



## Ian Saville, The Socialist Magician, returns to Edinburgh with a new show and a very old dummy.

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Dr Ian Saville is one of the very few comedy acts at this year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe, who has a Ph.D. (in political theatre history, as it happens). And he is almost certainly the only performer who will be bringing with him a veteran ventriloquist's dummy with an illustrious background.

Ian Saville is a bit of a veteran himself. The 60-year-old has been performing his own brand of magic with a political edge for the last 30 years, delighting audiences with “astoundingly funny” (*Time Out*) comedy, and simultaneously bewildering them with stunning tricks. He was one of the first performers on the alternative cabaret scene of the 1980s, alongside people like Paul Merton, Julian Clary and Mark Steel (in fact, he has a very funny story about travelling to a gig with these three). Now he is both performer and University lecturer, dividing his time equally between academia and the stage. As well as solo shows and cabaret, he regularly performs with the *Anticapitalist Roadshow*, as the token magician among singer-songwriters including Peggy Seeger, Leon Rosselson and Grace Petrie. Ian is also a member of the Magic Circle.

He last visited the Edinburgh Fringe in 2004, and the world has changed a lot since then. So it's about time that Ian returned to offer a magician's insight into the current economic crisis.

His new show revolves around money, explaining the illusions of the banking system in a way that only a magician can. Money appears and disappears, transforms itself and changes its value in a tour de force of creative accounting. And, of course, money talks.

In this time of austerity and cuts, many will be relieved to find that even if you have only a little money, you can still enjoy Ian's show. Ian will be part of the splendid free festival, where audiences pay no admission fee, but can contribute what they can afford (if they liked the show) on the way out.

Ian will bring with him a new character. Eric, Ian's financial adviser, is represented by a dummy which last visited Edinburgh in 1968, when he and his then owner did kids' shows in Princess Gardens. This beautiful, complex dummy was operated by “The Great De Sevia”, a travelling magician and children's entertainer. “De Sevia” died some years back, and since then the dummy has been hidden away in a suitcase. Until last November, that is, when he was acquired by Ian and restored to his former glory. The dummy was made by Len Insull, the foremost craftsman of this art in the 1950s and 1960s. Insull was the artist who made Peter Brough's dummy “Archie Andrews”, whose radio show (yes, a ventriloquist on the radio!) in the 1950s attracted an audience of 15 million. Insull also made “Lord Charles”, Ray Alan's dummy who was a regular on TV from the 1960s to 80s. So Eric is a brother to these illustrious characters.

As well as his adult show, Ian will be performing his acclaimed children's show, *Something in My Shoe*, every day (Except Mondays) at noon. Will the sixty-year old have the stamina to survive? You can put your money on it.

More information about Ian and his other shows can be found at: [www.redmagic.co.uk](http://www.redmagic.co.uk).

Reviews (*Guardian*, *Time Out*, *Scotsman*, *Independent* etc) at: [www.redmagic.co.uk/content/reviews](http://www.redmagic.co.uk/content/reviews)

Pictures and more information at <http://redmagic.co.uk/content/free-money-magic-show-new-socialist-magic-show-free-entrance>

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