

Edinburgh author Lucy Ribchester's new novel launches this week at St Cecilia's Hall

Lucy Ribchester's new novel, **MURDER BALLAD** (Black & White Publishing, £16.99 hardback), will be officially launched tomorrow Thursday 27th June 2024 at St Cecilia's Hall in Edinburgh's Old Town.

The launch will include musical performances of murder ballads, and classical music by the 18th century female composer Maria Barthélemon, some of which has rarely or never been performed in over 200 years and was unearthed by Edinburgh-born Ribchester during her research for the novel.

Singer Ailsa Dixon will perform the murder ballad *The Twa Sisters* (also known as *Binnorie O*), and journalist Marcello Mega will read from Robert Fergusson's poem *Auld Reikie*.

Ciaran Walker will also perform pieces on the harpsichord by Maria Barthélemon, and author Lucy Ribchester will be in conversation on stage with Caraigh McGregor, before signing copies afterwards.

The launch event has been kindly sponsored by Port of Leith Distillery and The Fudge Kitchen.

The launch venue of St Cecilia's Hall – a key part of the city's bustling arts scene in the late-1700s, and only a stone's throw from the renowned modern-day arts hub that is the Royal Mile during festival time – was home to the prestigious Edinburgh Musical Society, and features in the opening scenes of Ribchester's compelling, macabre tale of friendship and betrayal.

With Isobel Duguid at its dark heart, MURDER BALLAD tells the story of a street ballad singer who has risen to be the toast of the Edinburgh Musical Society.

However when the true events behind her most famous murder ballad are called into question, her tale unravels into a labyrinth of deceit as twisty as Edinburgh's Old Town geography.

It's a novel rooted in meticulous research, musical knowledge and historical context, but brought to life through Ribchester's compelling characters and edge-of-the-seat narrative.