

Five things you need to know today



- Innovation Fund for school projects doubled
- Last chance to be in our Summer newspaper!
- Wicked Women
- Michel Faber at Waterstones
- Ecelctrc Panoptic at Talbot Rice Gallery

Funding for innovative school projects to improve attainment has been more than doubled to £3.5 million, the Deputy First Minister John Swinney has confirmed today.

More than 400 schools across Scotland will benefit from 219 projects to improve attainment, specifically around literacy and numeracy.

The Innovation Fund, launched in January by the First Minister and originally set at £1.5 million, was set up to provide grants of up to £10,000 to schools for creative and innovative projects to improve attainment.

The Fund was open to all schools in Scotland that were not already benefitting from the Attainment Scotland Funding.

Speaking ahead of the publication of the Scottish Government's Education Delivery Plan Mr Swinney said:

"The First Minister and I have been clear that our priority is to substantially close the attainment gap in the next five years. We have taken a number of actions to do this, including our £750 million Scottish Attainment Challenge which includes the Innovation Fund, and later today I will publish our new Education Delivery Plan which will set out in detail how we plan to close the attainment gap.

“We received hundreds of high quality applications for the Innovation Fund and as a result, we took the decision to double the funding available to reach as many children as possible.

“I’m pleased to see the creativity shown by schools and local authorities as the successful projects range from small ones in individual schools to large scale, cross authority projects. They cover a diverse range of issues across literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and span a broad age range.

“We know teachers are best placed to make decisions about their schools and the Innovation Fund has empowered them to take direct action to help improve the attainment of their pupils.”



This is very nearly almost your last chance to be included in our Summer 2016 newspaper which will be published in July.

Email us for further details if you are a local business or indeed if you are bringing a Fringe show to Edinburgh this year!

editor@theedinburghreporter.co.uk

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Scotland is home to some of the world’s most wicked women, and joining the cast at The Edinburgh Dungeon, is one of the nation’s most notoriously feisty females – Mary Queen of Scots.



Branded wicked by many of her contemporaries and ultimately given the chop by her cousin – Queen Elizabeth I – Mary has divided opinions for centuries. Now, The Edinburgh Dungeon's new summer show – Wicked Women – is set to settle the debate for good...

Inside the Dungeon rumours are rife of the Queen's proposed plots to assassinate her husband, Lord Darnley, and as visitors get closer and closer to the truth they will be able to decide if she truly is a wicked woman, or if she has been wronged by the history books.

Reigning alongside Mary Queen of Scots will be the Dungeon's other wicked women, including the vengeful Green Lady ghost and the ferocious females of Sawney Bean's cannibal clan – Scotland's most notorious man-eaters!

Edward Evans, General Manager at The Edinburgh Dungeon, commented: "Mary Queen of Scots is one of Scotland's most famous figures, and the scandalous stories surrounding her life – much of which she lived here in Edinburgh – continue to fascinate and divide opinion. Now, for the first time, visitors to the Edinburgh Dungeon can help settle the debate – if they are able to escape the clutches of our other terrifying temptresses as they make their way through the depths of our dungeon."

The Wicked Women show starts from 1st July and runs until 28 August 2016. Ticket prices start from £11.75 for adults, and £9.95 for concessions (online saver rate). For more information or to book tickets please visit www.thedungeons.com/edinburgh or follow @EdinDungeon for updates.



Michel Faber, award-winning author of *The Book of Strange New Things*, *Under the Skin* and *The Crimson Petal and the White*, will launch a collection of poems written to honour the

memory of his wife, who died after a six-year battle with cancer at the final event to be held at Waterstones George Street in Edinburgh.

Bright, tragic, candid, heartbreaking, honest and true, these poems chronicle Eva's diagnosis, illness and death, and Michel's mourning process. They are an exceptional account of what it means to find the love of your life. And what it is like to have to say goodbye.

The final event to be held at Waterstones George Street which will close on 17 July after 20 years of trading, Michel Faber will be in conversation with Chitra Ramaswamy.

Venue: Waterstones George Street, Edinburgh

Date: Monday 11th July

Time: 18.30

Free event, tickets available in store.

<http://www.canongate.tv/discover/michel-faber-launches-undying-a-love-story-at-waterstones-george-street/>



The University of Edinburgh's Talbot Rice Gallery presents *Eclectrc Panoptic*, the first solo exhibition in Europe of New-York based artist Jess Johnson.


Part of TRG3, Talbot Rice's programme of projects showcasing the work of emerging artists, Johnson transforms Gallery 3 with tessellating patterns, a suite of drawings and virtual reality to create an immersive installation, inviting the viewer to enter her surreal and speculative worlds.

Jess Johnson creates highly detailed drawings of alternative realms that reveal her fascination with the intersections between language, popular culture, technology and science fiction. She builds complex worlds that combine densely layered patterns, bizarre figures and evocative texts within imagined architectural spaces. The specific genesis

of *Eclectrc Panoptic* is the psychomagic group rituals conceived by the visionary filmmaker and comic book writer Alejandro Jodorowsky; and the technological themes of Frank Herbert's 1965 novel *Dune*.

Embedded within this environment is the virtual reality animation *Ixian Gate* 2015. Created in collaboration with artist Simon Ward, it turns Johnson's drawings into an immersive three-dimensional world, enabling the viewer to have the simulated experience of entering their hypnotic realms. Through an Oculus Rift headset, as the visual elements begin to mirror those in the drawings, the distinction between the virtual and the real melts away leaving the viewer to contemplate the uncertainty between reality and perception, or simply submit and succumb to the not-knowing.

My reality is different to your reality. We're taught to think of reality as a fixed and absolute thing; like concrete or bedrock. I think of it as flowing lava, moving under the surface of time. Reality can be different speeds and densities. It can be multidimensional. It can be harnessed and brought into existence by words and symbols. The human brain can conceive of something that did not exist before and then go out and make it. You can make something out of nothing and alter the universe around you. By anyone's definition that's magic. Jess Johnson.

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