



## Just Festival 2017: Press Release

The world is in a difficult place at the moment. From the domestic to the global, the personal to the political, for those who wish to make the world a better place it may feel as if there is a surging tide of issues and injustice that might knock us off our feet at any moment. So from the 4<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> August, the Just Festival will be taking a closer look at issues that goes against the current and stand up for social justice. In our distinctly different programme, we will engage with a wide range of social justice issues facing people around the world. We will also delve into the past as we reflect on three significant historical anniversaries, 100 years of the Balfour Declaration, 70 years of Indian Independence and 500 years since the Protestant Reformation, all of which have significantly shaped the world around us.

Our two beautiful and historic venues, St John's Church and the Quaker Meeting House, will be home to theatre, music, exhibitions and debate with the aim to challenge perceptions, celebrate differences and promote respectful dialogue.

There will be a strong Indian presence in the performance side of our programme. Ragamala Dance Company will join us from the United States as they combine a Western aesthetic with an Indian ethos, to create a physical piece that has rich tradition and deep philosophical roots. The incredible young women of *Kranti (Meaning Revolution in Hindi)* will share their own stories of sex work, trafficking and surviving in Mumbai's Red-Light Area in their critically acclaimed play Lal Batti Express.

Active Inquiry will be bringing their amazing Theatre of the Oppressed show to St John's. Augusto Boal, the creator of Theatre of the Oppressed said "*I want the Spectator to take on the role of Actor and invade the Character and the Stage. I want them to occupy their own space and offer solutions*". The Leith based arts company will invite the audience to do just that as they create pieces which demand that the audience attempt to solve the problems for the characters on stage.

In *Seriously Funny* we will be inviting comedians to collaborate with academics as they aim to educate and entertain. Many comedians will be coming to Edinburgh this year to focus upon a particular social justice issue; by giving them the chance to work with an expert in this field they will be able to create a one-off show, as informative and rewarding for themselves as it is for the audience.

We are also hoping to welcome back the Kielty Brothers as they follow up on their 2013 smash hit '*The Onion of Bigotry*'. The duo will be taking an alternative and a decidedly quirkier approach to the Protestant Reformation as they will perform the world premiere of their musical *Reformation in Retrospect*.

Away from the song and dance, we will give a chance for Fringe goers to hear from and discuss with experts on a whole spectrum of social justice issues. We look forward to hearing local and international perspective from charities, NGOs, academics and many others as they discuss some of the biggest, and some of the more overlooked, challenges facing society. Our conversation programme has consistently provided the backbone to our festival offering, as we allow the public to go further than just being an audience member and actively encourage them to engage in the discussion.

We hope that all those who come to the Just Festival this August will leave inspired, enlightened and ready to join the movement to fight for a more united world.

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Just Festival – [just-festival.org](http://just-festival.org) | [@justFestival](https://twitter.com/justFestival) | [#AgainstTheCurrent](https://twitter.com/JustFestival)

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