

Bo'ness' 'Hippodrome Silent Film Festival' returns next week

Scotland's only silent film festival will return to the Hippodrome – Scotland's oldest purpose built cinema – in Bo'ness on Wednesday 16 March, for the opening of Hippodrome Silent Film Festival 2022.

The star-studded programme is jam-packed with films featuring some of the biggest names of the silent era – Buster Keaton, Laurel & Hardy, Lon Chaney, Joan Crawford, and more. With so much to see and enjoy over the five day Festival, it would be easy to overlook some of the events and screenings taking place. Here are five events at HippFest 2022 that you don't want to miss:



The Loves of Mary Queen of Scots

The Loves of Mary, Queen of Scots (1923)

19:30 Wed 16 March

Stand aside Saoirse... it's time to make way for the silent era's answer to the most celebrated and romantic figure in Scottish history: Mary Stuart.

Part of Scotland's Year of Stories 2022, the Hippodrome Silent Film Festival is proud to present the world premiere of a new restoration of *The Loves of Mary, Queen of Scots*; with live musical accompaniment from Wendy Weatherby (cello, voice), Frank McLaughlin (guitar, pipes), and David Trouton (piano); and renowned storyteller Andy Cannon providing historical context during reel changeovers in the role of the 'Film Explainer'.

This ambitious costume drama will be a lively opening to this year's Festival.

Journey to the Isles: Marjory Kennedy-Fraser

19:30 Thu 17 March

A mesmerising glimpse into the landscapes, folktales and songs that inspired one of Scotland's great early collectors of Traditional Arts.

Commissioned by HippFest for Scotland's Year of Stories 2022; your journey to the Isles will be led by acclaimed and charismatic live performer Marion Kenny – one of Scotland's leading storytellers; and award-winning musician, singer and songwriter: Mairi Campbell. Weaving together words, music and song alongside Kennedy-Fraser's enchanting films, Marion and Mairi will conjure the sounds and landscapes captured by this key figure of Scotland's Celtic Revival.



Rowdy Ann

Gender Rebels (double bill)

11:00 Fri 19 March

Ever since the 2016 Presidential Debate, #NastyWomen has

become a global feminist rallying cry. Yet, there is a long and robust history of women celebrating their own nastiness to speak truth to patriarchal power. Meet HippFest's very own Nasty Women in this new programme, co-curated by Maggie Hennefeld and Laura Horak.

This fun-filled double bill features two films about gender hijinks in the Wild West. Women wearing the trousers... and the cowboy boots to match. Actor-Producer Texas Guinan is a self-sufficient ranch owner who reluctantly decides to enlist the help of her husband in *The Night Rider* (1920); and comedy actress Fay Tincher is 'rowdy' by name and 'rowdy' by nature in *Rowdy Ann* (1919).

Not for Sale (1924)

15:00 Sat 19 March

British screenwriter Lydia Hayward could spin comedy gold out of any story and wrote dozens of screenplays in the 1920s. She was hailed in the film trade press as 'the finest scenario writer we have', but her fine reputation languishes forgotten with the films she worked on.

HippFest hopes to change that with an afternoon dedicated to the screenwriter's work, showing off her sharp-eyed wit and expert ear for comic vernacular in this delightful rom-com.

If you're a fan of British cinema and want to learn more about one of our best screenwriters of the silent era, this one's for you.



The Unknown © 1927 WBEI

The Unknown (1927)

18:30 Sun 20 March

Tod Browning's jaw-droppingly macabre drama starring box office sensation Lon Chaney and superstar-in-the-making Joan Crawford.

Chaney demonstrates his unparalleled flair for gruesome on-screen physical transformation with his performance as Alonzo the Armless – a knife-thrower in a travelling circus, madly in love with glamorous assistant Nanon. A love-triangle like no other and probably one of the most bizarre and dramatically grotesque films you will ever see.

Guaranteed to send shivers down your spine, this penultimate screening of HippFest 2022 is not to be missed.

Alison Strauss, Festival Director (Falkirk Community Trust)

said: “We are thrilled to be back in person for our 12th edition and can’t wait to welcome the audience and performers to the Hippodrome. We’re putting all the finishing touches in place – sprucing up the red carpet, shaking the mothballs out of our glamorous Gala outfits, and dressing the town for the festivities. It’s been a long time but at last we can go out out to HippFest.”

The Loves of Mary, Queen of Scots performer and Storyteller Andy Cannon said: “It brings us great pleasure to finally perform at the premiere of the newly restored The Loves of Mary, Queen of Scots. Mary has achieved mythic status in Scotland’s history, and we are delighted to bring a little of her story to life on screen and on stage for the opening of this year’s HippFest. I hope the audience will enjoy this wonderful version of Mary’s story as much we have in telling it.”



City Girl (1932) – Courtesy of Park Circus-Walt Disney Studios
Journey to the Isles performer and Storyteller Marion Kenny said: “I am excited and delighted to be performing at this

year's Hippfest alongside singer Mairi Campbell. I am looking forward to being inside the fabulous Hippodrome in Bo'ness to experience this unique festival celebrating many of the treasures from Scotland's archives of Silent Screen.

Audiences can expect to be transported with a magical mix of silver screen, storytelling and musical sound scape, back in time to the islands of the outer Hebrides that held song collector Marjory Kennedy-Fraser under their spell, allowing us a rare glimpse into a way of life long gone."

The Hippodrome Silent Film Festival 2022 will take place at the Hippodrome Cinema in Bo'ness, Wednesday 16 to Sunday 20 March. For full programme information and tickets visit www.hippfest.co.uk.

The Hippodrome Silent Film Festival is organised by Falkirk Community Trust with key funding from Falkirk Council, supported by Film Hub Scotland part of the BFI's Film Audience Network, and funded by Screen Scotland and National Lottery funding from the BFI.

This event has been supported by the Year of Stories 2022 Community Stories Fund. This fund is being delivered in partnership between VisitScotland and Museums Galleries Scotland with support from National Lottery Heritage Fund thanks to National Lottery players.