arc of the financial collapse against the philosophy of Enlightenment economist Adam Smith – played by Brian Cox in his return to the Scottish stage.

This commission celebrates large-scale Scottish theatre-making to retell an internationally significant event, with its epicentre in the heart of Edinburgh.

Roy Luxford
Creative Director

FESTIVAL THEATRE

Edinburgh's longest continuous theatre site, the Festival Theatre sets a grand stage for dance and opera with its impressive, historical surroundings. Festival Theatre is managed by Scotland's largest theatre charity, Capital Theatres. For more, visit capitaltheatres.com

SUSTAINABILITY

We take sustainability seriously at Edinburgh International Festival. Please keep your freesheet as a memento, recycle it or hand it back to staff so it can be reused or recycled. Find out more about our sustainability progress at eif.co.uk/sustainability