SCOTTISH INTERNATIONAL STORYTELLING FESTIVAL

BIRD AND BEAST

21–31 October 2026

sisf.org.uk

Welcome

to the 2026 Scottish International Storytelling Festival.

This year's festival explores the rich relationship between storytelling and the natural world through our theme **Bird and Beast**. Alongside a vibrant programme at the Scottish Storytelling Centre in Edinburgh, storytellers across Scotland bring these tales to life this autumn. From Shetland to Dumfries, from Argyll to Aberdeenshire we invite you to discover wondrous stories that illuminate the place of birds and beasts in our traditions, folklore and myths.

We proudly celebrate Scotland's cèilidh tradition with an invitation into the story circle, extending a warm welcome to guests from Italy, Türkiye, Canada, England and Ireland, who share their stories, traditions and contemporary practices alongside Scotland's own world-class talent. Join us for some unforgettable tales and moments that bring us closer to nature, as we follow the trail of footprints and feathers and let our imagination take flight.

We look forward to welcoming you soon!

Daniel Abercrombie, Festival Director and all the Festival Team

The Scottish International Storytelling Festival is organised by **TRACS (Traditional Arts and Culture Scotland)**, which brings together the **Scottish Storytelling Forum** and the **Traditional Music Forum of Scotland**, from its base at the **Scottish Storytelling Centre**. TRACS champions Scotland's shared traditions of crafts, dance, music, and storytelling: our Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Supported through **Scottish Government's Expanded Festivals Fund**, **Creative Scotland**, **City of Edinburgh Council**, **Festivals Edinburgh**.

About the Programme

Browse our event sections to shape your storytelling experience across the festival, whether it's to enjoy the magic of live storytelling and family events (in Edinburgh and across Scotland), or for professional development and networking with the best in the field.

How to book

www.sisf.org.uk

+44 (0)131 556 9579

43-45 High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1SR

All other partner venues and nationwide events have their own booking outlets, as listed on our website.

Accessibility

A full SSC **Access Statement** is available at sisf.org.uk and a list of BSL performances is available on **page 21**.

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Festival Hub

The Scottish Storytelling Centre's award-winning building is the hub of the festival, located halfway down Edinburgh's High Street within easy walking distance of Princes Street and Waverley train station. There is no parking directly outside the Centre, but the Lothian bus number 35 stops outside with a taxi rank close by.

Pricing

For events at SSC a booking fee of £1.25 is charged per ticket, up to a maximum of £5 per booking. There is no booking fee for free events or for events booked in-person.

Festival Supporter Pass (£24)

If you plan to attend multiple events, please take advantage of our Festival Pass.

- Discounted tickets to many live festival events at the Scottish Storytelling Centre
- 10% discount at the Storytelling Centre's bookshop
- 10% discount in the Haggis Box's Storytelling Café
- Invitation to the Festival Opening Reception on Wed 21 Oct
- Attend 6 or more discounted events and your Pass will pay for itself

Look out for the Festival Pass prices in the listings.

Scottish Storytelling Centre Events

Ailsa Dixon and Ffion Philips
Photo by Fauna Photo

WED 21 OCT

Aderyn/Bird

6pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS+ **£11.25**

Atop a far-off mountain, birds gather to perch on the fate-shaping hands of an old mountain man – stories stirring in the murmuration, waiting to glide into the human world. In this Harebell Tellers production, traditional storytellers **Ailsa Dixon** and **Ffion Phillips** follow the flight paths of bird mythology across ancient Britain; oceans, forests, in and out of this world and that. Weaving together Welsh and Scots language, music and story into a meditative hour of storytelling magic.

BSL interpretation by **Megan McArthur**.

Open Hearth

8pm (1hr 30) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS+ **£11.25**

Our Open Hearth sessions gather together storytellers and musicians for a relaxed evening of stories and music in the Netherbow Theatre. As the darkness closes in and minds glow with pictures in the symbolic fire, this is the perfect way to end your day! Featuring **Şeyda Çevik**, **Ruth Kirkpatrick**, **Ian Stephen** and musician **Ceylan Hay** (Bell Lungs).

THU 22 OCT

Seeing the Story with Animal Eyes

Workshop

10:30am (2hrs 30) | £21.25 (£19.25)

Often we can become so familiar with the world of the story we are working with, that we forget the layers, the richness and the magic. Choosing to see your story with different eyes can help you find the depth that is hidden in plain sight. Suitable for all levels of storytellers, but please bring a story you know to work with. Led by **Shonaleigh**.

Morning Circle

11am (1hr) | Free (ticketed)

Start your festival day with a relaxed morning session of story sharing and networking. Join old friends and new ones, to shake off the dust together. This gathering is hosted by **Dawne McFarlane**, who guides a conversation on storytelling inspired by her book *Fairytales, Families and Forests* (co-authored with Georgiana Keable).

Şeyda Çevik
Image Supplied

The Great Instauration with Gayle Chong Kwan

2pm (1hr 30) | £5

Join artist **Gayle Chong Kwan** on an interactive creative restorying session to explore themes in 'The Great Instauration' (2026) her installation in the Grand Gallery of the National Museum of Scotland that explored science as a culturally embedded process shaped by social history, power, and omission. Chong Kwan will share the storytelling at the heart of her practice and recent work, on a journey through research, art, collections and archives.

Italian Tales: Stories of Horses, Myths of Birds, Legends of Snakes

5pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS £11.25

Join **Paola Balbi** and **Davide Bardi** for a journey through traditional Italian myths, legends and stories closely related to the land and nature. Follow the hoof prints of the horses in the Tuscan countryside and the trails of the snakes in the fresh grass of the north, where animals and imaginary beasts populate the daily lives and dreams of people.

Year of the Horse

6:45pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS £11.25

Traditional Scottish storytelling filled with the spirit of the Fire Horse. **Tony Bonning** recounts his epic adventure travelling Scotland with his horse, Chief, collecting Kelpie tales along the way, whilst **Allison Galbraith** shares European and Scottish horse legends and the true story of a local fiery Clydesdale. Join two horse enthusiasts as they take you trekking through time and the mysteries of horse lore.

BSL Interpretation by **Sarah Forrester**.

The Eye of the Monster

8:30pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS £11.25

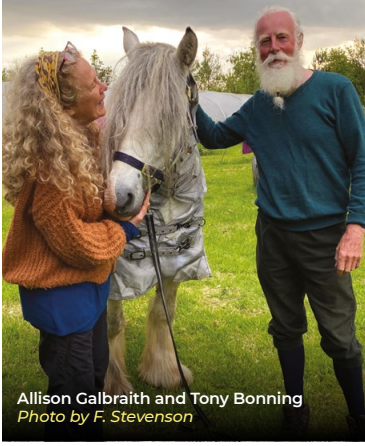
By facing the beast, you find out who you really are; only in darkness can you find the strength to open your wings. An interweaving of traditional stories from **Shonaleigh**'s Drut'syla tradition with Anatolian tales shared by storytellers from Türkiye, **Nazlı Çevik Azazi** and **Roza Erdem**.

FRI 23 OCT

National Theatre of Scotland at 20: Culture, Democracy, and the Stateless Nation

10am (2hrs 30) | Free (ticketed)

As the National Theatre of Scotland and the Scottish Storytelling Centre both mark their twentieth anniversaries, this special event brings together artists, academics, cultural leaders, public figures and audiences to explore the relationship between theatre, storytelling, literature and democratic life in Scotland. The event opens with a panel discussion featuring **Steve Byrne**, **Hannah Lavery**, **Dr Stephanie Lehner** and **Jackie Wylie**, chaired by **Dr Paula Sledzinska**, followed by a special in-conversation event with **Nicola Sturgeon** and **Joyce McMillan**.



Allison Galbraith and Tony Bonning
Photo by F. Stevenson

Spun Stories and Unspun Fates

2pm (1hr 30) | £5

Underground in a grassy knoll, three spinsters spin both flax and stories. Storytellers **Freya McCall**, **Sháneen McGurnaghan** and **Nina Willms** incorporate folk tales, songs and historically-inspired stories of women weaving themselves agency alongside the spiders and supernatural sisters who spin fate. Followed by a short discussion.

Mossycoat - Into the Wildwood

5pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS £11.25

Step into the wildwood where jewel-like birds flit through gold branches and shadowy beasts observe from the gloaming. A liminal place of transformation, concealment and deep ancestral memories, the forest represents freedom and the untamed spirit. But tread carefully for, at certain times, the veil shimmers to gossamer thin. Presented by storyteller **Jess Smith**, musician **Natasha Burns** and dancer **Katherine Blyth**, with visuals from **Aly Robinson**.

BSL Interpretation by **Megan McArthur.**

David Hughes
Photo by Graham Richardson

Warrior/Poet

6:30pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS **£11.25**

David Hughes weaves together the Celtic myth of Mad Sweeney and the story of Colin Macleod and the Pollok Free State. These are stories of community and resistance, of transformation and belonging, masculinity and madness, championing those that fight for a radical love of the world.

The Journey of Leonardo

8:30pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS **£11.25**

The story of a boy, born into difficulties, who would become an artist and scientist of unending fame and influence. Considered strange by many in his small Tuscan village, he must embark on a long physical and spiritual journey to set himself free from prejudice. A poetic and intense story-musical performance about the early years of Leonardo Da Vinci and the endless possibilities of every human when they manage to break free from a predetermined destiny. Created and performed by **Paola Balbi** and **Davide Bardi** with original live music from **Mario Costanzi**.

SAT 24 OCT

Artistic Translation for Performance Storytelling

Workshop

10:30am (2hrs 30) | £21.25 (£19.25)

A unique opportunity for storytellers and interpreters who wish to make their stories more engaging and accessible for audiences who speak a different language. **Paola Balbi** and **Davide Bardi** share their developed method and experience with live story translation in different languages, gathered from 20 years of international experience at festivals around the world. This method can be applied to any language (including sign language) and can provide effective artistic translation for any story performance. Please note, attendance requires the ability to communicate in at least one other language besides English.

Story Circle

2pm (1hr) | Free (ticketed)

Come together in the Storytelling Centre's George Mackay Brown Library for an open story circle. Bring a story to share, or just enjoy the flow of what happens. All welcome!

Come Dee Wis

3pm (1hr) | £11.25 (£9.25)
PASS **£7.25**

Live traditional Shetland fiddle music, dance an sangs, original short films, traditional craft wark an da spoken wird'll be ösed bi Shaetlan Scots Scriever **Claire White** an **Robbie Leask** ta tell a nuanced story o island life fae da ninth century tae da present day, aa i'da newly-offeeshil Shaetlan language!

PASS
If you plan to attend multiple events, remember to take advantage of our **Festival Pass!**

Displayed ticket price is inclusive of a £1.25 per ticket booking fee, up to a maximum of £5 per booking.

Daiva Ivanauskaitė-Brown
Photo by Gintare Kulyte

The Bird of Truth

8:30pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS **£11.25**

Join **Daiva Ivanauskaitė-Brown** on a soaring journey into Lithuania. Blending folklore, family legacy, and history, this performance reveals the untold story of book-smugglers risking everything for their native tongue. Enhanced by UNESCO-honoured ancient polyphonic harmonies from Edinburgh's Sutartinės singers, human voice and birdsong beautifully blur in an unforgettable celebration of resilience.

SUN 25 OCT

Oh Those Inspiring Cows!

Workshop

10:30am (2hrs 30) | £21.25 (£19.25)

A cosy presentation of ancient story, music and instruments, where **Riikka Palonen** will share stories and folklore from the woodland pastures and cow sheds of Finland, along with the presentation of her own bone craft and the lore behind it. There will also be a rare chance to practice the Nordic cow call "kulning" with **Satu Lankinen**.

Turkish Tales

5pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS **£11.25**

Spend an hour in the company of our guest storytellers from Türkiye, for a session of magical and mythical animal tales from Anatolia. Combining gentle humour, folk wisdom and respect for all creatures, these stories are shared with us for all to enjoy.

A Garment for the Moon

6:30pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS **£11.25 | Adults and 8+**

A centuries-long line of female story keepers lovingly passed thousands of intricately interconnected story cycles through generations, from grandmother to granddaughter, in the Yiddish oral tradition of the Drut'syla. In this special event, **Shonaleigh** shares fabulous wisdom and wonder tales from her first-ever written collection of some of her Bubbe's tales, featuring strong and inspiring characters throughout.

Morning Circle

11am (1hr) | Free (ticketed)

Start your festival day with a relaxed morning session of story sharing and networking. Join old friends and new ones, to shake off the dust together. Hosted by **Donald Smith** who guides a conversation inspired by his new book *Rewilding Scotland's Epics* (Luath Press), which contains new versions of three of Scotland's mythological cycles, which reach far into our past but are alive in our landscape and culture today. Why should we tap these older layers and how should they be approached in contemporary performance?

Rewilding Scotland's Epics: The Columba Cycle

12:30pm & 2pm (1hr 15 per session) | £15.25 (£13.25)

PASS £11.25

(Both sessions for £21.25)

Rewilding Scotland's Epics restores the natural power and connection of our oldest storytelling cycles through live contemporary retellings. The Columba Cycle moves between Ireland and Scotland, Erin and Alba, connecting sea and land, exile and discovery, in spiritual and emotional pathways. Part One begins with Columba or Colmcille's wondrous birth through tragic conflict to exile, and the voyage to Iona and Scotland. Inspiration and struggle combine. Part Two goes with Columba's restless journeys from Iona including through the Great Glen, to Skye, and one unexpected return to Ireland. Then comes the final voyage into mystery and light. With **Marion Kenny**, **Donald Smith** and **Heather Yule**.

Riikka Palonen
Photo by Richard Clarke

Give Me a Piece of Land and a Good Cow

4:30pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)

PASS £11.25

In the time of creation, when God the Father designed people, Mother Earth also wanted to create something in her own image. So she composed a Cow. Stories about cows, women and resilience from the forests of Finland and the shielings of Scotland, performed by Finnish born storyteller **Riikka Palonen**, accompanied by **Satu Lankinen** who brings traditional herding songs and ancient instruments directly from Finland.

The Conference of The Birds: A Story For Us

6:30pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)

PASS £11.25

Birds have a healthy disregard for borders, passports and visas. Like stories, they can travel where humans can't so easily go. Join Muslim storyteller **Jumana Moon** and storyteller-musician **Dawud Duncan**, as they unlock the wisdom held in Farid al-Din Attar's classical Farsi masterpiece, 'The Conference of the Birds', blending it with traditional Scottish music and masterful storytelling.

Deiseil
Photo by Archie MacFarlane

Deiseil: Dancing in Time

8pm (1hr 45) | £17.25 (£15.25)
PASS £13.25

A powerful exploration of how stepdance, Scotland's percussive dance, was lost... and how its revival became woven into a lifelong friendship. Experience a compelling journey across centuries of tradition told through fiddle, feet, Gaelic song and story, in an immersive performance which draws you into the heart of our heritage. Deiseil (pronounced jay-shal) means "ready" in Scottish Gaelic. So be ready for a mesmerising reflection on how issues of culture, identity and connection still resonate through society today. This is groundbreaking new work from award-winning director **Gerry Mulgrew**, dancer **Alison Carlyle** and musician **Amy Geddes**.

'This is the most joyful show I've seen so far this Fringe.' ★★★★★ (Scotsman) ★★★★★ (AllEdinburghTheatre.com)

MON 26 OCT

Bulgarian Folk Tales

2pm (1hr 30) | £5

Join Bulgarian storyteller **Nana Tomova** as she shares mesmerising tales stretching back to ancient Thracian times, from a land rich with myth and magic. Hear how the first bear came to be; how a horned mother cow tends to a grieving daughter and how a duck waves her wings to help those in need. Spend an hour with one of Bulgaria's leading storytellers as she celebrates the launch of her book, *Bulgarian Folk Tales* (The History Press).

The State of Water

5pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS £11.25

Water moves through all things; rivers run overland to the sea, rain rises into the clouds and oceans are highways. In this artistically crafted piece, **Peter Chand** and **Kirsten Milliken** seamlessly blend stories, songs and folklore, from their respective Indian and Scottish traditions about lake nymphs, enchanted waves, hidden realms and the waters connecting us all.

Stanley's Beasts an Birds: Tales an Sangs fae the Fireside

6:30pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS £11.25

Gather roon the fire for an evening of stories and sangs inspired by the legacy of Traveller tradition-bearer Stanley Robertson. Through traditional tales, songs learned directly from Stanley, and new musical responses, **Sheena Blackhall**, **Jackie Ross** and **Arwen Scott** celebrate birds, beasts, memory, heritage and Scotland's living storytelling traditions.

BSL Interpretation by **Sarah Forrester**.

Psyche and Eros

8:30pm (1hr 30) | £15.25 (£13.25) PASS £11.25

The ancient Greek myth Psyche (spirit, breath, soul) and Eros (god of desirous love) is so full of wisdom it has been called a new map of love. With every moment of despair, help comes from the natural world; the humble ant, the mighty eagle, the great shepherd god Pan. With storyteller **Dawne McFarlane** and musicians **Maryem Tollar** and **Sophia Grigoriadis**.

TUE 27 OCT

Psyche and Eros - Exploring the Story

Workshop

10:30am (2hrs 30) | £21.25 (£19.25)

The ancient Greek myth Psyche and Eros is full of timeless wisdom that is relevant now. This interactive workshop invites participants into the story with serious playfulness. **Dawne McFarlane** will lead gentle movement, telling and drawing exercises that you can continue creating with, whilst musicians **Maryem Tollar** and **Sophia Grigoriadis** invite us to expand our imagination beyond words. Explore moments of ancient wisdom and how they resonate with you now.

Morning Circle

11am (1hr) | Free (ticketed)

Start your festival day in the Storytelling Court with a relaxed morning session of story sharing and networking. Join old friends and new ones, to shake off the dust together. This story and craft gathering is hosted by **Beth Cross** who shares stories and experiences from her wonderful Sea Story Quilting project.

PASS

If you plan to attend multiple events, remember to take advantage of our **Festival Pass!**

The Antler & The Wing
Photo by Matt Pearce

BSL Stories of Birds and Beasts

5pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS £11.25

Join storyteller and BSL Storytelling Coordinator **Tania Allan** with BSL Storytelling Apprentices for stories of Birds and Beasts performed live in British Sign Language. Immerse yourself in the visual language and watch as their stories come to life. An opportunity to find out more about the BSL apprentices and their storytelling journeys.

With English interpretation from **Sula Brookes**.

The Antler and the Wing

6:30pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS £11.25

Dive into an atmospheric forest-scape exploring shared folklore between the Black Forest and Scottish Highlands. Through evocative music, storytelling, and audience interaction, this multidisciplinary performance from **Franziska Droll** and **Mollie Davis** conjures mythical white stags, cryptic birds, and morphing shape-shifters, questioning what happens to our legends when the wild goes silent.

BSL Interpretation by **Megan McArthur**.

Open Hearth

8pm (1hr 30) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS £11.25

Our Open Hearth sessions gather together storytellers and musicians for a relaxed evening of stories and music in the Netherbow Theatre. As the darkness closes in and minds glow with pictures in the symbolic fire, this is the perfect way to end your day! Featuring **Bea Ferguson**, **Tom Muir**, **Sinéad O'Brien** and musician **Maryem Tollar**.

WED 28 OCT

Morning Circle

11am (1hr) | Free (ticketed)

Start your festival day in the Storytelling Court with a relaxed morning session of story sharing and networking. Join old friends and new ones, to shake off the dust together. This gathering is hosted by Orcadian storyteller **Tom Muir**, who will discuss the supernatural hogboons that dwell in the mounds of Orkney and Norway.

An Audience with Dog and Jean (The Man Who Planted Trees)

2pm (1hr 30) | £5

Puppet State Theatre Company's *The Man Who Planted Trees* ran from 2006 to 2022 touring worldwide, clocking up over 1,800 performances telling the story of Elzéard Bouffier and his famously loquacious dog, Dog. Now, to mark the show's 20th anniversary, **Richard Medrington** and **Rick Conte** return to their favourite venue, alongside Puppet State's **Elspeth Murray**. Expect reminiscences, audience questions, favourite bits, and touring stories. Pssst - he's still in the basket!

Donald Smith
Photo by Duncan Smith

Rewilding Scotland's Epics: The Ossian Cycle

5pm, 6:45pm & 8:30pm (1hr 15 per session) | £15.25 (£13.25)
PASS+ £11.25 (All 3 for £31.25)

Rewilding Scotland's Epics restores the natural power and connection of our oldest storytelling cycles through live contemporary retellings. The Ossian Cycle brings Fionn, Gráinne, Diarmuid, Ossian, Niamh and many others to passionate life, in a space between magic and mayhem, mystery and full-blooded emotion. In Part One, deer, salmon and hounds transform to weave the guiding patterns of the cycle in the lives of the Fianna fellowship. In Part Two, the quest for the cup of healing, and the pull of the sea, take the Ossian cycle into new dimensions of beauty and danger. In Part Three, the wooing of Gráinne and the Boar of Ben Gulban dramatically break Fianna forever, but Niamh pits her island of the ever-young against the tragic pull of earth and home. With **Gráinne Holland**, **David Hughes**, **Martin MacIntyre**, **Sinéad O'Brien** and **Donald Smith**.

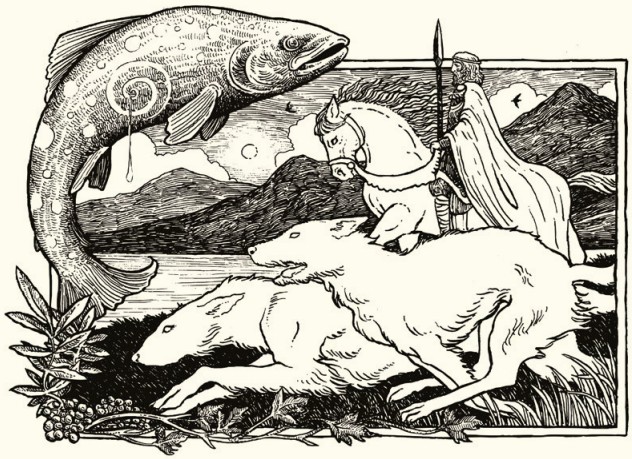


Illustration by Hester Aspland

THU 29 OCT

Games and Songs, Birds and Beasts

Workshop

10:30am (2hrs 30) | £21.25 (£19.25)

Join **Lauren Bianchi** for an experiential storytelling session full of games, songs and stories to take away with you and build your practice and repertoire. This session is suitable for storytellers and creatives working with children and adults and will delve into the rich storytelling heritage of Scotland and beyond to find the birds and beasts to build your stories and sessions around.

Morning Circle

11am (1hr) | Free (ticketed)

Start your festival day in the Storytelling Court with a relaxed morning session of story sharing and networking. Join old friends and new ones, to shake off the dust together. This story and dance gathering is hosted by **Fergus McNicol**, who will get our tail feathers moving!

Deaf Storytelling in Scotland

2pm (1hr 30) | £5

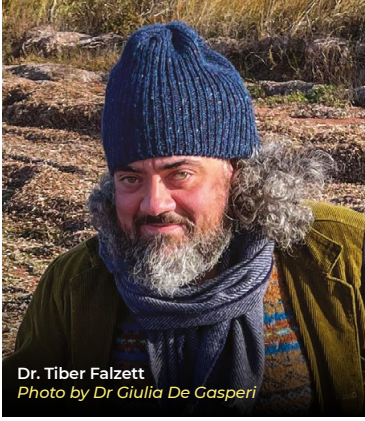
Led by BSL Storytelling Coordinator **Tania Allan**, this event welcomes Deaf History Scotland to share insights into its archive and the Seed Corn project, which uses tangible historical objects to inspire Deaf people to share their memories and experiences through storytelling. This in turn helps to preserve and celebrate Scotland's Deaf history, heritage and culture.

With English interpretation from **Sula Brookes**.

Caoidh na Gaoitheig | A Resounding Voice (Alan Bruford Lecture)

5pm (1hr) | Free (ticketed)

Tradition accrues and is transformed through relational and referential encounters, both anticipated and unanticipated, between uncertain and precarious human and more-than-human lives. Amid displacement, migration, and the loss of languages and species, **Dr. Tiber Falzett** (Head of Irish Folklore in the School of Irish, Celtic Studies and Folklore, University College Dublin) asks what these ways of knowing carry, and what is lost when the voices that carried them fall silent. Presented in memory of Scottish scholar Alan Bruford, in partnership with the University of Edinburgh's Department of Celtic and Scottish Studies.



Dr. Tiber Falzett
Photo by Dr Giulia De Gasperi

Dedalus and Icarus

7pm (50mins) | £15.25 (£13.25)

PASS **£11.25**

Bologna's **Fraternal Compagnia APS** presents the myth of Dedalus and Icarus, reinterpreted in Dario Fo and Franca Rame's distinctive ironic style as a timeless tale of rebellion and a satire of power. **Gabriel Bird**'s jester-like theatrical performance explores the conflict between generations, the limitations of human nature, and the desire for freedom and escape through ingenuity. Presented in special recognition of the centenary of Nobel Prize winner Dario Fo.

Sheep Stanes

8:30pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)

PASS **£11.25**

In the far North, on the isle of North Ronaldsay, seaweed-eating feral sheep roam the coastline, hemmed between groond and watter by a 13-kilometer dry stane dyke. Storyteller **Ailsa Dixon** draws out tales from old tape recorders – historic, personal and folkloric – that have built this sheep dyke, shaped by countless hooves, hands and storms over centuries. With live fiddle music from **Kirsty Harrison**.

FRI 30 OCT

An Introduction to Commedia dell'Arte

Workshop

10:30am (2hrs 30) | £21.25 (£19.25)

A special opportunity to learn some of the history and practice of Commedia dell'Arte with Bologna's famous **Fraternal Compagnia APS**. Originating in Padua in 1545, Commedia dell'Arte is the Italian theatrical tradition which utilises body expression, improvisation, mask work, physical awareness and theatrical storytelling skills to create a relationship between performers and spectators. Explore the roots of Italian theatre and folk storytelling and discover techniques to help develop a relationship with your audience in this ancient, but fully relevant, artform.

Morning Circle

11am (1hr) | Free (ticketed)

Start your festival day in the Storytelling Court with a relaxed morning session of story sharing and networking. Join old friends and new ones, to shake off the dust together. This gathering is hosted by **Dr Robert Fell** from **Art27 Scotland** in partnership with community-led organisation **Rajpot**, who share their cultural rights-based work with Nackens (Scottish Gypsy Traveller) storytellers and artists from across Scotland.

Sruth nan Gàidheal: The Carrying Stream of Gaelic Nova Scotia

2pm (1hr 30) | £5

Join **Màiri Britton** on a virtual visiting tour of Nova Scotian Gaelic tradition bearers. For eight years, Màiri and colleagues have worked on the Cainnt is Ceathramhan / Language in Lyrics project, creating an index of 7,000 Gaelic songs and re-cataloguing and transcribing the remarkable Cape Breton Gaelic Folklore Collection. Through performance and guided listening, Màiri will share some of her favourite songs and stories from the collections. Followed by a song-circle led by **Brian Ó hEadhra** from the **North Atlantic Song Convention (NASC)**.

Wild and Free?

5pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)

PASS £11.25

Follow the journey of our heroine, who dreams three times of a magic island filled with treasure, so journeys there only to hear stories of nature's struggles from an eagle, a salmon and a deer. **Cara Silversmith** explores biodiversity loss and its impact on our mental health, trying to find connection in a disconnected and fragile world. With live music from **Ceit Langhorne**.

Nuair a Bha Gàidhlig aig na h-Eòin

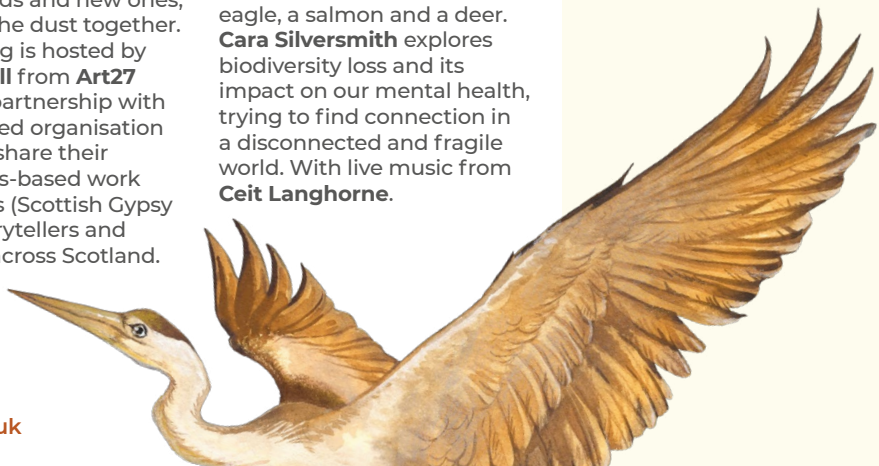
6:45pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)

PASS £11.25

Eadar Naomh Brìghde agus am brìdean, agus an eala mar shamhla air birlinn MhicNèill, tha eòin air a bhith aig cridhe traidiseanan beul-aithris na Gàidhlig bho chionn fhada. Bidh 'Nuair bha Gàidhlig aig na h-Eòin' a' fighe òrain thraidiseanta is ùra ri chèile le ceilearadh nan eun is ceòl. Air a stiùireadh le **Màiri Nic 'IlleMhaoil** còmhla ri **Alana NicAonghais** (pìob), **Pàdruig Moireasdan** (bogsa), **Shona Mhoireasdan** (fidheall) agus **Gillebrìde Mac 'IlleMhaoil** (seinn).

When the Birds Spoke Gaelic

From St Brigid and the oystercatcher to the swan as a symbol for MacNeil's galley, birds have long been central to Gaelic folklore traditions. 'Nuair a Bha Gàidhlig aig na h-Eòin' weaves traditional and original songs with bird calls and music. Led by **Màiri MacMillan** with **Alana MacInnes** (pipes), **Pàdruig Morrison** (accordion), **Shona Morrison** (fiddle) and **Gillebrìde MacMillan** (voice).



Gira - Songs for the Orishas

8:30pm (1hr 30) | £15.25 (£13.25) PASS £11.25

Brazilian artists **Giulia Drummond** and **Mario Caribé** present a ritualistic performance of music and stories of the Orishas, Yoruba deities who personify the forces of nature and timeless human archetypes. The cult of the Orishas was brought to Brazil by the enslaved Yoruba people and it endured all the oppression and violence of slavery. These spiritual traditions are filled with joy and music: chanting, drumming, dancing. It's the music that conducts each stage of a ritual. And so this performance is designed with a ritualistic structure, following a traditional xirê - sequence in which the Orishas are saluted, sung and danced in the Gira.

SAT 31 OCT

Under Your Skin: An Embodied Approach to Scary Stories

Workshop

10:30am (2hrs 30) | £21.25 (£19.25)

A playful, sensory, movement-based workshop co-led by storyteller **Inés Álvarez Villa** and Deaf BSL storyteller **Tania Allan**. Drawing on Inés's embodied storytelling practice and teaching, and her six editions at the Edinburgh Horror Festival, alongside Tania's visual storytelling techniques and the tradition of ghost storytelling within Deaf culture, the workshop explores how suspense and dread are built through silence, gesture, and atmosphere as much as through words. Using props, vibration and sensory experiences, Deaf and hearing participants alike will explore how embodied storytelling builds confidence, creativity and connection while bringing spooky tales to life. BSL and English interpretation will be provided throughout.

Closing Circle

1pm (2hrs) | Free (ticketed)

An open conversation and social space, to explore the networks and ideas that connect us. Led by the **Scottish Storytelling Forum**, this is a chance to reflect together on this year's festival and harness energy for future ideas, projects and stories.

BSL interpretation by **Emmy Kauling**.

Masquerade Mask

4pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)

PASS £11.25

Welcome to the world of Commedia dell'Arte and the great characters of Italian theatrical tradition, including Pantalone, Il Dottore, the Captains and the Lovers. Through improvisation, pantomime, and the use of traditional masks, this performance from Bologna's **Fraternal Compagnia APS** explores universal themes of love, power, poverty, and human nature, breaking down any barrier between performers and the audience.

Harp and Carp
Photo by Greg McKinney

Battle of the Birds: A Darker Tale

6pm (1hr) | £15.25 (£13.25)

PASS £11.25

A re-imagining of the Battle of the Birds by storyteller **Owen Pilgrim** brings out a darker side of the story, drawing on the original tale and inspired by elements from esoteric Scottish folklore and history and woven with Traveller stories of the Devil and his trickery. Featuring a unique live soundtrack by sound artist **Gordon Cameron**.

BSL Interpretation by **Sarah Forrester**.

Open Hearth

8pm (1hr 30) | £15.25 (£13.25)

PASS £11.25

Our Open Hearth sessions gather together storytellers and musicians for a relaxed evening of stories and music in the Netherbow Theatre. As the darkness closes in and minds glow with pictures in the symbolic fire, this is the perfect way to end your day! Featuring **Harp and Carp** (**Daniel Serridge** and **Neil Wood**), **Morvern Graham** and **Marjolein Robertson.**

Family Events in Edinburgh

Join us in the school holidays and across the Festival for a selection of storytelling performances and events for all the family!

All events at SSC unless otherwise listed.

Suitcase Stories: Seven Ravens
Photo by Fernando

SAT 10 OCT

The Birds and Beasts of Edinburgh Zoo

Edinburgh Zoo,
134 Corstorphine Rd,
Edinburgh EH12 6TS

11am - 2pm (20min sessions)
Free with your ticket for Edinburgh Zoo | All ages

Join storytellers in the Lemur Lodge at Edinburgh Zoo to hear wondrous tales of the many animals who are cared for there. There might be stories of crowned cranes, flamingos, penguins and more!

Booking & Info:
edinburghzoo.org.uk

Animal Magic

11am (1hr 15) | £9.25 per child
3-6 years

Travel to lands of myth and legend. Meet magical beasts and birds and bugs. Learn about wondrous creatures of our own world. Together, you'll explore ways to enjoy and protect nature's magic. Part interactive storytelling performance, part craft workshop and all fun!

The Last People on Earth

3pm (1hr 15) | £11.25 (£9.25) | 8+

Step into a story carved into Scotland's landscape and carried through centuries of memory. The Last People on Earth invites you on a powerful journey back almost 2,000 years to an encounter between the Caledonians and the unstoppable force of the Roman Empire: the battle of Mons Graupius. A new show by celebrated Scottish storyteller **Andy Cannon**.

SUN 11 OCT

Under the Starry Sky - Sensory Stories of Birds and Animals

Easy Sundays

11am (1hr) | £9.25 per child
All ages

Come and hear tales of happenings in the burrows and bird-boxes, dens and byres of Scotland at night. Join in with the stories with actions and props featuring lots of things to squish and shake! Then enjoy a relaxed sensory art session inspired by the stories, making all kinds of dens for our birds and beasties. With storyteller **Ailie Finlay** and artist **Catherine Lindow** from My Kind of Book. Fun for everyone, particularly suitable for children with additional needs and their families and friends.

TUE 13, WED 14 & THU 15 OCT

Storycraft: Aesop's Fables

10:30am (2hrs) | £11.25 per child 7-10 years

Can you craft a story? Professional storytellers **Sarah Wedderburn-Ogilvy** and **Ailsa Dixon** invite you to fun-filled sessions learning a different iconic Aesop fable every day. Explore stories through games and movement and learn the skills you need to develop your own storycraft. Book for one session or start to really build your repertoire with multiple sessions. A great introduction to the art of live storytelling for aspiring young tellers aged 7-10 years.

TUE 13
The Crow and the Pitcher

WED 14
The Ant and the Grasshopper

THU 15
The Birds, the Beasts and the Bat

TUE 13 & WED 14 OCT

Suitcase Stories: Seven Ravens

1:30pm (1hr) | £11.25 (£9.25) | 5+

A schoolgirl called Ada is visited by a Raven and thrust into a dream world of quests, feathers and a glass mountain. Join Ada on a tiny world adventure over an extraordinary hand-felted landscape as she unlocks the Raven's secret. Inspired by the Brothers Grimm fairy tale. Created and performed by **Freda O'Byrne**.

Macastory
Photo by Ludovic Farine

THU 15 OCT

Feathers and Fur: A Fabled Fandango

1:30pm (1hr) | £11.25 (£9.25) | 8+

Embark on a tail-wagging, wing-flapping adventure of heroic dogs, daring pigeons and extraordinary true stories. Packed with storytelling, song, laughter and quirky audience fun, discover the animal heroes history forgot—and compete for glory in the legendary Golden Poop Scoop awards! Created and performed by **Lea Taylor** and **Nicola Wright**.

FRI 16 OCT

Paws, Claws & Cobblestones

11am (1hr) | £9.25 per child 3-10 years

Join Macastory's **Ron Fairweather** and **Fergus McNicol** for a fun-filled interactive storytelling, song, and rhyme adventure. Discover cheeky monkeys, elephants in the castle and determined dogs with fascinating tales from old Edinburgh full of animal antics, laughter, music, and larger-than-life characters. Come along and meet Old Edinburgh's weird and wonderful famous furry friends!

SAT 17 OCT

Family Fun for International Intangible Cultural Heritage Day

10.30am (5hrs 30) | All ages

Celebrate International UNESCO Intangible Heritage Day with an open-doors day of family fun at the Scottish Storytelling Centre. Explore our shared living heritage through story, crafts, dance, music and song with a line-up of come and try workshops, ticketed sessions and drop-in activity for all ages.

SUN 18 OCT

Bear with Me

Easy Sundays

2pm (1hr 30) | £11.25 (£9.25) Adults and 7+

What do you give a King who has everything? From bearing gifts to gifting bears, our young hero Beloved and his Bear are on an epic journey. Drawing on Icelandic sagas and Scandinavian folktales, storyteller **Jan Bee Brown** and musician **Toby Hawks** share some hairy moments and explore our relationship with our feral forefathers. Family-friendly and dementia-inclusive.

Festival Diary Edinburgh

Go Local Scotland listings: pages 22-33

DATE	TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	PAGE
WED 21 OCT	2pm	Weather Spirits and Rain Lore	NLS	25
	6pm	Aderyn/Bird	SSC	05
	8pm	Open Hearth	SSC	05
THU 22 OCT	10:30am	Seeing the Story with Animal Eyes	SSC	05
	11am	Morning Circle	SSC	05
	2pm	The Great Instauration	SSC	05
	5pm	Italian Tales: Stories of Horses, Myths of Birds, Legends of Snakes	SSC	06
	5:30pm	Meet the Gods, Creatures and Heroes of Celtic Legend	NLS	25
	6:45pm	Year of the Horse	SSC	06
	8pm	North Atlantic Song Circle	WB	25
	8:30pm	The Eye of the Monster	SSC	06
FRI 23 OCT	10am	National Theatre of Scotland at 20: Culture, Democracy, and the Stateless Nation	SSC	06
	2pm	Spun Stories and Unspun Fates	SSC	06
	5pm	Mossycoat - Into the Wildwood	SSC	06
	6:30pm	Warrior/Poet	SSC	07
	8:30pm	The Journey of Leonardo	SSC	07
SAT 24 OCT	10:30am	Artistic Translation for Performance Storytelling	SSC	07
	10:30am	Family Storytelling Day at the National Museum of Scotland	NMS	07
	11am	Wings of Colour | Renklerin Kanatları	SSC	07
	2pm	Story Circle	SSC	07
	3pm	Come Dee Wis	SSC	07
	5pm	Turkish Tales	SSC	08
	6:30pm	A Garment for the Moon	SSC	08
	8:30pm	The Bird Of Truth	SSC	08
SUN 25 OCT	10:30am	Oh Those Inspiring Cows!	SSC	08
	11am	Morning Circle	SSC	09
	12:30pm & 2pm	Re-Wilding Scotland's Epics: The Columba Cycle	SSC	09
	4:30pm	Give Me a Piece of Land and a Good Cow	SSC	09
	6:30pm	The Conference of The Birds: A Story For Us	SSC	09
	8pm	Deiseil: Dancing in Time	SSC	10

DATE	TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	PAGE
MON 26 OCT	2pm	Bulgarian Folk Tales	SSC	10
	5pm	The State of Water	SSC	10
	6:30pm	Stanley's Beasts an Birds: Tales an Sangs Fae the Fireside	SSC	10
	8:30pm	Psyche and Eros	SSC	10
TUE 27 OCT	10:30am	Psyche and Eros: Exploring the Story	SSC	11
	11am	Morning Circle	SSC	11
	5pm	BSL Stories of Birds and Beasts	SSC	11
	6:30pm	The Antler and The Wing	SSC	11
	8pm	Open Hearth	SSC	11
WED 28 OCT	11am	Slighe nan Eun | The Way of the Birds	NLS	25
	11am	Morning Circle	SSC	12
	2pm	An Audience with Dog and Jean (The Man Who Planted Trees)	SSC	12
	5pm, 6:45pm & 8:30pm	Re-Wilding Scotland's Epics: The Ossian Cycle	SSC	12
THU 29 OCT	10:30am	Games and Songs, Birds and Beasts	SSC	13
	11am	Morning Circle	SSC	13
	2pm	Deaf Storytelling in Scotland	SSC	13
	5pm	Caoidh na Gaoitheig | A Resounding Voice (Alan Bruford Lecture)	SSC	13
	7pm	Dedalus and Icarus	SSC	13
	8:30pm	Sheep Stanes	SSC	13
FRI 30 OCT	10:30am	Workshop: Commedia	SSC	14
	11am	Morning Circle	SSC	14
	2pm	Sruth nan Gàidheal: The Carrying Stream of Gaelic Nova Scotia	SSC	14
	5pm	Wild and Free?	SSC	14
	6:45pm	Nuair a Bha Gàidhlig aig na h-Eòin | When the Birds Spoke Gaidhlig	SSC	14
	7:30pm	Guid Crack	WB	25
	8:30pm	Gira - Songs for the Orishas	SSC	15
SAT 31 OCT	10:30am	Under Your Skin: An Embodied Approach to Scary Stories	SSC	15
	10:30am	Samhuinn Celebration with Morvern Graham	SSC	15
	1:30pm	Closing Circle	SSC	15
	4pm	Masquerade Mask	SSC	15
	6pm	Battle of the Birds: A Darker Tale	SSC	15
	7pm	Of Stars, Bears and the Beginning of Time	SJC	25
	8pm	Open Hearth	SSC	15
	8:30pm	Celtic Beasts and Where to Find Them	SJC	25

Location Key

NLS National Library of Scotland
NMS National Museum of Scotland
SSC Scottish Storytelling Centre
SJC St. John's Church
WB Waverley Bar

Family Storytelling Day
Photo by National Museum of Scotland

Words of the Wild: Changing Seasons

National Museum of Scotland, Chambers Street, EH1 1JF

3pm (1hr) | Free (ticketed) | 6+

Join the **Scottish Wildlife Trust** and storyteller **David Hughes** for a turn of the Celtic Wheel of the Year. David will explore the changing seasons through an ecological story lens, followed by a celebration of storytellers of all ages who have captured the wonder of Scotland's seasons as this year's winners of the Words of the Wild nature writing competition are announced.

Booking & Info:
nms.ac.uk/national-museum-of-scotland/whats-on

SAT 24 OCT

Wings of Colour | Renklerin Kanatları

11am (1hr) | £9.25 per child | 5+

If you could be any bird, which one would you be? Create your own colourful bird, discover its magical gift, and join a joyful storytelling adventure filled with songs, rhymes, movement and imagination. Together we'll celebrate kindness, courage, friendship and the beautiful colours that make every one of us unique. Join Turkish storyteller, children's author and educator **Nazife Burcu Takıl** for a joyful, highly interactive family storytelling experience inspired by the colours, songs and traditions that connect us across cultures.

Family Storytelling Day at the National Museum of Scotland

National Museum of Scotland, Chambers Street, EH1 1JF

10.30am (6hrs) | Free (drop-in)
All ages

Encounter birds, beasts and beasties of all kinds with a full day of free fun at the National Museum of Scotland, featuring stories and crafts for all the family. Venture into the woods with **Claire McNicol** for stories of woodland and forest, dive below the sea with **Janis Mackay**, go wild with **Macastory** on a Story Safari around the museum and encounter the wee-est of the Wee Folk with **Gauri Raje** and **Patrick Chadwick**. Between stories there will be plenty of family-friendly crafts and activities to keep you entertained!

SAT 31 OCT

Samhuinn Celebration with Morvern Graham

10:30am (1hr 30)
£11.25 per child | 5+

Join storyteller, illustrator, and printmaker **Morvern Graham** against the backdrop of her Folkloria! exhibition for a wonderful morning of stories, crafting and mask-making to celebrate Samhuinn. Come in the Halloween spirit and be prepared to get crafty before parading your new masks around the Storytelling Centre and out into Edinburgh's Old Town. Costumes are welcomed and encouraged!

Displayed ticket price is inclusive of a £1.25 per ticket booking fee, up to a maximum of £5 per booking.

BSL Performances

We are committed to making our programme accessible to Deaf audiences and those who use British Sign Language (BSL). Events marked with the BSL icon in this programme include professional interpretation or are led in BSL, ensuring that stories can be fully enjoyed in both languages. Interpreter names, stage positions and other information will be provided to customers before performances.

BSL Led Events

Tue 27 Oct | 5pm
BSL Stories of Birds and Beasts
(BSL with spoken English interpretation)

Thu 29 Oct | 2pm
Deaf Storytelling in Scotland
(BSL with spoken English interpretation)

Sat 31 Oct | 10:30am
Under Your Skin: An Embodied Approach to Scary Stories
(BSL and English, with interpreters for both)

BSL Signed Performances

Wed 21 Oct | 6pm
Aderyn/Bird

Thu 22 Oct | 6:45pm
Year of the Horse

Fri 23 Oct | 5pm
Mossycoat - Into the Wildwood

Mon 26 Oct | 6:30pm
Stanley's Beasts an Birds: Tales an Sangs fae the Fireside

Tue 27 Oct | 6:30pm
The Antler and the Wing

Sat 31 Oct | 6pm
Battle of the Birds: A Darker Tale

If you have any specific questions about these performances, or if you wish to discuss any access requirements prior to your visit, please email us at **reception@scottishstorytellingcentre.com**. A full venue **Access Statement** is available on our website.

Festival Exhibition

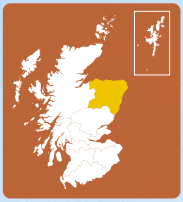
SAT 3 OCT - SAT 31 OCT

Folkloria!
by Morvern Graham

Scottish Storytelling Centre
Open from 10am daily | Free
Storyteller, illustrator, and printmaker **Morvern Graham** presents an immersive exhibition of prints and illustrations that reinterpret traditional folklore, revealing the magic hidden within familiar landscapes. Encounter worlds inhabited by selkies, unseen beings, and folklore-inspired characters, all shaped by the land and sea of Scotland's eastern coast, with original artwork taken from Morvern's new book *Seasonal Folktales*.

Go Local

Aberdeen and North East Scotland



Aberdeenshire and the north-east of Scotland provides a rich tapestry for stories, with its silver city and varied landscapes of farmland, forested mountains and rolling rivers heading out to an often wild North Sea.

A wonderful collection of events is presented here across the region, from Findhorn and Forres on the Moray coast, down inland to Banchory and Inverurie. Across the autumn, the Aberdeen and Beyond Storytelling Festival hosts family events, fireside chats, story-song sessions and live and online performances, all hosted by GAS (Grampian Association of Storytellers), the TMSA (Traditional Music and Song Association) and the Elphinstone Institute.

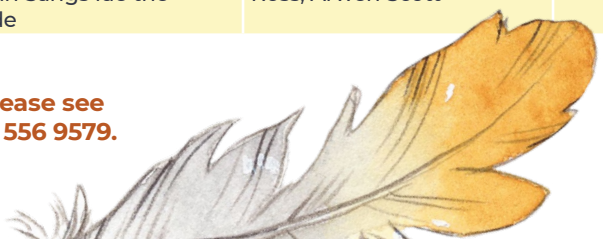
For all ticket information please scan QR code or see www.sisf.org.uk / 0131 556 9579

Carol Scorer
Photo by Kate Bewick

Go Local events in Aberdeen and North East Scotland

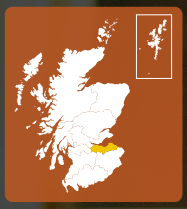
DATE & TIME	EVENT	ARTIST/S	LOCATION
FRI 2 OCT | 7PM	Wild Neighbours	GAS Storytellers	Aberdeen
SAT 3 OCT | 7PM	The Last People on Earth	Andy Cannon, Wendy Weatherby	Aberdeen
SAT 17 OCT | 7:30PM	Unbridled	Carol Scorer, Rory O'Connell	Forres
TUE 20 OCT | 10AM	Div Ye Ken Yer Corbie Frae Yer Gled?	Lynne Campbell, Lindsey Gibb, Jackie Ross	Aberdeen
TUE 20 OCT | 11AM	Children's Storytelling	Anne Pitcher	Aberdeen
TUE 20 OCT | 8PM	TMSA Session	Various	Aberdeen
WED 21 OCT | 10:30AM	Bell, Book and Borealis: In the Footsteps of a Pictish Saint	Elspeth Murray	Banchory
WED 21 OCT | 7PM	The Aberdeen Bestiary: a Treasure Trove for Storytellers	GAS Storytellers	Online
THU 22 & FRI 23 OCT 7:30PM	The Last People on Earth	Andy Cannon, Wendy Weatherby	Inverurie
SAT 24 OCT | 2PM	Div Ye Ken Yer Corbie Frae Yer Gled?	Lynne Campbell, Lindsey Gibb, Jackie Ross	St Cyrus
SAT 24 OCT | 7:30PM	The Last People on Earth	Andy Cannon, Wendy Weatherby	Insch
SAT 24 OCT | 7:30PM	Psyche and Eros	Sophia Grigoriadis, Dawne McFarlane, Maryem Tollar	Findhorn
SUN 25 OCT | 12PM	Psyche and Eros - Exploring the Story Workshop	Sophia Grigoriadis, Dawne McFarlane, Maryem Tollar	Findhorn
TUE 27 OCT | 6:30PM	The State of Water	Peter Chand, Kirsten Milliken	Aberdeen
FRI 6 NOV | 7PM	Psychopomps and Other Fantastical Beasts from Around the World	GAS Storytellers	Aberdeen
SAT 14 NOV | 7:30PM	The Great Goddess: Feather, Hide, and Horn	Nana Tomova	Forres
SAT 14 NOV | 2PM	Birds, Beasts and Blethers from the Bothy	Various	Peterculter
TUE 17 NOV | 8PM	TMSA Session	Various	Aberdeen
WED 18 NOV | 7PM	Stories from the History of Wildlife	Dr. Lee Raye	Online
TUE 24 NOV | 6:30PM	Warrior/Poet	David Hughes	Aberdeen
WED 25 NOV | 7PM	Stanley's Birds and Beasts: Tales an Sangs fae the Fireside	Sheena Blackhall, Jackie Ross, Arwen Scott	Huntly
SAT 28 NOV | 7PM	Stanley's Birds and Beasts: Tales an Sangs fae the Fireside	Sheena Blackhall, Jackie Ross, Arwen Scott	Lumphanan

For all ticket information please see www.sisf.org.uk or call 0131 556 9579.



Go Local

Edinburgh and Lothians



Alongside events at the Scottish Storytelling Centre, we are delighted to partner with Edinburgh Zoo, Lighthouse Books, the National Library of Scotland, the National Museum of Scotland and North Edinburgh Arts, amongst others in Edinburgh. Discover events around the Lothians, with great storytelling sessions taking place from North Berwick in the east, to Winchburgh in the west and Dalkeith in the south.

For all ticket information please scan QR code or see www.sisf.org.uk / 0131 556 9579

Martin MacIntyre
Photo by Andrew Perry Photography

Go Local events in Edinburgh and Lothians

DATE & TIME	EVENT	ARTIST/S	LOCATION
UNTIL 30 APR 2027 10AM	Exhibition: Rain	Various	NLS
FRI 9 & SAT 10 OCT 2PM	Talking Trees: Paper, Art and Stories	Beetroots Collective	Dr. Neil's Garden
SAT 10 OCT | 11AM	Birds and Beasts of Edinburgh Zoo	Various	Edinburgh Zoo
SUN 11 OCT & SUN 15 NOV | 6PM	Tales at the Lighthouse	Niall Moorjani	Lighthouse Books
MON 19 OCT | 1:30PM	Bear With Me	Jan Bee Brown, Toby Hawks	NEA
WED 21 OCT | 2PM	Weather Spirits and Rain Lore	Sandra Codd Macdonald, Mio Shudo, Donald Smith	NLS
WED 21 OCT | 2PM	Birds and Beasties Storytelling Session	Elaine Robertson	Dalkeith
THU 22 OCT | 5:30PM	Meet the Gods, Creatures, and Heroes of Celtic Legend	Martin MacIntyre, Justin Davies	NLS
THU 22 OCT | 8PM	North Atlantic Song Circle	Brian Ó hEadhra & NASC	Waverley Bar
FRI 23 OCT | 2PM	Feather and Foam: Stories and Songs of Seabirds	Beverley Casebow, Jan Bee Brown	North Berwick
FRI 23 OCT | 2PM & 3PM	Under the Sea / Pirates and Mermaids	It's in the Bag	Currie
WED 28 OCT | 11AM	Slighe nan Eun | The Way of the Birds	Màiri MacMillan	NLS
FRI 30 OCT | 7:30PM	Guid Crack Storytelling Session	Beverley Bryant	Waverley Bar
SAT 31 OCT | 7PM	Of Stars, Bears and the Beginning of Time	Riikka Palonen, Richard Clarke	SJC
SAT 31 OCT | 8:30PM	Celtic Beasts and Where to Find Them	Mark Steadward	SJC
SAT 31 OCT | EVENING	Samhuinn Fire Festival	Beltane Fire Society	Edinburgh
SAT 7 NOV | 3:30PM	David Ireland in Conversation with Donald Smith	David Ireland, Donald Smith	New College
THU 12 NOV | 7:30PM	Hearth Fire Sessions	Various	SSC
SAT 14 NOV | 7PM	Winchburgh Storytellers: 2nd Annual Evening of Stories for Grown Ups	Mary Baxter, Daru MacAleece, Beith Watson, Efrem Jones, Diana Watt	Winch-burgh
WED 18 NOV | 7:30PM	Stories on the Way	Various	SSC
TUE 24 NOV | 7:30PM	Moonspinners	Various	SSC
SAT 28 NOV | 1:30PM	Bear With Me	Jan Bee Brown, Toby Hawks	HoN

Location Key
HoN Heart of Newhaven
NEA North Edinburgh Arts
NLS National Library of Scotland
SJC St. John's Church
SSC Scottish Storytelling Centre

For all ticket information please see www.sisf.org.uk or call 0131 556 9579.

Go Local

Glasgow and West Scotland

Glasgow's storytelling traditions are long rooted in its people, with the current storytelling scene being nurtured and celebrated by the thriving Village Storytelling Centre, based in Pollok. The Village programme for SISF showcases emerging voices, community stories and brilliant contemporary storytelling in collaboration with Wildcard Stories. Events outside of Glasgow in Ayr, Lanark and Milngavie take the stories out across the region as well.

For all ticket information please scan QR code or see www.sisf.org.uk / 0131 556 9579

The Winged and the Wicked
Photo by Esteban Zapata Páez

Go Local events in Glasgow and West Scotland

DATE & TIME	EVENT	ARTIST/S	LOCATION
SAT 3 OCT | 6PM	Folktales for New Scots	Beetroots Collective	Glasgow
SUN 4 OCT | 3PM	Going Home	Katie Proven	Milngavie
SUN 4 & WED 21 OCT 6PM	Folktales for New Scots	Beetroots Collective	Ayr
THU 22 OCT | 8PM	Emerging Voices in Storytelling	Emerging Village Storytellers	Glasgow
FRI 23 OCT | 8PM	Sangs an' Clatter: Before the Sun Rises	Various, with Evrim Ölçer Özünel and Şeyda Çevik	Glasgow
SAT 24 OCT | 4PM	The Year of the Horse	Tony Bonning, Allison Galbraith	Lanark
SUN 25 OCT | 3PM	The Hunter's Full Moon with Kittlin	Claire McNicol, Lesley O'Brien, Mags Smith, Freya Torjussen, Linda Williamson	Glasgow
MON 26 OCT | 7PM	Community Sangs an' Clatter: Tales of Feather and Claw	Various Village Storytellers	Glasgow
THU 29 OCT | 5PM	Halloween Parade: Here Be Dragons!	Various	Glasgow
FRI 30 OCT | 7PM	Cowboy Graves	Bryce Drennen, Frankie Regalia, Monday Soutar	Glasgow
SUN 1 NOV | 3PM	The Winged and the Wicked: Stories from the South of Chile	Trinidad Cabezón Droguett, Giulia Drummond, Sam Gamero	Glasgow
SUN 1 NOV | 7PM	Harp and Carp: Doom Creeps In	Daniel Serridge, Neil Wood with Heather Cartwright, Andrew Wilson	Glasgow
FRI 20 NOV | 2:30PM	Warrior/Poet	David Hughes	Glasgow

Community Sangs an' Clatter
Photo by The Village Storytelling Centre

Frankie Regalia
Photo by The Village Storytelling Centre

Katie Proven
Photo by Neil Quinn

For all ticket information please see www.sisf.org.uk or call 0131 556 9579.

Go Local

Highlands, Islands and Argyll

From the extraordinary beauty of the Isle of Skye to the windswept Shetland Islands, the Highlands and Islands of Scotland have hosted many a cèilidh, where faerie and folk tales are shared and more-than-human creatures are revered and respected. Across parts of this wide region, Gaelic storytelling offers a glimpse into the past and a hope for the future, where nature and the landscape demand their stories be told.

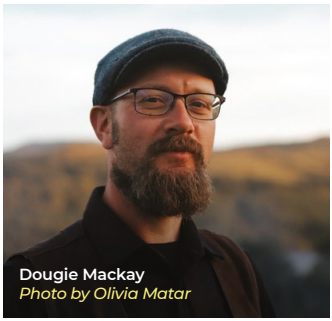
For all ticket information please scan QR code or see www.sisf.org.uk / 0131 556 9579

Sarah Hobbs
Photo by Catriona Parmenter Photography

Go Local events in Highlands, Islands and Argyll

DATE & TIME	EVENT	ARTIST/S	LOCATION
FRI 2 OCT | 7:30PM	Of Stars, Bears and the Beginning of Time	Riikka Palonen, Richard Clarke	Kyle of Lochalsh
TUE 13 OCT | 7PM	Storylands Sessions	Nana Tomova	Kincraig
THU 22 OCT | 7PM	West Wild Woods	Luke Winter	Rothesay
SUN 25 OCT | 3PM	Mossycoat - Into the Wildwood	Katherine Blyth, Natasha Burns, Jess Smith	Lochawe
THU 29 OCT | 7PM	The Year of the Horse	Tony Bonning, Allison Galbraith	Isle of Skye
FRI 30 OCT | 7PM	The Year of the Horse	Tony Bonning, Allison Galbraith	Isle of Skye
FRI 30 OCT | 7PM	Fiddles, Fairies and Folklore: An Audience with Allan Henderson	Allan Henderson, with Tiber Falzett	Abriachan
SAT 31 OCT | 11AM	Latha Samhna sa Choille | Samhainn in the Woods	Caoimhe Keohane, with Tiber Falzett	Abriachan
SUN 1 NOV | 7:30PM	Shetland Story Slam	Liz Musser, Ruth Oliver	Lerwick
FRI 6 NOV | 2PM	Feasgar ri Seanchas	Magaidh Smith, Domhnall Saunders, Rolo, Iain Don Maclomha	Stornoway
SUN 14 NOV | 1PM	The Birds and Beasts of the Highland Wildlife Park	Dougie Mackay	Kingussie
SAT 14 NOV | 2:30PM	The Swan Woman	Claire Hewitt	Kilcreggan
SUN 15 NOV | 10:30AM	Weaving Song and Story Together	Claire Hewitt	Kilcreggan
SUN 15 NOV | 7PM	Highland Tales of Mystery and Magic	Dougie Mackay	Beauly
SAT 28 NOV | 10AM	Unmapped Places: Cairngorms Stories	Sarah Hobbs	Nethy Bridge
SAT 28 NOV | 7:30PM	The Conference of the Birds: A Story For Us	Dawud Duncan, Jumana Moon	Oban

Ruth Oliver, Shetland Story Slam
Photo by Chloe Tallack



Dougie Mackay
Photo by Olivia Matar

Claire Hewitt
Photo by Jerry Hardman

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Go Local

South Scotland

The southern regions of Scotland are rich in storytelling traditions, with their landscape and people inspiring literary giants like Robert Burns and Sir Walter Scott. Border ballads have been sung through generations in the oral tradition, with the Eildon Hills being the backdrop to Thomas the Rhymer meeting the Faerie Queen. The rivers and mountains still flow and roll today, inspiring a new generation of storytellers from the Solway to the Tweed.

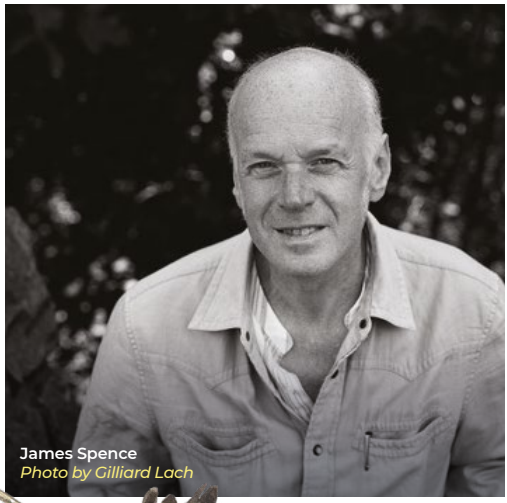
For all ticket information please scan QR code or see www.sisf.org.uk / 0131 556 9579

Peter Chand
Photo by F&M Media

Go Local events in South Scotland

DATE & TIME	EVENT	ARTIST/S	LOCATION
SAT 26 SEP | 7:30PM	A Cold Heart	Franziska Droll, Greg Harradine	Peebles
MON 12 - SAT 24 OCT	Wild Goose Festival	Various	Dumfries
FRI 16 OCT | 3PM	Carrying Fire	David Hughes	Dumfries
SAT 17 OCT | 3PM	The Antler and the Wing	Franziska Droll and Mollie Davis	Dumfries
SAT 17 OCT | 7:30PM	Untold Stories: Tales from the Town	Various	Hawick
SAT 24 OCT | 7:30PM	The State of Water	Peter Chand, Kirsten Milliken	Dalbeattie
FRI 30 OCT | 7:30PM	The Laddie That Kept Hares	James Spence, Jimmy Nagle	Jedburgh
SAT 7 & 14 NOV 1:30PM	Folktales for New Scots	Beetroots Collective	Peebles
SAT 14 NOV | 7:30PM	The War of the Birds	Mark Borthwick	Hawick
WED 25 NOV | 7:30PM	60 Miles Above The Moon	Christopher Kent	Hawick

Mark Borthwick
Photo by Chloe Tallack

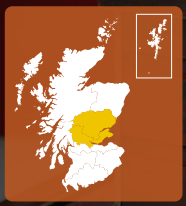


James Spence
Photo by Gilliard Lach

For all ticket information please see www.sisf.org.uk or call 0131 556 9579.

Go Local

Tayside, Perthshire and Fife



This autumn, a big celebration of storytelling takes place in the cities of Dundee, Dunfermline, Perth and Stirling as well as across the wider regions of Clackmannanshire, Fife and Kinross. The huge range of events reflects the thriving storytelling scene in this part of Scotland, as well as the diverse stories inspired by the landscape and animals we share it with.

For all ticket information please scan QR code or see www.sisf.org.uk / 0131 556 9579

Erin Farley
Photo by Lydia Smith

Go Local events in Tayside, Perthshire and Fife

DATE & TIME	EVENT	ARTIST/S	LOCATION
SAT 10 OCT - SAT 14 NOV | FROM 1PM	Cassette Memory	Erin Farley, Volk Gallery	Dundee
SAT 10 OCT | 1PM	Cassette Memory: Launch Event	Erin Farley	Dundee
WED 14 OCT | 11AM & 12:30PM	Kitsune and Kites	Lindsey Gibb, Mio Shudo	Dollar
THU 15 OCT | 7:30PM	Birds and Beasts, Ghosts and Goulash	Hillfoots Storytellers	Alloa
FRI 16 OCT | 2PM	Look Aboot Ye - Alloa	Eleanor Bell, Joanne Dowd	Alloa
SAT 17 OCT | 11:30AM & 12:45PM	Feathers and Folklore	Caroline Carmichael, Kate Walker	Dunfermline
THU 22 OCT | 7:30PM	Birds and Beasts, Darkness Beneath	Hillfoots Storytellers, Ian Stephen	Alloa
FRI 23 OCT | 7PM	The Eye of the Monster / Story Cèilidh	Shonaleigh, Nazlı Çevik Azazi, Roza Erdem	Dundee
SAT 24 OCT | 10AM	Look Aboot Ye - Sauchie	Eleanor Bell, Joanne Dowd	Alloa
SAT 24 OCT | 10AM	Weaving Tales	Tania Dron, Lucy O'Higgins	Menstrie
SUN 25 OCT | 7:30PM	The State of Water	Peter Chand, Kirsten Milliken	Port of Menteith
MON 26 OCT | 7PM	Give Me a Piece Of Land and a Good Cow	Riikka Palonen, Satu Lankinen	Dunfermline
FRI 30 OCT | 6PM	Birds and Beasts: A Storytelling Audience with Tom Muir and Jess Smith	Tom Muir, Jess Smith	Perth
SAT 31 OCT | 6PM	Samhuinn at the Crannog Centre	Various	Aberfeldy
FRI 6 NOV | 7PM	Blether: A Nicht Fou o Scots	Lindsey Gibb, Jo Gilbert, Beth Malcolm, Colleen Nicoll	Dundee
SAT 7 NOV | 2PM	Feather and Foam: Stories and Songs of Seabirds	Jan Bee Brown, Beverley Casebow	Anstruther
FRI 20 NOV | 7PM	Of Stars, Bears and the Beginning of Time	Riikka Palonen, Richard Clarke	Aberfeldy
SUN 22 NOV | 11:30AM & 12:45PM	Feathers and Folklore	Caroline Carmichael, Kate Walker	Stirling

For all ticket information please see www.sisf.org.uk or call 0131 556 9579.

Guest Artists

CANADA

Sophia Grigoriadis is a musician and teacher whose long study of Greek, Balkan and Middle Eastern singing and percussion has led her to compose and perform with many Toronto-based world and fusion ensembles.

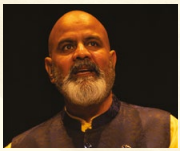
Dawne McFarlane is a storyteller and educator who has been sharing the art of storytelling for more than 30 years across Canada and internationally. Dawne was the Artistic Director of Toronto Storytelling Festivals 2019-21, and is co-author of *Fairytales, Families and Forests: Storytelling with Young Children*.

Maryem Tollar is an award-winning Egyptian-Canadian vocalist renowned for her world music performances. She performs with several Toronto musical groups including Al Qahwa and Turkwaz.

ENGLAND

Shonaleigh is one of Europe's leading storytellers. Having learned the Drut'syla tradition from the age of four, she carries thousands of oral stories from the Jewish tradition and shares their magic, mystery and wisdom with audiences around the world. As well as presenting her first written collection of stories, *A Garment for the Moon* (Orkneyology Press), she is collaborating with two Turkish storytellers for SISF 2026.

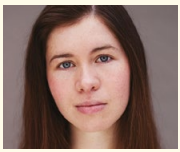
Jumana Moon is a storyteller based in Walthamstow, where she co-runs monthly storytelling club Stowtellers. She is inspired by stories from her Islamic faith: stories from sacred text, folk tales and stories from the tradition of devotional poetry such as Rumi, Jami and Nizami. She also has a special love of stories which emphasise the feminine voice and stories of the natural world.



Peter Chand is one of Europe's most renowned storytellers, constantly in demand for his powerful, evocative and moving stories from the Indian subcontinent and beyond. He has told stories and led workshops in many places including France, Greece, Singapore, the U.S.A. and Lithuania.

IRELAND

Gráinne Holland is a Belfast-born singer, songwriter, storyteller and media producer who was immersed in Irish traditional arts and language from an early age, fostering her deep love of folklore, mythology, and music. She breathes new life into Irish mythology through her project *Tales of Tuatha Dé Danann* which blends music, storytelling and song through podcasts, live shows and children's theatre, reconnecting fluent Irish speakers, learners, and non-speakers alike with the mythological tales and folklore of the ancestors.



Sinéad O'Brien is an award winning storyteller and theatre maker from Dublin who weaves Irish folklore and mythology with stories from history and local heritage, often mixing in personal stories. Sinéad has had sold out shows and received five star reviews across Ireland, Edinburgh, London, Prague and Amsterdam, where she worked with Mezrab House of Stories. Her solo work includes *Hero/Banlaoch* and *No One Is Coming*, which also won Best Play at Origin 1st Irish Festival, New York 2025.

ITALY

Raccontamiunastoria Storytelling Company (RSC) is an industry-leading storytelling company based in Rome. Co-Artistic Director **Paola Balbi** is a seasoned actress and renowned storyteller with over 20 years of experience, who has helmed multiple festivals including Storytelling Time Festival (Bolzano, Italy) and Tales on the Island – International Storytelling Festival (Sharjah, UAE). **Davide Bardi** is a storyteller, actor and musician who loves to tell traditional stories of his native region Maremma in Tuscany. Davide is co-Artistic Director of RSC and is responsible for promoting a whole range of storytelling activities across Italy. **Mario Costanzi** is an Italian singer-songwriter, producer and priest. He has written over 250 songs, ranging from singer-songwriter music to ambient electronic compositions.

Fraternal Compagnia APS from Bologna is a world-leading company in the Commedia dell'Arte, who also specialise in mask-making and social theatre. They were the first company to organise World Commedia dell'Arte Day, with the patronage of UNESCO. They work extensively with schools, focusing on young people and their cultural and social development, whilst promoting Commedia dell'Arte on an international level. We are delighted to invite company members **Gabriel Bird**, **Luca Comastri** and **Tania Passarini** to perform with us this year in special recognition of the centenary of Nobel Prize winner Dario Fo.

TÜRKIYE

Şeyda Çevik is a storyteller, educator, trainer and co-founder of SEİBA International Storytelling Center in Istanbul, Türkiye. She specialises in storytelling in education, especially the use of fairy tales in the classroom. Now based in Athens, Greece, she has particular interest in stories that travel across borders, exploring the shared motifs of Anatolian and Greek folktales alongside the rich oral traditions of Romani storytelling. Her work continues to explore how stories connect cultures, generations and lived experiences.

Nazlı Çevik Azazi is an award-winning storyteller, facilitator, author and theatre pedagogue from Türkiye, where she co-founded SEİBA International Storytelling Center. She specialises in storytelling within education and the arts, and for more than fifteen years has brought traditional oral storytelling into dialogue with contemporary artistic practice. In 2017, she received the Thüringen Fairy Tale and Legend Award in Germany and has authored three books on fairy tales and storytelling.

Roza Erdem is an actor, storyteller, educator, and facilitator whose work is grounded in Expressive Arts. She delivers storytelling training for a wide range of organisations, often working with migrant rights and environmental protections, or with NGOs focusing on collective memory. Roza likes to share a repertoire of autobiographical stories, traditional tales, myths, fairy tales, and wisdom stories with audiences of all ages through her independent practice and her work with the Seiba International Storytelling Center.

Prof. Dr. **Evrim Ölçer Özünel** is a storyteller and folklorist based in Istanbul. She is the current President of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Association (Somut Olmayan Kültürel Miras Derneği) in Türkiye and a member of the UNESCO Turkish National Commission ICH Expert Committee.

See **sisf.org.uk** for more information on our Guest Artists

How to get here

Scottish Storytelling Centre | 43-45 High Street | EH1 1SR

The **Scottish Storytelling Centre's** award-winning building is the hub of the Festival, located halfway down Edinburgh's High Street, within easy walking distance of Princes Street and Waverley train station. There is no parking directly outside the Centre, but the Lothian bus number 35 stops outside with a taxi rank close by.

Venue Accessibility

The Scottish Storytelling Centre is fully wheelchair accessible with lift access to all floors. For access information to our partner venues please check with them directly.

Tickets

0131 556 9579 | sisf.org.uk

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TRACS TRADITIONAL ARTS·CULTURE SCOTLAND

TRACS (Traditional Arts and Culture Scotland) (SCIO SC043009) is a co-operative network which champions our shared traditions of crafts, dance, music, and storytelling: our Intangible Cultural Heritage. TRACS is supported by The City of Edinburgh Council and Creative Scotland Multi-Year Funding. TRACS is an accredited NGO expert advisor to UNESCO on Intangible Cultural Heritage and a Community Support Hub for the UK's Living Heritage inventory.

Our Partners

Special thanks to our Edinburgh partners: Beltane Fire Society, Lighthouse Books, National Library of Scotland, National Museum of Scotland, National Theatre of Scotland, New College Festival of Books and Belief, North Atlantic Song Convention, Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, Scottish Wildlife Trust, The Skinny, University of Edinburgh's Department of Celtic and Scottish Studies and The Waverley Bar.

Special thanks to our nationwide partners in Aberdeen and North East Scotland; Glasgow and West Scotland; Highlands, Islands and Argyll; the Lothians; South Scotland and Tayside, Perthshire and Fife.

Special thanks to our international partners: Canada Council for the Arts, Compagnia di Storytelling Raccontamiunastoria, Fraternal Compagnia APS, Ministerro Della Cultura (Italia), Seiba International Storytelling Center, SOKÜM (Institute for Intangible Cultural Heritage, Türkiye), Tell Tale Foxes, Belgium.

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