

edinburgh people's festival

www.edinburghpeoplesfestival.org

DAILY DIARY

Saturday 16/08/08

Day Eight Of The 2008 Edinburgh Peoples Festival

THE CEILIDH

The curtain came down on this years Edinburgh People's Festival August programme [we are after all an all year round Festival now] with our ceilidh in the Thomas Morton Hall where we danced the Gay Gordons, Strip the Willows and Dashing White Sergeants to the tunes of the 'Minnows'.

It was lovely to see guests from far and near; we had Polish Scots and Swiss at their first ceilidh as well as Leithers enjoying a good night out. Whilst it's fair to say the numbers were again not what we had hoped for, but this is an event I think we could do again with even greater success. It was fun to honour the campaigners from Save the Old Town and Save Meadowbank who joined us and I think the idea of having a special awards night during the interval for the ceilidh is a good concept to repeat – perhaps nearer the year end.

OVERALL

Having attended all the People's Festival events this year – with almost 30 shows if you consider the exhibition [7], arts [7] competition and photography [7] ran for a whole week – I am very proud to have presented our most far reaching programme yet. The 2008 August programme reflected the real progress we are making, indeed our budget this year was easily ten times bigger than last year.

Four particular highlights for me were the exhibition which has received universal praise and is an asset which we can use again and again to publicise our message and group. I have already been approached by other venues to host the exhibition in the coming months.

The arts show has opened doors for the People's Festival into the visual arts community where our success has meant the opportunity to start building a significant and meaningful relationship with many artists working in Edinburgh today.

The Hamish Henderson Memorial Lecture was a real feather in our cap and again has enormous scope for developing into a highly significant cultural event in this city.

And last but not least, the Comedy night in Gorgie cemented our relationship with all the guys at the BMC Club and also with The Stand Comedy Club team. We have been to the BMC five times now and this year's show was easily the best yet. More than 100 people turned up to enjoy every minute and I think the repercussions for us will be far reaching and positive.

All the different parts of our 2008 programme had merit and advance the cause of the Peoples' Festival to produce artistic and cultural attractions of the highest quality in working class communities of Edinburgh – For the People and By the People.

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My thanks to all the People's Festival Committee for all their hard work and commitment; to Johanna Dind particularly who carries more of the work on her shoulders than anyone and always to a high and thoroughly professional standard [and we all hope she recovers from the injury she sustained to her leg at the ceilidh!], to Pat and Lui for their untiring work and attending more shows than virtually anyone else, to Lisa and Mark for making the arts show the huge success it was, to Barry Fowler for his constant support, encouragement and hard work, to Colin Brown for the Rebus tour and the ceilidh, to Irvine Allan for ongoing 'work in progress' documentary about the Peoples Festival and all his technical know how and to Jim Slaven for his help.

Our combined thanks also got to Mike Greenlaw at the Artspace, Richard Demarco and Terry for always being there when we needed them, to Tommy Shepard at The Stand for supplying all the comedians, to Sam the cameraman, Stephane for his unique photography and to all the performers, venue hosts, sponsors and supporters of the People's Festival 2008.

**Colin Fox
People's Festival Chairman**