


# Robert Louis Stevenson Fellowship awarded to Edinburgh writer



Scottish Book Trust is delighted to announce that Iain Johnstone, an Edinburgh-based writer, has been awarded one of four [Robert Louis Stevenson Fellowships](#), based in Grez-sur-Loing in France.

The Fellowships, supported by Creative Scotland's Creative Futures fund, were initiated in 1994 by Franki Fewkes, a Scottish enthusiast then living in France. As well as giving writers a chance to escape the hustle and bustle of their everyday lives to devote time to their writing, Fewkes intended it to be an opportunity for the Fellows to meet other artists and to absorb new cultural and social influences.

Situated at the edge of the Forest of Fontainebleau, Grez-sur-Loing was visited regularly by Stevenson, who was attracted by the commune's established community of writers and artists. It was there, at the Hôtel Chevillon, that he met his future wife Fanny Osbourne. Stevenson found both the place, and its well established community of writers and artists, highly attractive and he returned to Grez-sur-Loing for three successive summers.

 Children's playwright Johnstone will retrace Stevenson's footsteps in August 2014, enjoying a residence of one month in a self-catering studio apartment at the Hôtel Chevillon International Arts Centre at Grez-sur-Loing, allowing him to take time away from his usual environment in order to develop his work.

Johnstone has been a professional theatre composer, actor,

director and writer for twenty-six years. He has worked with most leading Scottish theatre companies including Dundee Rep, The Royal Lyceum, Communicado and NTS. South of the border he has worked with Northern Stage Newcastle, the RSC, the National Theatre, National Theatre of Wales and Told By an Idiot (with whom he is an Associate Artist). Johnstone is Artistic Director of Edinburgh-based Wee Stories Theatre, where he co-created much of the company's acclaimed work over the last fourteen years, including his one-man show, One Giant Leap.

Commenting on the fellowship, Johnstone said: "Being able to spend one month in a beautiful part of France entirely focused on writing a play set in France during and after the Great War is an incredible opportunity for me. It is also wonderful for my self-confidence as a writer. I am straining at the leash to get there and start scribbling!"

Will Mackie, Head of Writer Development at Scottish Book Trust, said:

"We're thrilled to offer this wonderful opportunity to Iain, a dramatist whose work is greatly admired and widely enjoyed. We wish him a productive and enjoyable stay at Hôtel Chevillon – a beautiful, tranquil and richly evocative environment where the presence of one of our greatest writers is so keenly felt."

Emma Turnbull, Development Officer at Creative Scotland, said:

"The RLS fellowships offer a much needed opportunity for writers to retreat beyond the demands of everyday life to focus entirely on their writing. Hotel Chevillon has hosted many Scottish writers over the past 20 years, and every writer who has undertaken a fellowship in that time has spoken about how beneficial the time and space were to the development of their work. This year's recipients all submitted work of excellent quality and were able to demonstrate how the

fellowship would benefit their work. We wish them well.”