



22 October –
1 November
2025

LIGHTS OF THE NORTH



SCOTTISH
INTERNATIONAL
STORYTELLING
FESTIVAL

sisf.org.uk

Welcome

to the 2025 Scottish International Storytelling Festival.

'Lights of the North' is a feast of traditional storytelling and entertainment across Scotland. Enjoy events from Shetland to Dumfries and Galloway, the Western Isles to Aberdeenshire, as well as a host of programming at the Scottish Storytelling Centre and its festival partners in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

The 2025 Festival tracks a rich northern arc which bridges Finland to Iceland, and connects Germany to Norway, with Scotland a sea road junction in the middle. Don't miss out on the tales and music or the close experience of nature. As winter gathers round the hearth fires, look north to join the merry dancers in the sky!

The Festival Team



The Scottish International Storytelling Festival is organised by **TRACS (Traditional Arts & Culture Scotland)**, which brings together the **Traditional Music Forum of Scotland**, **Scottish Storytelling Forum** and **Traditional Dance Forum of Scotland**, from its base at the **Scottish Storytelling Centre**.

TRACS TRADITIONAL
ARTS & CULTURE
SCOTLAND

Supported through **Scottish Government's Festivals Expo Fund**, **Creative Scotland Multi-Year Funding**, **City of Edinburgh Council**, **Festivals Edinburgh** and **Goethe-Institut**.



About the Programme

Browse our event sections to shape your storytelling experience across the Festival in Edinburgh and across Scotland, whether it's to enjoy the magic of live storytelling and family events 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 regional events have their own booking outlets, apart from events at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

Accessibility

A full **Access Statement** is available on our website. A full list of how to engage with our enhanced performances will be available at sisf.org.uk.

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Festival Supporter Pass (£24)

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

 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 launch event

 Attend 6 or more discounted events and your Pass will pay for itself



Look out for the Festival Pass prices in the listings.

Another Story

A Scottish Storytelling Podcast

Tune in to hear wonderful storytellers share some of their favourite tales and chat about storytelling in Scotland and beyond.

So join us for another story...



Available wherever you get your podcasts, including Spotify, Apple and Amazon.

BSL Performances

We are committed to making our programme accessible to D/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 BSL and English. Interpreter names, stage positions and other information will be provided to customers before performances.



BSL Led Events

Sun 26 Oct | 6pm

**Lost to the Sea,
Lost to the World**

(performed in BSL with
spoken English interpretation)

Thu 30 Oct | 10.30am

**An Introduction to BSL
Storytelling (Workshop)**

(delivered in BSL and English,
with interpreters provided)

BSL Signed Performances

Wed 22 Oct | 6pm

**Of Stars, Bears and the
Beginning of Time**

Sat 25 Oct | 2pm

**Storytellers Together:
Collective Inspirations**

Sun 26 Oct | 8pm

Da Winters O Shetland

Wed 29 Oct | 6pm

Tales of the Travellers

Thu 30 Oct | 6pm

**Gullrun's Saga:
A Viking Story**

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 27 SEP – WED 5 NOV

Stories Drawn from the Land *by Hester Aspland*

Scottish Storytelling Centre

Open from 10am daily

This stunning collection of ink illustrations and ceramics by emerging artist **Hester Aspland** draws lines between traditional stories and wild places. Atmospheric, observational landscape studies and explorations into folklore and fairy tales inform detailed, textural works which blend inspiration from the Golden Age of Illustration with a contemporary focus on the connections between women and nature.

Book illustrations for projects working with the stories of Duncan Williamson and Tom Muir are shown alongside other evocative works traversing the landscapes and stories of Scotland, Iceland, Ireland and the Faroe Islands.

Maighdeann-Mhara

Illustration by Hester Aspland



Scottish Storytelling Centre

Events & Workshops

Daniel Serridge and
Heather Cartwright
Photo by Eoin Carey



WED 22 OCT

Of Stars, Bears and the Beginning of Time 🐾

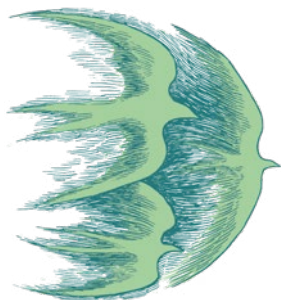
6pm (1hr) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

A mythical journey through the celestial origin stories of the Fenno-Baltic tradition, told by Finnish-born storyteller **Riikka Palonen**, accompanied by folk musician **Richard Clarke**. Modern science tells us we were born from stardust, but how did the ancient people in the north know that? Elemental tales like these remind us that we share this planet, alongside bears, cranes and wolves, but who told the first stories?

Open Hearth

8pm (1hr 30) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

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 **Beverley Bryant**, **Mimesis Heidi Dahlsveen** and **Colin Urwin** and musician **Marit Fält**.



THU 23 OCT

Using Recordings and Archive Material

10.30am (2hrs 30) | £16 (£14)

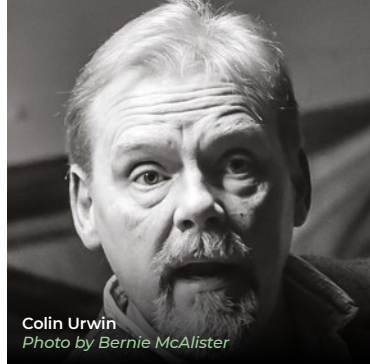
Workshop

Scotland's storytelling tradition has been nurtured by decades of fieldwork by folklorists, capturing the wealth of our intangible cultural heritage and bridging the gap between the past, present, and future. In this engaging and hands-on workshop, storytellers will learn how to explore, interpret, and creatively incorporate sound archives and field recordings into their craft. We'll also delve into ethical considerations for sourcing and acknowledging materials, honouring the voices of our forebears with respect and care, ensuring the tradition thrives for generations to come. With TRACS CEO **Steve Byrne**.

The War of the Birds

6pm (1hr) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

The old stories tell us there is one place on Earth where the birds laid down their wings in peace - yet the real battle rages on, the endless war against forgetting. Storyteller **Mark Borthwick** weaves traditional and electronic music together with full-blooded stories of the old world to transport us to the shores of a new one, where stories are currency, and memory is home. An exploration of postwar migrations, family histories lost to time, and the stories which made us all that we are, a long time ago.



Colin Urwin
Photo by Bernie McAlister

The People of the Sea

8pm (1hr 15) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

Inspired by David Thomson's remarkable work *The People of the Sea*, storytellers **Ruth Kirkpatrick** and **Colin Urwin** bring selkie myths and coastal voices back to life. Both tender and brutal, Thomson's collection of seal folklore and folktales from the coasts of Scotland and Ireland captures the mythic bond between people and nature, acting as a quiet yet powerful homage to a disappearing world.

FRI 24 OCT

Musicking the Story

10.30am (2hrs 30) | £20 (£18)

Workshop

Storytellers working with musicians is a well-ploughed furrow, but little exploration has been done around the innate musicality of storytellers when talking. Storyteller **Daniel Serridge** and musician **Neil Wood** discuss how your telling changes and grows when working in tandem with a musician, exploring pace, rhythm and atmosphere. Everyone is musicking!

Norwegian Tales

4pm (1hr) | £12 (£10) **PASS** £8

Norwegian storytellers **Mimesis Heidi Dahlsveen** and **Georgiana Keable Jerstad** share tales of trolls, hens and strange husbands. A chance to enjoy the company of two of Norway's leading storytellers, also celebrating the launch of Georgiana's new collection *Norwegian Folk Tales* (The History Press).

Selkie: Past, Present, Future

6pm (1hr) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

Niall Moorjani and **Ailsa Dixon** present an evocative and moving exploration of what it is to be human, as they lyrically synthesise storytelling with live music and Orcadian folk song. Come for the music, stories and songs, stay for the deep exploration of trans experience in Scotland today, through three queered and reimagined selkies set in the past, present and future.

Open Hearth

8pm (1hr 30) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

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 **Kirsten Milliken**, **Bob Mitchell**, **Inés Álvarez Villa** and musician **Claire White**.

SAT 25 OCT

Gruesome & Grimm Tales

10.30am (2hrs 30) | £20 (£18)

Workshop

A lot of classic fairy tales, especially well-known ones by the Brothers Grimm, have been heavily edited over the years by removing the grisliest details to make them more palatable. Join storyteller **Anna Lehr** to rediscover the original tales, explore the forgotten ones and work on your very own gruesome tale that will send shivers down your audience's spine!

Storytellers Together: Collective Inspirations

2pm (1hr 30) | Free, ticketed

Hear some of the background inspirations and values of the **Scottish International Storytelling Festival**, including the **Andy Hunter Storytelling Bursary**, the **Earth Stories Collection** and the work of the **Scottish Storytelling Forum**. A chance to also share your own aims and purposes in a networking space, bringing together performers and attendees who are interested in storytelling skills and sources, community projects and creative collaboration.

Emerging Storytellers in Europe

4pm (1hr) | £12 (£10) **PASS** £8

Enjoy the future of European storytelling with 3 short performances in collaboration with FEST (Federation of European Storytelling). 'What's the Difference?' by **Geoffrey van der Ven** delves into the emotions of shame and personal isolation. '(Not) Your Girl!' by **Winter de Cock** weaves auto-fiction and myth, asking enduring questions of female objectification, agency and consent. 'Cassandra' by **Ailsa Dixon** blends Greek myth, Scottish folklore and personal narrative into an exploration of prophecy, protest and survival. Come see the future!

Against the Current

6pm (1hr) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

A dynamic group of storytellers reimagine the forgotten tale of St Enoch, mother of St Mungo, through the journeys of four women making their lives in Glasgow. Woven with myth, movement and lived experience, this contemporary performance is a love letter to a northern city and a celebration of resilience, homemaking and voice. With **Sarah Wedderburn-Ogilvy**, **Isobel O'Donovan**, **Daiva Ivanauskaitė-Brown** and **Trinidad Cabezón Droguett**. Originally created for the Village Storytelling Festival 2024.



Land of Many Waters

8pm (1hr) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

Land of rivers, lochs and waterways, Scotland is a place where the signs of Cailleach, Bodach and Salmon still shimmer amidst the stones and shrines. Inspired by Scottish rivers, the stories they carry and their fragile eco-system, **Eileen Budd** and **David McAlmont** present a narrative blend of storytelling, songs and visual arts, with sound design and traditional rhythms from **Debbie Armour**. Includes Gaelic content, with translations for non-Gaelic speakers.

SUN 26 OCT

Skaldic Tools

10.30am (2hrs 30) | £20 (£18)

Workshop

Join Norwegian storyteller **Mimesis Heidi Dahlsveen** in an immersive workshop where we will delve into the rich tradition of the Norse 'skalds' (bards) and their storytelling techniques. We will explore the poetic and narrative tools that skalds used to captivate their audiences and bring the stories from Norse mythology to life.

He Sits on the Rock of Joy

4pm (1hr) | £12 (£10) **PASS** £8
16+

Deep in the woods of Kalevala, a voice rises. Old man Väinämöinen has been promised the lovely young Aino as his bride!

He sings his joy, twice, three times. But his troubles have only begun.

Journey into the northern forests with storyteller **Linda Perttula** and singer-songwriter **Aino Elina** as they combine teenage memories, ancient poetry and ethereal vocals in search for a connection to the Finnish epic.

Lost to the Sea, Lost to the World

6pm (1hr) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

Tania Allan and **Craig McCulloch** share two haunting tales of captivity, silence and survival. Weaving together Selkie myths and Deaf history, they explore themes of oppression, abuse, environmental destruction and cultural erasure. Though rooted in the past, the stories still echo loudly today, and they both fight for freedom. Performed in British Sign Language, with spoken English interpretation.

Da Winters O Shetland

8pm (1hr) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

As the nights draw in, come and hear tales from Shetland's past. A collection of folktales and historical stories arching across the dark nights of Winter. From magical to factual and even funny, these stories have been gathered from the books and memories of Shetlanders. Told by storyteller and comedian **Marjolein Robertson**.



David McAlmont
Photo by Brian David Stevens

MON 27 OCT

Tim Stead: Magician with Wood

5pm (2hrs) | £12 (£10) **PASS** £8

A first-ever Edinburgh screening for this documentary about innovative wood sculptor and furniture designer Tim Stead. The whole story of a man, a tree, a wood, a sculpted home and a legacy to be protected. Join director **Beatrix Wood** for a special screening and Q&A, and enjoy some of Tim's original furniture in the Centre's Cafe.





Marion Kenny
Photo by Robin Mitchell

The King and The Lamp

8pm (1hr 30) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

As darkness descends, join storyteller and musician **Marion Kenny** as she pays homage to her friend and mentor, the late Duncan Williamson, widely acknowledged as Scotland's greatest ever storyteller. Marion will mesmerise and enchant as she shares Scottish folktales passed down by word of mouth, magically interweaving words with harp and flute.

TUE 28 OCT

Swedish Tales

4pm (1hr) | £12 (£10) **PASS** £8

Swedish storyteller **Jerker Fahlström** shares traditional folktales from the forests of his native country and beyond. Be ready for a fun journey to the north, in company of one of Sweden's leading storytellers.

A Curious Episode at Balquhiddy: Placenames in the North and the Nackens

Alan Bruford Lecture

6pm (1hr) | Free, ticketed

Scottish place names and their origins are important. Join **Dr Robert Fell** to hear about the perspectives of Nackens (Scottish Gypsy Travellers) and how their folklore can give us unique insights into Scotland's history and her place names. With special guest **Shamus McPhee** who recounts a curious episode from Highland Perthshire that gave Balquhiddy its name. Presented in memory of Scottish scholar Alan Bruford, in partnership with the University of Edinburgh's Department of Celtic and Scottish Studies.

Open Hearth

8pm (1hr 30) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

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 **Grace Banks, Johan Sandberg McGuinne, Jackie Ross** and musician **Tom Oakes**.

PASS

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

WED 29 OCT

The Art of a Traditional Hungarian Roma storyteller

10.30am (2hrs 30) | £16 (£14)

Workshop

Discover the legacy of Vilmos Csipkés, one of Hungary's last traditional Roma storytellers, led by **Boglárka Klitsie-Szabad** of the Hungarian Heritage House. Explore Csipkés' rich repertoire of magical tales, religious stories, and humorous anecdotes through subtitled video excerpts and ethnographic insights. Learn about his performative techniques and storytelling contexts, documented using the performer-centered Budapest School method.

Icelandic Tales

4pm (1hr) | £12 (£10) **PASS** £8

Storyteller **Hjörleifur Stefánsson** shares tales from the spellbinding highlands of Iceland, where locals and Huldafólk (hidden people) live in harmony, most of the time. A chance to enjoy the company of one of Iceland's leading storytellers.

Tales of the Travellers

6pm (1hr) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

Enjoy a flow of tales and songs with Scotland's Travelling People, whose traditions have been gathered from all parts of Scotland. Go with the magic of **Jess Smith, Jimmy Williamson** and special guest

David Pullar, as they explore the riches of Traveller heritage passed down to them through generations.

The Return of the Vikings

8pm (1hr 30) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

Fresh from cèilidhs and story nights at the recently concluded Orkney Storytelling Festival, Nordic storytellers from Orkney, Iceland and Sweden gather once again to share more of their Viking adventures. With **Tom Muir, Hjörleifur Stefánsson** and **Jerker Fahlström**.

THU 30 OCT

An Introduction to BSL Storytelling

10.30am (2hrs 30) | £20 (£18)

Workshop

Join **Tania Allan** and **Emery Hunter** to explore storytelling through both British Sign Language and English in this inclusive, creative workshop. You'll learn how to develop expressive characters and bring your story to life using movement, facial expression, and voice. Perfect for beginners or those looking to build confidence in bilingual storytelling.

Everyone welcome!
Interpreters provided.



Boglárka Klitsie-Szabad
Photo by Klára Heimpold

Gullrun's Saga: A Viking Story

6pm (1hr 15) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

Danish storyteller **Svend-Erik Engh** and Scottish musician **Neil Sutcliffe** present an original tale of a young woman setting out to create her own destiny in Viking times. Brought to life through storytelling and music, blending traditional and original pieces.



Storyteller: Martyn Bennett and the Travellers' Stories

8pm (1hr 30) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

The music of the pioneering Scottish musician Martyn Bennett flowed with many inspirations, none more so than that of the Scottish Travellers. His final album, *Grit*, saw him draw upon the ballads and stories of the Travellers, famously sampling Sheila Stewart's version of Ewan MacColl's *The Moving On Song* to incredible effect. We celebrate Martyn's love of Traveller culture, whilst also exploring his wide use of world music through the Hindu Kali myths, in an evening with friends of Martyn's and those still being inspired by his legacy today. With **James MacDonald Reid**, **Gauri Raje**, **Jess Smith** and **Gary West**.

FRI 31 OCT

Working with Tech and Touring

10.30am (3hrs) | £16 (£14)

Workshop

Join us for a panel discussion and presentations about all things storytelling tech and touring. Storyteller **Gauri Raje** and Tech Engineer **Roddy Simpson** chat about how they brought these two very different worlds together and how you can too. Award-winning producer **Kate Taylor** joins the panel bringing her knowledge and expertise, and **Emyr Bell** from NEAT will give a presentation.

The Story of Swan Woman

6pm (1hr) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

What happens if we lose our wings and forget how to dance, sing or let our soul take flight? Is it possible to live between human time and wild time? Storytellers and musicians **Anna-Maria Toivonen** and **Claire Hewitt**, invite you to gather round the fire of inspiration as they share their unique Finnish-Scottish weaving of this magical transformation tale, *Swan Woman*.

Dazwischen

8pm (1hr) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

Storyteller **Anna Lehr** presents a tale about death, birth and what lies 'dazwischen' (in between). This exploration of fear, grief and reconciliation is loosely based on the Brother's Grimm fairy tale Godfather Death, German songs, poems and traditions, and will feature Death itself in puppet form joining Anna on stage.

SAT 1 NOV

Mortality & Making: Crafting Conversations About Death

10.30am (2hrs 30) | £20 (£18)

Workshop

Join us for a taboo-breaking workshop of storytelling, craft and honest conversation. In a safe, supportive environment, we will explore some traditional death stories then get hands-on, decorating a cardboard coffin and weaving a willow coffin with skilled

artisans. This isn't morbid, it's liberating! Tackle fears, share experiences, and reclaim death as part of life's natural rhythm. Led by storyteller, celebrant and death educator **Beverley Bryant**, this workshop transforms discomfort into understanding and isolation into community, offering new perspectives on life's final chapter.

Teasing the Story from the Text

10.30am (2hrs 30) | £20 (£18)

Workshop

Swedish storyteller and actor **Jerker Fahlström** leads us through the stages of analysing a text. Explore each character in your story: who they are, their role, and why they act the way they do. By the end, you'll have a rich pool of insights to shape your narrative with depth and clarity. Please bring a story to work with, let's get creative!

Storytellers Together: International Connections

2pm (1hr 30) | Free, ticketed

An open conversation with national and international guests about the networks and ideas that connect us. The networking strand at the Scottish International Storytelling Festival brings together performers and attendees who are interested in storytelling skills and sources, community projects and creative collaboration.



Erin Farley
Photo by Lydia Smith

To The Ends of The Earth

4pm (1hr) | £12 (£10) **PASS** £8

In the fourth century, a young woman steps onto a boat in Greece carrying the bones of a martyr. Triduana is part of a small group of missionaries determined to share the Christian faith by taking Saint Andrew's bones 'to the ends of the earth'. Her journey to the land of the Picts will take her across seas and rivers and through transformations of belief and body. Join **Monica Madas** and **Erin Farley** as they tell the story of Triduana's voyage into unseen waters and mythologies through story, song and puppetry.

The Corpse Road

6pm (1hr) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

Across Cumbria, roads wend their way through picturesque countryside. Ancient dry stone walls hold the stories of the dead that were carried past on these secret and haunted trails. The Corpse Road follows the rise and fall, the twists and turns of these paths to tell the tale of characters that were carried to their final resting place. Storyteller **Daniel Serridge** and musician **Heather Cartwright** weave stories and songs together in this evocative and unnerving folkloric journey to the grave.

Open Hearth

8pm (1hr 30) | £14 (£12) **PASS** £10

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 the festival! Featuring **Dougie Mackay**, **Hjörleifur Stefánsson**, **Suse Weisse** and musician **Luisa Brown**.

Family Events



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



A Dispute with a Butterfly

**SAT 11 &
SUN 12 OCT**

A Dispute with a Butterfly

11am, 12pm, 1pm, 2pm
(20mins) | £6 | 7+

Step into a soft, sensory storytelling experience, following the incredible journey of the Painted Lady Butterfly. Every year she travels 9000 miles all over the world ensuring the survival of her entire species. Impossible to complete alone, the journey happens across five generations. Through puppetry, participation and play, **Fibi Cowley** shows us what we can learn from this incredible creature, and how past generations can inspire us to make the world a better place.

WED 15 OCT

School for Skalds with Macastory

2pm (1hr 30) | £8 per child
7-12yrs

Prepare to become a Skald, a Viking poet storyteller. Join storytellers extraordinaire **Macastory** for a daring adventure... YOURS! With Macastory's help, create your own mini-saga, learn it and tell it in the style of the ancient Viking Skalds. Prepare for sea monsters, battles and even a visit from the gods. Cast the mystical story runes, then it's up to you what happens next!

FRI 17 OCT

Dragon Tale

2pm (1hr) | £10 (£8) (£32) | 7+

A girl faces a dragon. Songs and stories are her weapons and her armour. Join storyteller **Daiva Ivanauskaitė-Brown** for a magical tale about courage and dreams. This performance brings together tales and tunes from Lithuania and Scotland, with live music from **Gaynor Barradell**.

SAT 18 OCT

Through Your Eyes

2pm (1hr) | £8 (£6) (£24) | 8+

What makes a good story...?! Join storyteller **Nicola Wright** for cliffhangers, love stories and rags-to-riches tales, bringing 900 years of Edinburgh's history vividly to life through the eyes of young people. Stories so wild you cannot make them up! For young people (and their adults) with an ear for a story! Supported by the City of Edinburgh Council 900 fund.

BLOOM

6.45pm (1hr 50) | £8 (£6) (£24)
Adults and 8+

BLOOM is a dance performance and personal story from Tokyo-born, Scotland-based percussive stepdancer **Kae Sakurai**. This lyrical and innovative work blends expressive percussive dance with original music inspired by tradition, complemented by poetic video projections. BLOOM will delight, refresh and inspire! Join us after for a fun-filled evening of Cèilidh dancing, perfect for all ages and abilities. No experience? No problem! Funded by Creative Scotland's Touring Fund for Theatre and Dance.

SUN 19 OCT

Family Cèilidh

1pm (1hr 30) | £8 (£6) (£24)
All ages

Come with family and friends to dance Scottish dances and sing well-known songs with the **Minnow Cèilidh Band**.

All dances will be called and there'll be easy-to-follow circles for wee ones. A fun introduction to sociable dancing with live music.

SAT 25 OCT

Tales of Cold Forests and Cosy Bears

11am (1hr) | £8 (£6) (£24) | All ages

Join storyteller **Ailie Finlay** for some sensory stories from the forests of the North. Big cosy bears in caves, tiny birds and the first snow of the year! We'll learn all about heat and cold and have fun with lots of props to squish and shake. We'll finish the session with a simple sensory craft activity. Fun for everyone but particularly suitable for children with additional needs and their families and friends.

SAT 1 NOV

Riverwoods Folk Tales: From Source to Sea

1.30pm (1hr) | £8 (£6) (£24) | 6+

Join the Scottish Wildlife Trust and storyteller **Allison Galbraith** as we immerse ourselves in the magical, shimmering world of Scottish waters. We will explore the mythology, ecology and importance of rivers and waterways through Allison's retelling of rare, watery Scottish legends. Then, we will celebrate storytellers of all ages who have captured the spirit and wonder of Scotland's wildlife and wild places, as we announce the winners of the Words of the Wild nature writing competition.

sisf.org.uk



Illustration by Annalisa Salis

SUN 26 OCT

Botanics Storytelling Day: Tales from the Kitchen Garden

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Arboretum Place, EH3 5NZ
12pm (4hrs) | Various sessions

Giant turnips, lush rampions, magic beans and pumpkins turned into golden coaches! Veggie gardens have thrived with stories since the beginning of time. You are welcome to come and discover them with our storytellers, for an afternoon of fun and magic for all ages!

Booking and info:

Scottish Storytelling Centre - www.sisf.org.uk, 0131 556 9579

SUN 2 NOV

Family Samhuinn

10.30am (Free, drop-in) & 1pm (1hr) | £8 (£6) (£24)
All ages

This delightful **Beltane Fire Society** tradition allows parents to share in the magic of the Samhuinn story with their little ones through storytelling and music. Join us for a free morning of face painting and activities, followed by a ticketed session of storytelling and songs.



Edinburgh Partners



WED 15, THU 16 & FRI 17 OCT

Wild Wings of Hope

National Museum of Scotland, Grand Gallery, Chambers Street, EH1 1JF

10.30am (5hrs 30) | Free, drop-in | All ages

The event blends papercut craft and traditional storytelling to honour the awe-inspiring migration of barn swallows and swifts between Scotland and Africa. Participants will create paper insects and birds with local artist **Ed Harrison**, brought to life through performances by African folklorist **Chief Gift Amu** and Scottish bard **Cara Silversmith**. Presented in partnership with the National Museum of Scotland.

Info: National Museum of Scotland - publicevents@nms.ac.uk

Gift Amu
Photo by Luke Ripley

Events hosted by
National Library of Scotland
George IV Bridge, EH1 1EW

Booking and info:
www.nls.uk

**20 JUN 2025 -
18 APR 2026**

Dear Library

Mon-Thu: 10am - 7pm
Fri & Sat: 10am - 5pm | Free

To mark its 100th birthday, the National Library of Scotland presents a special exhibition. Made in collaboration with partners across the country, this love letter to libraries will intrigue, energise, and galvanise you. You'll leave with a whole new perspective on how libraries can help you, and how you can help them. Browse bookshelves in an open reading room filled with recommendations from the public and well-known Scottish figures. See libraries in popular culture, protest banners and badges, vintage film footage, and more.

MON 27 OCT

Fairy Tales in Focus

The Brothers Grimm and the Brothers Chambers
2.30pm (1hr) | Free, ticketed

This exchange of stories between German and Scottish sources highlights the continuing importance of fairy tales, and the richness of local versions. Event in English and Scots with some running commentary on language. Recommended for adults and older children. With **Franziska Droll** and **Donald Smith**.



Mimesis Heidi Dahlsveen
Photo by Sonja Balchi

Folk Tales in Focus

The Norwegian Collectors and Scotland
5pm (1hr) | Free, ticketed

Pioneering Norwegian, German and Scottish folk tale collectors inspired each other. Norwegian storyteller **Mimesis Heidi Dahlsveen** reveals some salty riches gathered by Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe, for contemporary adult audiences.

TUE 28 OCT

The Fianna in Focus

Scottish Lore and Collections
2.30pm (1hr) | Free, ticketed

The National Library of Scotland holds the collections of John Francis Campbell, a true Light of the North, and many other sources, including three volumes of *The Dewar Manuscripts*. **Ruairidh Maclean** and **Donald Smith** share some treasures in English and Gaelic, accompanied by written translations.

WED 29 OCT

The Scottish Travellers in Focus

2.30pm (1hr) | Free, ticketed

Scotland's storytelling renaissance could not have happened without the generosity of Scotland's Travelling People. Enjoy the flow of tales with two storytellers who draw on rich Traveller family and cultural traditions. With **Jess Smith** and **Jimmy Williamson**.

FRI 31 OCT

The Bewitching Season

2.30pm (1hr) | Free, ticketed

Folklore and the natural world come close at seasonal festivals. Trees, plants and herbs bring light and dark as the northern winter begins. Recommended for adults and older children. With German storyteller **Suse Weisse** and in association with **Goethe-Institut**.

Festival Diary

Edinburgh



Go Local Scotland listings: pages 22-33

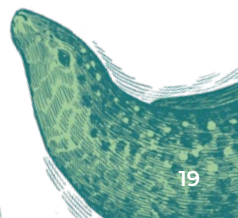
DATE	TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	PAGE
SAT 11 OCT	11am, 12pm, 1pm & 2pm	A Dispute with a Butterfly	SSC	14
SUN 12 OCT	11am, 12pm, 1pm & 2pm	A Dispute with a Butterfly	SSC	14
WED 15 OCT	10.30am	Wild Wings of Hope	NMS	16
	2pm	School for Skalds with Macastory	SSC	14
THU 16 OCT	10.30am	Wild Wings of Hope	NMS	16
FRI 17 OCT	10.30am	Wild Wings of Hope	NMS	16
	2pm	Dragon Tale	SSC	14
SAT 18 OCT	2pm	Through Your Eyes	SSC	14
	6.45pm	BLOOM	SSC	14
SUN 19 OCT	1pm	Family Cèilidh	SSC	14
WED 22 OCT	6pm	Of Stars, Bears and the Beginning of Time 🌿	SSC	07
	8pm	Open Hearth	SSC	07
THU 23 OCT	10.30am	Using Recordings and Archive Material	SSC	07
	6pm	The War of the Birds	SSC	07
	8pm	The People of the Sea	SSC	07
FRI 24 OCT	10.30am	Musicking the Story	SSC	07
	4pm	Norwegian Tales	SSC	08
	6pm	Selkie: Past, Present, Future	SSC	08
	8pm	Open Hearth	SSC	08
SAT 25 OCT	10.30am	Gruesome & Grimm Tales	SSC	08
	11am	Tales of Cold Forests and Cosy Bears	SSC	15
	2pm	Storytellers Together: Collective Inspirations 🌿	SSC	08
	4pm	Emerging Storytellers in Europe	SSC	08
	6pm	Against the Current	SSC	08
	8pm	Land of Many Waters	SSC	09
SUN 26 OCT	10.30am	Skaldic Tools	SSC	09
	12pm	Botanics Storytelling Day	RBGE	20
	4pm	He Sits on the Rock of Joy	SSC	09
	6pm	Lost to the Sea, Lost to the World 🌿	SSC	09
	8pm	Da Winters O Shetland 🌿	SSC	09

DATE	TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	PAGE
MON 27 OCT	2.30pm	Fairy Tales in Focus	NLS	17
	5pm	Folk Tales in Focus	NLS	17
	5pm	Tim Stead: Magician with Wood	SSC	09
	8pm	The King and The Lamp	SSC	10
TUE 28 OCT	2.30pm	The Fianna in Focus	NLS	17
	4pm	Swedish Tales	SSC	10
	6pm	A Curious Episode at Balquhider: Placenames in the North and the Nackens	SSC	10
	8pm	Open Hearth	SSC	10
WED 29 OCT	10.30am	The Art of a Traditional Hungarian Roma storyteller	SSC	11
	2.30pm	The Scottish Travellers in Focus	NLS	17
	4pm	Icelandic Tales	SSC	11
	6pm	Tales of the Travellers 🌿	SSC	11
	8pm	The Return of the Vikings	SSC	11
THU 30 OCT	10.30am	An Introduction to BSL Storytelling 🌿	SSC	11
	6pm	Gullrun's Saga: A Viking Story 🌿	SSC	11
	8pm	Storyteller: Martyn Bennett and the Travellers' Stories	SSC	12
FRI 31 OCT	10.30am	Working with Tech and Touring	SSC	12
	2.30pm	The Bewitching Season	NLS	17
	6pm	The Story of Swan Woman	SSC	12
	7.30pm	Guid Crack Storytelling Session	WB	21
	Evening	Samhuinn Fire Festival	HP	21
	8pm	Dazwischen	SSC	12
SAT 1 NOV	10.30am	Mortality & Making: Crafting Conversations About Death	SSC	12
	10.30am	Teasing the Story from the Text	SSC	12
	1.30pm	Riverwoods Folk Tales: From Source to Sea	SSC	15
	2pm	Storytellers Together: International Connections	SSC	12
	4pm	To The Ends of The Earth	SSC	13
	6pm	The Corpse Road	SSC	13
	8pm	Open Hearth	SSC	13
SUN 2 NOV	10.30am & 1pm	Family Samhuinn	SSC	15
	4pm	Tales at the Lighthouse	LB	21
WED 5 NOV	7.30pm	Moonspinners	SSC	21
SAT 8 NOV	12pm	Folktales for New Scots: Connected with Nature	SCC	21
	4pm	Religion and Scottish Drama	NC	21
SAT 22 NOV	12pm	Folktales for New Scots: Connected with Nature	SCC	21

Location Key

HP Holyrood Park
LB Lighthouse Books
NC New College
NLS National Library of Scotland

NMS National Museum of Scotland
RBGE Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh
SCC Southside Community Centre
SSC Scottish Storytelling Centre
WB Waverley Bar



SUN 26 OCT

Botanics Storytelling Day: Tales from the Kitchen Garden

Royal Botanic Garden
Edinburgh, Arboretum Place,
EH3 5NZ

12pm (4hrs) | Various sessions

Giant turnips, lush rampions, magic beans and pumpkins turned into golden coaches! Veggie gardens have thrived with stories since the beginning of time. You are welcome to come and discover them with our storytellers, for an afternoon of fun and magic for all ages!

Booking and info:
Scottish Storytelling Centre -
www.sisf.org.uk
0131 556 9579

Wee Stories at the Gazebo

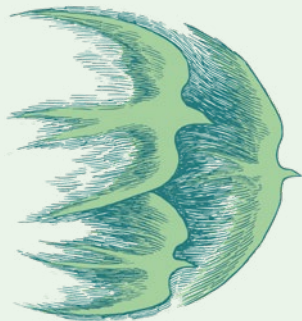
Free, drop-in | All ages

With Kate Walker, Marie-Louise Cochrane and Owen Pilgrim.

Story Walks

Free, ticketed | All ages

With **Amanda Edmiston**,
Georgiana Keable Jerstad
and **Mara Menzies**.



Amanda Edmiston
Photo by Neil Hanna

A Dispute with a Butterfly

12pm, 1pm, 2pm (20mins)
£6 | 7+

Step into a soft, sensory storytelling experience, following the incredible journey of the Painted Lady Butterfly. Every year she travels 9000 miles all over the world ensuring the survival of her entire species. Impossible to complete alone, the journey happens across five generations. Through puppetry, participation and play, **Fibi Cowley** shows us what we can learn from this incredible creature, and how past generations can inspire us to make the world a better place.

Magician With Wood

Workshop

1pm (3hrs) | £20 (£18)

In 1993 Tim Stead exhibited the Botanic Ash at the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh, a celebration of a 200-year old Ash tree. This workshop, led by filmmaker **Beatrix Wood**, invites participants to be inspired by trees and wood through a series of playful, experimental and creative exercises to create a modern myth together. Extracts from Beatrix's film *Tim Stead: Magician with Wood*, will act as a catalyst, alongside the sculpture and storytelling stool Tim made for storyteller Jean Edmiston, as well as some of Tim's own poems. No prior skills or experience needed.

FRI 31 OCT

Samhuinn Fire Festival

Holyrood Park

As the colder months settle in with the turning of the wheel, that familiar crescendo of drums and music will burst upon Holyrood Park once again. Samhuinn 2025 is ready to bring the fire! Presented by the **Beltane Fire Society**.

Booking and info:

beltane.org/about-samhuinn

Guid Crack Storytelling Session

The Waverley Bar, 3-5 St

Mary's St, EH1 1TA

7.30pm (2hrs 30)

By donation (suggested £5)

A festival Samhuinn special of Edinburgh's long-running storytelling night. Featuring guest storyteller **Mara Menzies**, who leads a session of spooky stories! With the usual chance to share a tale of your own.

SUN 2 NOV

Tales at the Lighthouse

Lighthouse Books, 43-45

W Nicolson St, EH8 9DB

4pm (2hrs) | Free, drop-in

Join host **Niall Moorjani** for an afternoon of amazing open mic storytelling designed as a safe space to tell new work, or try storytelling for the first time. New stories, old stories, folk stories, myths, legends, made-up stories and stories true to life - bring them all!

A BPOC queer-run event welcoming everyone to enjoy the storytelling experience.

WED 5 NOV

Moonspinners

Scottish Storytelling Centre

7.30pm (2hrs 30) | £14 (£12)

We welcome you under the full Beaver Moon with another exciting lineup of storytellers and performers sharing moon myths, lunar legends and cross-cultural stories, revealing themes of creation, fertility, cosmic joy, transformation, death and rebirth. Featuring **Bea Ferguson**, **Selina Graham** and **Heather Yule**. Mark it in your diary, or just follow the moon to guide you here!

SAT 8 NOV

Religion and Scottish Drama

New College, The Mound,

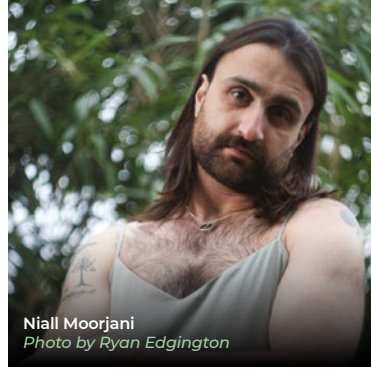
EH1 2LX

4pm (1hr) | £10 (£8)

Join **Randall Stevenson** and **Greg Walker**, editors of *The Oxford Handbook of Scottish Theatre*, with playwright **Linda McLean** and storyteller **Donald Smith**, to explore this rich northern theme, past and present. Part of the New College Festival of Books and Belief.

Booking and info:

divinity.ed.ac.uk/new-college-festival



Niall Moorjani

Photo by Ryan Edgington

SAT 8 NOV
& SAT 22 NOV

Folktales for New Scots: Connected with Nature

Walk & Workshop

Southside Community Centre, 117 Nicholson St, EH8 9ER

Meet by the Scottish Parliament building
12pm (3hrs) | Free, ticketed

Come along for a nature-connection walk led by storytelling therapist **Stephen McCabe**, followed by printing from nature art workshop with Beetroots Collective's artists **Marta Adamowicz** and **Robert Motyka**. Aimed at migrants and members of the local community.

Please note: the meeting point for the walk is by the Scottish Parliament building at 12pm, look out for the Beetroots Collective banner.

Booking and info:

www.beetroots.org,
www.naturetherapyonline.net,
info@beetroots.org



Go Local

Autumn is for cosy story gatherings round the fire of imagination, sharing stories and tunes. Discover a rich programme of local storytelling events, from the southwest to the very north of Scotland!

Lindsey Gibb
Photo by Marieke McBean

Angus

Forfar

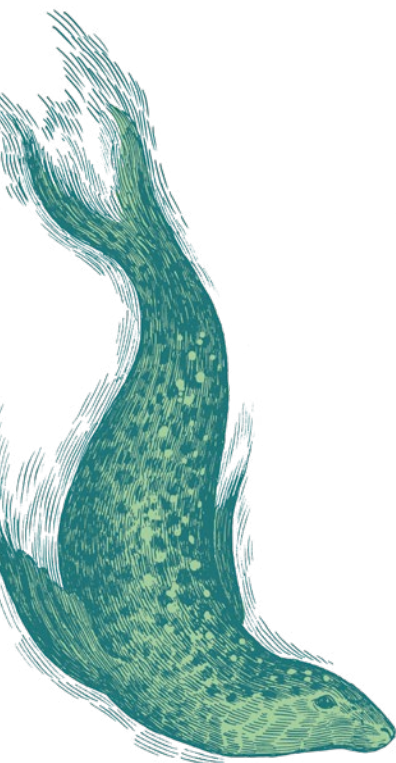
SAT 8 NOV

Picts & Vikings

Meffan Museum, 20 West High Street, DD8 1BB
11am (1hr) | Free, ticketed

Eileen Budd shares the folklore of our Northern skies, stones and symbols as seen through the eyes of Picts and Vikings. After the storytelling session, create your own Viking or Pictish calendar, inspired by Eileen's latest research into their fascinating symbols. Booking essential.

Booking and info:
Meffan Museum -
ForfarMuseum@angusalive.
scot, 01307 491 771



Montrose

SUN 2 NOV

Picts & Vikings

Montrose Museum, Panmuir Place, DD10 8HF
11am (1hr) | Free, ticketed

Eileen Budd shares the folklore of our Northern skies, stones and symbols as seen through the eyes of Picts and Vikings. After the storytelling session, create your own Viking or Pictish calendar, inspired by Eileen's latest research into their fascinating symbols. Booking essential.

Booking and info:
Montrose Museum -
MontroseMuseum@
angusalive.scot, 01674 907 447

Argyll

Cove & Kilcreggan

SUN 23 NOV

Gullrun's Saga: A Viking Story

Cove Sailing Club SCIO, Barons Point, G84 0NL
2.30pm (2hrs) | £8 (£5),
under 6s free

Danish storyteller **Svend-Erik Engh** and Scottish musician **Neil Sutcliffe** present an original tale of a young woman setting out to create her own destiny in Viking times. Brought to life through storytelling & music, blending traditional and original pieces.

Booking and info:
Gauri Raje -
www.silentsounds.in,
gauriraje2@gmail.com,
07942 638 365

Isle of Bute

WED 29 &
THU 30 OCT

Scotland's Rainforest

Anchor Community Hub, 33 Marine Rd, Port Bannatyne, PA20 0LL
6pm (1hr) | Free

Scotland's rainforest thrives with stories and folklore. Come and hear of treasures hiding under dancing trees and learn how Argyll oaks were turned into weapons of war. With **Luke Winter** of Story Wagon.

Info: Luke Winter -
storywagon.co.uk,
luke@storywagon.co.uk

Lochawe

SUN 26 OCT

Wir Leid: Scots for a New Generation

St Conan's Kirk, PA33 1AQ
3pm (1hr) | By donation

Young artists **Ailsa Dixon** and **Neil Sutcliffe** shine a light on Scots words, expressions and sayings, exploring how they relate to modern culture. They share folktales in Scots and Doric, integrated with a conversation about how they interact with the language in their own lives and with their peers. The show will feature a mix of traditional storytelling and music, with strong audience input.

Booking and info:
enquiries@stconanskirk.org.uk





Eleanor Bell and Joanne Dowd
Photo by Alan McLaren



Mio Shudo
Photo by Victor Spence

Clackmannanshire

Alloa

WED 15 -
SAT 25 OCT

Wild Hillfoots Storytelling Festival

Welcome to Clackmannanshire! At the heart of our festival is community, family, local history and wellbeing. Join us for the familiar and the unexpected. We will tell some spooky stories, share local legends, introduce the 'Wee Folk' in our folklore

and enrich the stories with crafty activities. Featuring guest storyteller **Jess Smith** and local storytellers **Joanne Dowd**, **Eleanor Bell** and many more. Hosted by **Hillfoots Tales**.

Full programme, booking and info: hillfootstales.co.uk or **Joanne Dowd** - joanne@hillfootstales.co.uk
07980 655 906

WED 15 OCT
Cats, Spiders and Funny Hats

SAT 18 OCT
Her Story with Crafts

THU 23 OCT
Wild History

SAT 25 OCT
Mini Cats, Spiders and Funny Hats

Dollar

THU 16 OCT

Creatures of the Wood

Japanese Garden at Cowden, Upper Hillfoot Rd, FK14 7PL
11am & 12pm (30min)
Included in Garden ticket

If you go down to the woods today... who will you meet? Adventure through the trees with storytellers **Mio Shudo** and **Lindsey Gibb** as they share tales of marvellous and mythical woodland creatures from around the world.

Booking and info:
cowdengarden.com
or **Nicola Dibley**
outreach@cowdengarden.com
07876 117 703





Anna-Maria Toivonen
Photo by Janne Peltonen

Dumfries & Galloway

Dumfries

FRI 3 - FRI 31 OCT

Wild Goose Festival

Our annual festival celebrates the inspirational journey undertaken by the geese from Svalbard to Scotland, and uses them and other migratory species as a sign to deepen our connection with the natural world. We aim to engage our communities through creativity, education and play, building meaningful relationships and encouraging people across generations to reconnect with the environment they live in. Hosted by **The Stove Network**.

Full programme, booking and info:
wildgoosefestival.scot
info@thestove.org

sisf.org.uk

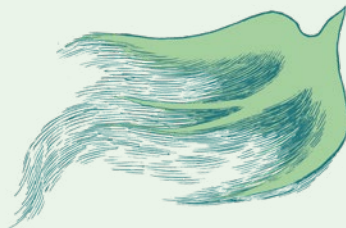
WED 29 OCT

The Swan Woman

The Stove Café, 100 High Street, DG11BX
7pm (2hrs)
Free, ticketed | 12+

Come gather around the fire of inspiration as Finnish storyteller **Anna-Maria Toivonen** and Scottish storyteller and visual artist **Claire Hewitt** weave bird lore, songs and stories from their traditions around a magical transformation tale from the North.

As a run up to the event Claire Hewitt will display a selection of artworks from her recent exhibition *Swan Woman*, inspired by the stories she tells.



Dundee

Dundee

Events hosted by **Blether Tay-Gither**

Booking and info:
Blether Tay-Gither -
blethertaygither@gmail.com

THU 30 OCT

A Voyage to the North

7pm (2hrs) | £5

Join us for a storytelling journey across the oceans and into northern lands, where gods, monsters and mysteries await. Led by **Blether Tay-Gither** storytellers, with special guest **Jerker Fahlström** from Sweden.

SAT 15 NOV

Bones, Birds & Beasties

D'arcy Thompson Museum, University of Dundee, Carnelley Building, Nethergate, DD1 4HN
2pm (1hr) | By donation (suggested £5)

The D'arcy Thompson Museum is a cornucopia of fascinating objects, all with their own unique stories. Join **Blether Tay-Gither** storytellers for an hour of strange and wonderful tales inspired by this eclectic collection. Limited numbers, advance booking recommended.

Dundee

FRI 7 NOV

Blether: A Nicht fou o Scots

**Sweet Venues, Keiller Centre,
3 Chapel Street, DD1 1DQ
7pm (2hrs) | £10**

SISF joins wi Blether, the monthly Scots variety nicht fer an evening fou o sangs, stories, poems and mair! Wi guests Orcadian poet and scriever **Harry Josephine Giles**, Perthshire storyteller **Lindsey Gibb** and renowned Scots singer **Christine Kydd**. There's open mic slots tae if ye fancy daeing yer thing for 3 mins. Emcees **Calum Kelly** and National Library of Scotland Scots scriever **Taylor Dyson**. In partnership wi Elfie Picket Theatre and Sweet Venues.

Booking and info:
sweetvenues.com
or [Elfie Picket Theatre -
elfiepicket@gmail.com](mailto:elfiepicket@gmail.com)

FRI 21 NOV

Raven Tales

**Royal Victoria Hospital
Meeting Centre, Jedburgh
Road, DD2 1SP
11am (1hr 30) | By donation**

Ravens have always strutted through myth and legend. Odin had two pet Ravens called Hugin and Munin: 'Thought' and 'Memory'. Join storyteller **Jan Bee Brown** and musician **Toby Hawks** for a collection of memorable, thought-provoking and dementia-inclusive stories and songs from Scandinavia and Scotland. Tickets are limited, please book in advance.

Booking and info:
**Fiona Barrett -
Fiona@meetingcentres.scot**

East Lothian

Musselburgh

FRI 28 NOV

Raven Tales

**Musselburgh Meeting Centre,
The Coffee Lounge,
St Andrew's Church,
70 Millhill, EH21 7EA
10.30am (1hr 30) | By donation**

Ravens have always strutted through myth and legend. Odin had two pet Ravens called Hugin and Munin: 'Thought' and 'Memory'. Join storyteller **Jan Bee Brown** and musician **Toby Hawks** for a collection of memorable, thought-provoking and dementia-inclusive stories and songs from Scandinavia and Scotland. Tickets are limited, please book in advance.

Booking and info:
April Govan - april@dfi.org.uk

Fife

Crail

FRI 17 OCT

The Riddles of Gestumblindi

**Crail Community Hall, St
Andrews Rd, KY10 3UH
7.30pm (1hr) | £10**

Norwegian storyteller, historian and author **Thor Ewing** takes us on a rare journey to the northern realms, diving deep into Icelandic sagas and Viking myths. Accompanied by lyre, flute and drum, he will regale us with ancient tales of Odin, Asgarth and Balder. Storyteller **Riikka Palonen**

and musician **Richard Clarke** will set the scene with Nordic songs and ballads.

Booking and info:
ticketsource.co.uk
or **Riikka Palonen -
palonenriikka@gmail.com
07557 419 310**

Dunfermline

**Events hosted by
Lang Spoon Tales
Queen Margaret Room,
Dunfermline Carnegie Library
and Galleries
1 Abbot Street, KY12 7NL**

Booking and info:
**Riikka Palonen -
palonenriikka@gmail.com
or text 07557 419 310**

SAT 8 NOV

Sea Shanties and Selkies

**1.30pm (1hr 30) | £5 child
(accompanying adults free)
4-10yrs**

Join Fife storytellers **Riikka Palonen** and **Kate Walker** as they make, sing and share stories of the sea from our Northern shores. Curious, crafty and clever tales!

Children must be accompanied by an adult.

SUN 16 NOV

Tales of the Waves

1.30pm (1hr 30) | £9 (£7) | 12+

Join Fife storytellers **Riikka Palonen** and **Kate Walker** as they cast their tales of stormy seas, magic, romance, and valour. Stirring stories to astonish, surprise and sustain.

Glasgow

Events hosted by The Village Storytelling Centre

The Village Storytelling Centre presents a lively series of events celebrating all kinds of stories, from traditional folk tales to autobiographical ones, from myths and legends to chilling ghost tales. Special guests **Hjörleifur Stefánsson** and **Mima Mellow** join local storytellers in a Glasgow cèilidh.

Full programme, booking and info:
villagestorytelling.org.uk
info@villagestorytelling.org.uk
0141 882 3025

THU 23 OCT

Sangs an' Clatter - Emerging Voices in Storytelling

FRI 24 OCT

- What We Talk about When We Talk about Life
- Three Voices: Stories in Glasgow

MON 27 OCT

Community Sangs an' Clatter

FRI 31 OCT

The Village Storytelling Centre's Halloween Parade

THU 30 OCT

International Sangs an' Clatter

7.30pm (2hrs) | £10 (£8)

The Village Storytelling Centre's flagship storytelling night comes to the Festival and welcomes storytellers from across the world. Featuring storyteller **Hjörleifur Stefánsson** from Iceland, music from the fantastic Irish singer-songwriter **Mima Mellow** and many more special guests.

sisf.org.uk

Glasgow

THU 30 OCT

The Brothers Grimm: A Living Legacy

Goethe-Institut,
3 Park Circus, G3 6AX
6pm (2hrs) | Free, ticketed

The event explores the continuing influence of the Brothers Grimm on folklore and collective imagination

Highland

Isle of Skye

Events hosted by SEALL

Booking and info:
seall.co.uk, info@seall.co.uk,
01478 617 211

A Necklace of Stories from the Highlands and Islands

FRI 24 OCT - DUNVEGAN

Dunvegan Community Hall,
IV55 8WA
6pm (1hr) | Pay What You Can (£5 minimum)

SAT 25 OCT - SLEAT

An Crùbh, Sleat, IV43 8QU
6pm (1hr) | Pay What You Can (£5 minimum)

Be transported to the magical Hebridean Islands and the Highlands of Scotland through stories and legends collected by folklorist Otta Swire, who captured the spirit and traditions of a bygone era. With story, music and imagery, storytellers **Bea Ferguson** and **Heather Yule** explore the captivating tales of these lands, and the people and strange creatures who dwell there.

and memory in Germany, Europe and far beyond. The development of the tales through time shed light on the uses and abuses of folklore, the importance of language, and the continuing importance of fairy tales for adults and children.

Introduced by **Kristin Wardetzky** with re-telling from **Suse Weisse**, followed by discussion.

Booking and info:
www.goethe.de/glasgow

Dualchas Arra-Ghàidheal | Gaelic Lore in Songs & Stories

FRI 24 OCT - DUNVEGAN

Dunvegan Community Hall,
IV55 8WA
7.30pm (1hr) | Pay What You Can (£5 minimum)

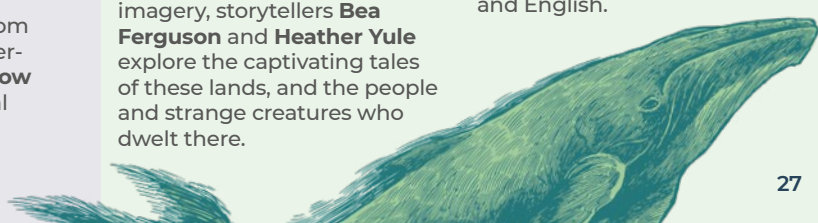
SAT 25 OCT - SLEAT

An Crùbh, Sleat, IV43 8QU
7.30pm (1hr) | Pay What You Can (£5 minimum)

Tha seanchaidh **Àdhamh Ó Broin** a' cur fàilte blath thugamh a chruinneachadh chòmhla gus ionmhas sgeulachdan nan Gàidheal, òrain is seudan eile aige a' co-phàirteachadh bho Earra-Ghàidheal. Bidh an tachartas seo ann an Gàidhlig is Beurla.

Gaelic tradition-bearer **Àdhamh Ó Broin** invites you to an informal, cosy gathering as he shares his treasure of Gaelic stories, songs and other nuggets of lore from Central Argyll.

The event will feature Gaelic and English.





Daiva Ivanauskaitė-Brown
Photo by Max Crawford

Kincraig

TUE 14 OCT

Storylands Sessions: October Show

Kincraig Church Hall,
The Brae, PH21 1QD
7pm (2hrs 30) | £12, £5
(Low-Income) | Under 18s free

Come along to our all-age community show for sharing storytelling, music, poetry and art, as we celebrate the Lights of the North. Featuring Lithuanian stories by guest storyteller **Daiva Ivanauskaitė-Brown**.

Booking and info:
Storylands Sessions
bit.ly/SSOMEvent
StorylandsSessions@gmail.com

Strathpeffer

SAT 18 OCT

Tales & Tunes in the Great Hall

Castle Leod, IV14 9AA
4pm (1hr 15) | £15

Join storytellers **Lizzie McDougall** and **Sunny Moodie**, with clàrsach player **Siannie Moodie** and musician **Nick Jenkins**, for an afternoon of music and stories in the ancestral home of the Chief of Clan MacKenzie. The fine portraits on the walls echo with past adventures, making it a very special place to enjoy tales and tunes evoking this rich history. Tickets are limited, please book in advance.

Booking and info:
Lizzie McDougall -
lizzie.mcdougall@gmail.com

Moray

Findhorn

Events hosted by
Universal Hall
The Park, IV36 3TZ

Booking and info:
universalhall.co.uk

SAT 25 OCT

From Text to Telling: Stories Off the Page

2pm (2hrs) | £5

Workshop

Storytellers **Ruth Kirkpatrick** and **Colin Urwin** invite you to a playful workshop where you'll discover how to breathe life into the written word and make stories your own. Building on their performance of 'The People of the Sea', they'll share insights into their own creative process, from choosing the right material to shaping it for the oral tradition.

The People of the Sea

7.30pm (1hr) | £5

Inspired by David Thomson's remarkable work *The People of the Sea*, storytellers **Ruth Kirkpatrick** and **Colin Urwin** bring selkie myths and coastal voices back to life. Both tender and brutal, Thomson's collection of seal folklore and folktales from the coasts of Scotland and Ireland captures the mythic bond between people and nature, acting as a quiet yet powerful homage to a disappearing world.

North East

Aberdeen & Other Locations

FRI 3 OCT -
WED 19 NOV

Aberdeen & Beyond Storytelling Festival

Join us for a jamboree of stories from Aberdeen and beyond. With special guests **Mimesis Heidi Dahlsveen** from Norway and **Martin MacIntyre**, joined by local storytellers **Phyll McBain**, **Jackie Ross**, **Grace Banks**, **Pauline Cordiner**, **Cara Silversmith** and many more.

Hosted by **GAS - Grampian Association of Storytellers** and **Elphinstone Institute**.

Full programme, booking and info:
GAS - GAS FB page,
gas_story@hotmail.com
or **Elphinstone Institute -**
abdn.ac.uk/elphinstone,
elphinstone@abdn.ac.uk,
01224 272 996

Aberdeen

TUE 28 OCT

Who Cares for Death?

Sir Duncan Rice Library,
Bedford Rd, AB24 3AA
6.30pm (1hr) | Free, ticketed

Norwegian storyteller **Mimesis Heidi Dahlsveen** shares stories on the inevitable concept of death and, throughout the evening,

we encounter death as it is characterized in Norwegian folktales, legends, and Old Norse poetry and prose. The storytelling performance explores the topic with a distinct emphasis on both the poetic and the humorous.

Peterculter

FRI 3 OCT

Stories and Songs in the North-East Bothy Tradition

St Peter's Heritage Hall,
Howie Ln, AB14 0PU
7pm (2hrs)
Pay What You Can (£10-£15)

A wonderful evening of stories, music and song celebrating the bothy culture of rural North East Scotland. Join ballad singer **Allan Taylor**, fiddler **Karin Paterson**, and storytellers **Phyll McBain** and **Jackie Ross** for a cèilidh of land, laughter, and a hearty dollop of Doric!

FRI 10 OCT

Tales fae Northern Lands

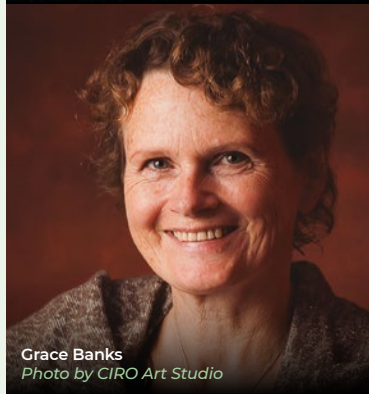
St Peter's Heritage Hall,
Howie Ln, AB14 0PU
7pm (2hrs) | Free, ticketed

Storyteller **Grace Banks** will regale us with tales and myths of the Faroes, Greenland and Norway. She will then take us on a sensory safari to explore a little of the natural world around us.

To discover and book all other events of the Aberdeen & Beyond Storytelling Festival please check the links at the top.



Martin MacIntyre
Photo by Andrew Cawley



Grace Banks
Photo by CIRO Art Studio

Peterhead

SUN 26 OCT

Spooky Stories at the Museum

Aberdeenshire Farming Museum, **Aden Country Park**,
Mintlaw, AB42 5FQ

Join storyteller **Pauline Cordiner** for a day of spooky Aden Halloween events.

Spooky Shadows, Ghostly Tales & Spooky Crafts
2.30pm (1hr) | £10 | 8-12yrs

Horrible Histories of Aden and Beyond
4pm (1hr) | £8 | 6yrs+

Aden's Terrifying Tales
6.30pm (2hrs) | £15 | 18+

Pre-Booking essential, please email museums@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

WED 19 NOV

The Carrying Stream

6.30pm (1hr) | Free

Online, live

Rooted in Northeast Scotland, *Education in the North* is a radical journal that spans the northern hemisphere, exploring education, culture and language. Through the years, it has provided a cèilidh space for ideas and initiatives to cross fertilise, pushing the boundaries of academic practice so that Indigenous and folk knowledge and practices are valued, and their place within education celebrated.

To mark its 60th Anniversary, the event brings together editors, storytellers and other contributors lifting up this work across Canada, Scotland and Norway.

Hosted by **Cathy Francis** and **Beth Cross** with guests **Jackie Ross**, **Jamie Fairbairn**, **Liisa-Rávná Finbog** and **Jennifer Markides**.

Booking and info:
CarryingtheStream.
eventbrite.co.uk
eitn@abdn.ac.uk

Orkney

Orkney Storytelling Festival

THU 23 -
SUN 26 OCT

The small festival with a big heart gives you a warm welcome to a four-day

celebration of traditional stories in beautiful places all around the islands. Featuring daily performances of guest storytellers **Hjörleifur Stefánsson** from Iceland and **Jerker Fahlström** from Sweden, joined by local storytellers **Tom Muir**, **Fran Flett Hollinrake**, **Marita Luck**, **Erin Farley** and **Chris Perry**. Come and join an island cèilidh!

Full programme, booking and info:
orkneystorytellingfestival.co.uk
orkneystof@hotmail.co.uk



Fran Flett Hollinrake
Photo by Simon Waldman

Perth and Kinross

Aberfeldy

Events hosted by **Birks Cinema**
1 Dunkeld St, PH15 2DA

Booking and info: birkscinema.co.uk
support@birkscinema.co.uk 01887 822 845

TUE 28 OCT

Swan Stories: Film & Storytelling

5.30pm (3hrs)
£10 (under 18s free)

Birks Cinema invites you to a double event about swans, their migrations and the stories they carry.

- **Flight of the Swans (1hr).**
A film screening about the Bewick's swans and their annual migration. Followed by discussion with film protagonist and producer **Sacha Dench**.
- **The Swan Woman (2hrs).**
Finnish storyteller **Anna-Maria Toivonen** and Scottish storyteller **Claire Hewitt** weave swan lore, songs and stories from their traditions around a magical transformation tale from the North.

SUN 9 NOV

A Wolf Shall Devour the Sun

6.30pm (1hr)
£10 (under 18s free) | 6+

Respected by ancient cultures, but the archetypal villain in European fairy tales, wolves were hunted to extinction in Scotland by the 18th century. Through ancient myth, shadow puppetry and dreamlike soundscapes, **Dougie Mackay** and **Jemima Thewes** take us to a space where Norse gods, Irish shapeshifters and Siberian wolf-children traverse Scottish moors and Transylvanian mountains. Stories about our oldest ally share the same question: in the absence of the wolf, what is lost?

Kenmore

Events hosted by The
Scottish Crannog Centre
Loch Tay, PH15 2HY

Booking and info:
www.crannog.co.uk
info@crannog.co.uk
01887 440 231

SAT 25 OCT

River Deep, Mountain High

6pm (1hr) | £10

From the great river Tay to the peak of Galdhøpiggen, the land around us tells us stories: come and listen to what it has to say.

Storyteller and author of the newly published *Norwegian Folk Tales* **Georgiana Keable Jerstad** and **Lindsey Gibb**, local storyteller and co-author of *Perthshire Folk Tales*, will share tales of the land and people.

FRI 31 OCT

Samhuinn

6.30pm (2hrs 30)
£25 (£20 under 16s)

Join us for the ancient festival of Samhuinn and celebrate the end of the summer with fire, games, guising and feasting!

Watch fire and pole performances by **Wolanksi's Pole and Aerial Fitness** and revel in the music of **Reely Jiggered**. You can take part in our treasure hunt, create your own mask, have your fortune read by our blacksmith and listen to tales of ghosts and spirits.

Perth

SUN 26 OCT

Merlin the Magician: A Telling

Osteria Bau Bau, 11 South
St. Johns Place, PH1 5SU
3pm (1hr 30) | Free

Join storyteller **Andrew Woodward** and musician **Jon Hoad** for a magical evening tracing the life of Merlin, from his otherworldly conception to his tragic end in ancient Lothian. Inspired by Amy Jeffs' *Storyland*, expect myth, music and mystery woven through Scottish legend.

Info:
Andrew Woodward -
andrew@storytellingproject.co.uk

SAT 8 NOV

Jacobite Tales and Tunes

Perth Museum, St John's
Place, PH1 5SZ
3.30pm (1hr) | Pay What You
Can (suggested £7)

Join storyteller **Lizzie McDougall**, clàrsach player **Siannie Moodie** and musician **Nick Jenkins** for an afternoon of music and tales inspired by Perthshire's Jacobite past. Discover the legends of nearby Fingask Castle, brought to life at Perth Museum and in the shadow of a sword believed to have belonged to Bonnie Prince Charlie.

Booking and info:
Culture Perth and Kinross -
culturepk.org.uk
or **Lizzie McDougall** -
lizzie.mcdougall@gmail.com

Shetland

Bigton

SAT 25 OCT

Da Story's Bonhoga: A Storytelling Workshop

Hymhus, ZE2 9JF
3pm (2hrs) | By donation
Workshop

Many folktales travel from place to place, making each setting their new home. In this workshop we'll look through stories and retell them to find their true heart. Through exercises and storytelling, we will then bring them to life in a setting that's familiar to you. Hosted by storyteller **Marjolein Robertson**. Spaces are limited, please book in advance.

Booking and info:
marjoleinrobertson@gmail.com

Da Winters O Shetland

Hymhus, ZE2 9JF
7pm (1hr) | By donation

As the nights draw in, come and hear tales from Shetland's past. A collection of folktales and historical stories all themed on the dark nights of Winter. From magical to factual and even funny. These stories have been gathered from books and memories. Told by storyteller and comedian **Marjolein Robertson**.

Booking and info:
marjoleinrobertson@gmail.com

Unst

FRI 24 OCT

Da Winters O Shetland

Uyeasound Hall, Uyeasound,
ZE2 9DL

7pm (1hr) | By donation

As the nights draw in, come and hear tales from Shetland's past. A collection of folktales and historical stories all themed on the dark nights of Winter. From magical to factual and even funny. These stories have been gathered from books and memories. Told by storyteller and comedian **Marjolein Robertson**.

Booking and info:
marjoleinrobertson@gmail.com

South Lanarkshire

Biggar

FRI 7 NOV

The State of Water

Wiston Lodge, Millrigg Rd,
Wiston, ML12 6HT
7.30pm (1hr) | £10

Join storytellers **Peter Chand** and **Kirsten Milliken** for an evening of evocative folktales and legends from their respective Indian and Scottish traditions about lake nymphs, enchanted mists, hidden realms and the water that connects us all.

Booking and info:
Biggar Corn Exchange -
www.biggarcornexchange.org.uk
info@biggarcornexchange.org.uk, 01899 221 555

SAT 15 NOV

Wee Folk of the Woods

Wiston Lodge, Millrigg Rd,
Wiston, ML12 6HT
2pm (1hr 30) | £5 child
(accompanying adults free)
5+

Step into the Otherworld and follow the Path of the Little People with storytellers **Kirsten Milliken** and **David Hughes**. Hear tales of the creatures that live in the branches, in the faerie rings and behind the little doors. Includes free hot chocolate.

Booking and info:
Wiston Lodge -
wistonlodge.com
info@wistonlodge.co.uk
01899 850 228

Stirling

Stirling

WED 29 OCT

Tales from the Castle Walls: The Gateway to the North

Stirling Castle, Castle Wynd,
FK8 1EJ
10.30am, 12pm & 2pm
(45mins) | Included in Castle
ticket | 8+

Storyteller **Caroline Carmichael** and Stirling makar **Laura Fyfe** bring you stories and poems that respond to the lives of the ordinary people of Stirling Castle, and Argyll and Sutherland regiment. It's a place where Gaelic meets Scots, and the gateway

to the north. Stories will be in English, with a distinct Gaelic and Scots flavour.

Booking and info:
historicenvironment.scot
School and community
bookings: **Kirsten Wood -**
kirsten.wood@hes.scot
07798 687 894

West Lothian

Winchburgh

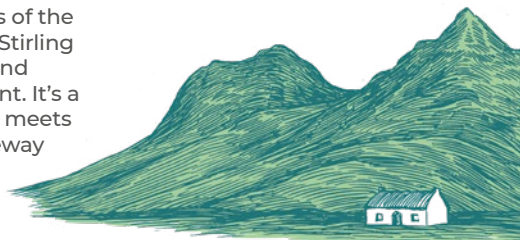
SAT 15 NOV

An Evening of Tales

Winchburgh Community
Centre, Craighton Place,
EH52 6RW
7pm (2hrs) | Free, ticketed
16+

Myths, legends, local history and lived events are waiting to be shared in a rousing evening of stories in the company of an up and coming storytelling community in West Lothian. Hosted by **Winchburgh Storytellers** and featuring aspiring, apprentice and professional storytellers. Please reserve tickets in advance.

Booking and info:
Mary Baxter -
winchburghstorytellers@cantab.net
marytatterhoodtales.wordpress.com





Magaidh Smith
Photo by Ruaraidh Urpeth

Western Isles

Isle of Lewis Stornoway

Events hosted by
An Taigh Cèilidh
16 Church St, HS1 2DH

Booking and info:
Magaidh Smith -
magaidh@taighceilidh.com
07554 665 549

FRI 24 OCT

Stairean | Stepping Stones

5pm (1hr 30) | By donation
(suggested £5)

Inspired by the tradition of gathering together to hear a traveller's tales, storytellers **Magaidh Smith** and **Ian Stephen** present a story exchange and share travellers adventures that link us with our North Atlantic neighbours. Featuring tunes, songs and Gaelic versions of the tales from Magaidh.

FRI 31 OCT

Rotal | Boats Wake

5pm (1hr 30) | By donation
(suggested £5)

Eathraichean air a' chuan mu bhraigh Eilean Leodhais eadar linn Clann 'ic Leoid, Sabaist Mhor Wick agus iomadh seanchas eile. Bidh seo sa Ghàidhlig an cois **Magaidh Nic a Ghobhainn** agus a caraidean.

Stories of boats linked to the Isle of Lewis through the ages, from the Clan Macleod era to herring fishing in Wick. With **Magaidh Smith** and friends. The event is in Gaelic.

FRI 7 NOV

North in our Bones

5pm (1hr 30) | By donation
(suggested £5)

Storyteller **Alex Patience** from Portskerra returns to her granny's native shores to share traditional stories and knowledge spiced with a wide range of North Atlantic culture, arts and nature.

Isle of Lewis
North Dell

THU 23 OCT

Stairean | Stepping Stones to the North

Comunn Eachdraidh Nis,
HS2 0SN
11.15am (45min) | Free,
ticketed (donations welcome)

Storytellers **Ian Stephen** and **Magaidh Smith** share and compare stories of North Atlantic islands. Magaidh will contribute Gaelic versions of some of the tales. The event is part of the maritime programme Fèis na Fairge. Please reserve tickets in advance.

Booking and info:
Comunn Eachdraidh Nis -
donna@cenonline.org or
01851 810 377

Mairi Campbell: Living Stone

A 400-million-year-old stone reveals layers of mystery and resonance. **Mairi Campbell** blends live music and song with visual art, highlighting the mystery and beauty of everyday life.

Co-created with director **Kath Burlinson** and composer **Dave Gray**.

Dumfries & Galloway

THU 2 OCT
Stranraer - Ryan Centre

FRI 3 OCT
Moffat - Moffat Theatre

Scottish Borders

SAT 4 OCT
Hawick - Heart of Hawick

Info: mairicampbell.scot

Guest Storytellers



Anna-Maria Toivonen **Finland**

Anna-Maria is a storyteller, folk singer and a music therapist. She's been working in the field of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) for 25 years now, and raising awareness of ICH is at the heart of her work. She performs as a storyteller at local and international festivals, private events, schools and wherever one can imagine! She also works as a teacher, using storytelling as a pedagogical tool with adults from all over the world.

Georgiana Keable Jerstad **Norway**

Georgiana is a pioneer for the storytelling renaissance and, since 2020, she's been leading the work for biodiversity and storytelling, taking thousands of teenagers up the Norwegian Pilgrims Way and on botanical story adventures. Georgiana founded 'Fortellerhuset' (The Storytelling House), the Norwegian Storytelling Festival and Storytelling Radio. She published *The Natural Storyteller*, followed by *Fairytales, Families and Forests*. Her latest book *Norwegian Folk Tales* will be published by The History Press in October 2025.

Hjörleifur Stefánsson **Iceland**

Born in West Iceland, Hjörleifur grew up on his family's farm, living and working in a world of turf and stone and listening to the stories of his grandparents, stories of local people and hidden creatures. As years passed by, he became a farmer and a storyteller. In 2020 he published his first book *Icelandic Folk Tales* (The History Press) and he's now working on his second collection of traditional stories.

Jerker Fahlström **Sweden**

Actor and storyteller, Jerker has years of experience on stage, film, radio and television, and he has travelled around the world with his performances. Some of his more popular shows include 'About Gods', 'Heroes and Little People', 'Danger on the Move: from the Orient to the Arctic Ocean', 'The Evil One', and his latest show 'They Created their Destiny'.

Mimesis Heidi Dahlsveen **Norway**

Heidi has worked as a storyteller nationally and internationally since 1996. She is an associate professor in oral storytelling and has participated in five EU projects that address oral storytelling within different practices. She has published two textbooks and contributed to several anthologies. Heidi works as a storyteller in a primary school in central Oslo and also performs in public events and festivals. She often works cross-aesthetically, collaborating with artists from other fields.

Suse Weisse **Germany**

Suse is one of Germany's leading storytellers and she has a special interest in telling and adapting the Grimms' stories for contemporary audiences. Suse was brought up in Frisia and leads the storytelling programme at Berlin's University of the Arts.





Anna-Maria Toivonen

Photo by Janne Peltonen

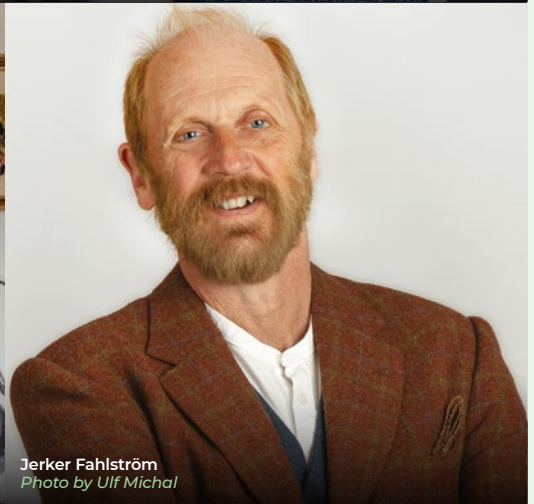


Georgiana Keable Jerstad

Photo by Markus Søgård



Hjörleifur Stefánsson



Jerker Fahlström

Photo by Ulf Michal



Mimesis Heidi Dahlsveen

Photo by Sonja Balchi



Suse Weisse

Photo by Dietmar Lenz

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.



Tickets

0131 556 9579 | sisf.org.uk

@scotstoryfest #scotstoryfest

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.

TRACS (Traditional Arts & Culture Scotland) (SCIO SC043009) is a co-operative network which champions our shared traditions of music, song, storytelling, dance, crafts, customs and local languages. TRACS celebrates the local distinctiveness of Scotland's places: our intangible cultural heritage. TRACS brings together the Traditional Music Forum of Scotland (SCIO SC042867), the Scottish Storytelling Forum (SCIO SC052330) and the Traditional Dance Forum of Scotland (SCIO SC045085). Supported by Creative Scotland Multi-Year Funding and The City of Edinburgh Council.

TRACS TRADITIONAL
ARTS & CULTURE
SCOTLAND

Our Partners



Special thanks to Edinburgh partners: Beltane Fire Society, Lighthouse Books, National Library of Scotland, National Museum of Scotland, New College Festival of Books and Belief, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Southside Community Centre and The Waverley Bar.

Special thanks to our regional partners in Angus, Argyll, Clackmannanshire, Dumfries & Galloway, Dundee, East Lothian, Fife, Glasgow, Highland, Moray, North East, Orkney, Perth & Kinross, Scottish Borders, Shetland, South Lanarkshire, Stirling, West Lothian and Western Isles.