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# Soft-power push as Edinburgh festival welcomes an Aussie invasion

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While our athletes are busy collecting gold medals at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, they are not the only Australians making an impression on the world stage.

This weekend the Edinburgh festival kicks off grand scale and swag, and the Aussies are out in force. Edinburgh is one of the oldest and most prestigious festivals in the world, with an enviable program of classical music, opera, dance and theatre. Together with the new, it has stuffed to the rafters Fringe, with more experimental theatre and contemporary music. Edinburgh is the place to be if you are a market for talent spotters and other pressures.

And it is about to host the largest contingent of Australian talent in the festival's 75-year life. Fringe night at Meersyndicl Stadium, Edinburgh's biggest venue, Grace Oliver Stylis will present its Australian-flavored show, Australia's skilled acrobats, the Quite Nuts Indigenous dance group, a dance and circus extravaganza for children's chair, it promises a spectacle at least as big as the world.



Australians are throughout the festival program. Multi-awarded Naomi-ayre Counting and Cracking, the play Sydney's Ensemble Theatre staged in international rating, telling a story of Sri Lankan civil war and a family's immigration to Australia.

Another play, You Know We Belong Together by Julia Hales, a Melbourne-based actor with cerebral palsy, tells the story of her lovately soap opera has no actors like her is it.

The Australian World Orchestra, a non-profit arts outfit that brings together about 50 Australian musicians from ensembles around the world, will perform in Edinburgh for the first time under legendary conductor Fabio Mitrio before heading to the Proms in London.

Add a month-long program of performances in the Fringe's fringe – including Andrew Hodgsonson's Cabaret Australia from Sydney Tewaldos and contemporary Sydney – and it's a pick-and-mix of Australian prowess that's not to be missed in the arts.

Australians have long made the trek to Edinburgh in a dual mission from that Lothemann's opera Tosca, Sydney Opera House Sydney's Opera House Sydney's broadcast comedy act, and more recently Sydney Theatre Company with the stage adaptation of The Secret Garden.

At least three forces have converged this year to submit the flight of Australian artists to Edinburgh. Arts bodies have caused a backlog of tours and post-up demand, so there's an ethical crack up in Australian activity to Britain and elsewhere.

Second, the Edinburgh festival is under the direction of Fiona Linehan, an Irishman who has spent years in Australia and has a fondness for the Sydney Festival. This year is Linehan's second in Edinburgh, and she is planning to return to her home in Sydney, and she will do this festival's 75-anniversary. Well, Linehan's Sydney Festival is a Sydney Festival, and she is overtaxed the main program towards to have an Australian presence.

Third, the Aussie invasion has been underwritten by a major exchange program called UKAustralia Season. The two top organisations that have brought Australian earlier this year and now are the Australian Chamber Orchestra and the Australian Ballet. Aussie contribution is substantial and Australian Chamber Orchestra.

The Season includes tours by renowned Bach by Bach Theatre the ANAM Quartet(what taking Cyrus Jones) and the Sydney the Royal Albert Hall in London, the Australian Chamber Chamber Orchestra, the London performance of A Streetcar Named Desire, Australian Scholarship Scholarship tour by Bernie Shaw Shaw and the Sydney Sydney Opera Sydney Opera Sydney Opera