

Try out The Scottish Storytelling Festival for size

The good thing about The Scottish Storytelling Festival is that it all takes place in the Scottish Storytelling Centre on the Royal Mile – and they have a lovely café.

The other good thing is that the programme is wide and varied and there will be something here to take your fancy. [Read more on the SSC website here.](#)

Storytelling Shows

Animate Lands: A Celtic Mythic Cycle

Dougie Mackay & Freya Rae

A journey through the storied soul of Scotland. Tales of ancient bards, wily druids, shapeshifters, wildlings and warrior poets are brought to life in a contemporary storytelling style by Dougie Mackay with musical accompaniment by Freya Rae. This fresh and joyful take on Celtic lore and Scotland's landscape was a sell-out hit at the Scottish International Storytelling Festival 2022 and Edinburgh Fringe 2023. 'A masterful hour of tale and tune' ****½ ([TheQR.co.uk](#))
**** ([AllEdinburghTheatre.com](#)).

Joyfully Grimm: Reimagining a Queer Adolescence

James Stedman

1988. One boy is growing up in myth and magic, unaware that Section 28, prohibiting the “promotion of homosexuality”, is moving to silence his tale and those of anyone like him. Combining traditional fairy tales and original poetry, with help from a grumpy frog, storyteller James Stedman takes a heartfelt, slightly irreverent look at our history. Directed by Molly Naylor. Originally commissioned for the Scottish International Storytelling Festival 2023. ‘Uplifting and enlightening’ **** (TheQR.co.uk)

Odin’s Eye and the Art of Seeing

Alice Fernbank

A proton beam of radiation is fired into Alice’s eye. Ultraviolet auroras appear in her vision. An unexpected moment of beauty in a cancer treatment centre in the Wirral opens the doorway to a mythical world of Norse gods and their epic quests in the pursuit of “seeing”. Originally commissioned for the Scottish International Storytelling Festival 2023.

Don Quixote Rides Again

Inés Álvarez Villa & Danielo Olivera

Spanish storyteller Inés Álvarez Villa brings the iconic adventures of Don Quixote to life accompanied by flamenco musician Danielo Olivera. A spellbinding storytelling experience that will transport you to the heart of Spanish culture. Originally commissioned for the Scottish International Storytelling Festival 2023. ‘Utterly enchanting’ ***** (TheQR.co.uk)

Shadow Walking

Peter Chand, Ruth Kirkpatrick & Tom Lyne

Acclaimed storytellers Peter Chand and Ruth Kirkpatrick seek

to excavate stories not often told, bringing them out of the shadows and onto centre stage. Accompanied by a unique jazz score from musician Tom Lyne on double bass, this walk in the shadows is one you won't want to miss. Originally commissioned for the Scottish International Storytelling Festival 2023. 'Two storytellers at the height of their power' **** (TheQR.co.uk)

Orpheus/Orfeo

Dan Serridge, Neil Wood & Heather Cartwright

The story of Orpheus and Eurydice gets a Scottish twist in this dark and dangerous telling of the famous Greek myth as the Shetland ballad of King Orfeo swirls into the murky depths of Hades' underworld. Storyteller Daniel Serridge, harpist Neil Wood and balladeer Heather Cartwright take you deep below the earth and back again, pushing you forward, dragging you home and demanding that you don't look back! Originally commissioned for the Scottish International Storytelling Festival 2023. 'A thrilling, emotional journey' ***** (TheQR.co.uk)

No One is Coming

Sinéad O'Brien

Award-winning storytelling performance about a mother and daughter, a love letter she'll never send. Encompassing Irish folklore, anecdotes, myths, funny stories and tough truths. A rollercoaster experience inside a fun (if slightly traumatised) Irish woman's brain. 'Stellar. This is storytelling as it should be' ***** (Herald). 'Mesmeric to watch' **** (CorrBlimey.uk)

Queer Folks' Tales

Turan Ali & Scottish Storytelling Centre

The 5-star hit LGBTQ+ storytelling show returns for its second

Fringe; camper, fruitier and queerer than ever! Host Turan Ali scours the Fringe for a fresh queer line-up every show to share hilarious, surprising, sobering tales, songs and epic poems. 'A brilliant evening of storytelling... If you weren't there, you should have been!' ***** (ScotsGayArts.com) 'an utterly fabulous celebration' ***** (TheQR.co.uk)

'Edinburgh's most vibrant, authentic, and exciting storytelling event.' ***** (The Wee Review) ***** (BroadwayBaby.com)

Land Under Wave

Young Edinburgh Storytellers

Three storytellers, trapped in the Otherworld, must perform their music and stories to earn their freedom. Which deserves to return to the human realm? The fair folk in the audience must decide! Young Edinburgh Storytellers (YES) Mark Borthwick, Ailsa Dixon and David Hughes navigate the mystery of emergence and becoming, blending their voices with music to explore queer identities and the rewilding of people and place. Modern Scotland's living lands contrast with the ancient otherness of the Faeries' Tír na nÓg. 'A magical journey... masterful' ***** (Scotsman)

Traditional Tales from Scotland

Scottish Storytelling Centre

Join some of Scotland's best storytellers as they share their favourite traditional tales from near and far. From fairies and selkies to castles and kelpies, these stories have inspired writers, storytellers and artists throughout the centuries. A relaxed session with a different storyteller each day, sharing wonderful, wise and occasionally wild stories!



Robert Burns: A Celebration

Bob Mitchell & Anne Hunter

Storytellers Anne Hunter and Bob Mitchell present a high-octane rendition of some of Robert Burns' best-known and best-loved works. An exciting presentation of song, poetry, anecdote and narrative, this is a show created by enthusiasts for an audience of Burns devotees and inquisitive newcomers alike. An ideal introduction to this remarkable son of Scotland.

Táin

Young Edinburgh Storytellers

A cursed army, two twisted lovers, a mighty hero, and a magnificent bull set in motion a terrible war which shapes the landscape and defines the heroic age of Ireland.. In this modern retelling of Ireland's most ancient and beloved myth, Young Edinburgh Storytellers Mark Borthwick and David Hughes weave together music and myth, blood and laughter, gender and

magic, to explore the dark delights of the Táin Bó Cúailnge.

Hero/Banlaoch

Sinéad O'Brien

Growing up, Sinéad's Dad was a hero right out of the Irish myths he told his daughter – stories of warriors, shapeshifters and magic wells. But as Sinéad grows up and her father relapses into addiction, they are both forced to re-examine the stories they told themselves. Expertly combining Irish epics with personal stories, Sinéad's storytelling is 'nourishment for the soul' ***** (EdFestMag.com). A sequel-of-sorts to 2023's No One Is Coming.

Do Not Look Away: The Story of Medusa

Lily Asch & Dimitris Kounatiadis

Drawing from Greek and Roman mythology, feminist theory and art history, storyteller Lily Asch paints a complex and evocative picture of this famous figure, exploring the parallels between this ancient story and the modern world. A moving storytelling performance with live musical accompaniment from Dimitris Kounatiadis. 'Canny and sharp... There is something special here.' **** (CorrBlimey.uk)

Family Shows

Grow

Suitcase Storytelling Company

A brand-blooming-new version of the 2023 sell-out smash-hit! Join in with a sun song, hose kerfuffle and plenty of clowning around, celebrating nature and things that grow. Ideal for little gardeners aged 2-6, but everyone welcome. Featured in the Guardian's Top Five Children's Shows of Edinburgh Fringe 2023.

Sing Along with the Fairy Song

Janis Mackay

Award-winning children's author and storyteller Janis Mackay invites the fairies of forest and garden to listen to her stories with you. Inspired by Janis' book *The Fairy Song* (Floris Books), this fun, enchanting and magical performance of storytelling and song is perfect for three- to eight-year-olds. Dress up if you would like to and spread the fairy magic!

The Tree and Her Tale

Jess Aquilina

The story of a friendship between a Boy and a magical storytelling Tree. Combining puppetry, music and storytelling, this wholesome show celebrates the importance of friendship and supporting one another.

Macbeth for Bairns

Little Supernovas

Award-winning storyteller Brooke Dunbar presents an immersive, sensory, theatrical version of Macbeth complete with bubbles! A whimsical and comic adaptation of the Bard for bairns aged 0-4 years.

Theatre Shows

LIFE

Maria Macdonell

Estelle models for The Artist. Despite decades of experience, she has never sat for a session like this and with such an outcome, both unexpected and inevitable. An exciting new work premiered by Maria MacDonell (*Miss Lindsay's Secret*) and Mark Coleman, LIFE boldly mixes stillness, movement, silence, words

and audience participation to create theatre as drawing class, drawing class as theatre. You can join in, or simply watch the story emerge.

An American Love Letter to Edinburgh

Rick Conte

Benjamin Franklin loved Edinburgh. He visited in 1759 and 1771, making pals with all the luminaries including David Hume, Adam Smith and James Hutton and enjoying lively debates in the Old Town's famous Oyster Club late into the night. In this funny and informative show, Rick Conte (*The Man Who Planted Trees*) tells the tale of his countryman's Scottish enlightenment, echoing his own experiences of the city that took him in 35 years ago and has yet to spit him out. Directed by Andy Cannon.

Mairi Campbell: Living Stone

Mairi Campbell

Mairi Campbell encounters a 400-million-year-old stone, fashioned into a family millstone found on the island of Lismore. The stone has become her talisman, revealing layers of mystery and resonance. Song, violin, sound and word combine in an odyssey that unifies lineage, land and pulse. Join Mairi for a feast of image, music and word that brings the living stone to life! Music co-devised with Dave Gray, directed and co-created by Kath Burlinson. 'Incredible storyteller... voice is like no other' (EdinburghGuide.com).

Follow-up to *Pulse* and *Auld Lang Syne*:

'Wonderfully crafted show' ***** (AllEdinburghTheatre.com)

Thunderstruck

David Colvin

The Herald Angel award-winning smash hit of modern Scottish theatre returns to the Edinburgh Fringe for a fifth successive year. The tragic, comic and epic tale of the greatest bagpiper that ever lived, who rocked tradition, flew beyond the summit of his art and changed Scottish music forever. Whatever notions you have of bagpipes, leave them at the door. 'A stunning, staggering piece of modern Scottish folk theatre' ***** (BritishTheatreGuide.info) 'Elucidating, charming and rip-roaringly inspirational' ***** (TheQR.co.uk) ***** (AllEdinburghTheatre.com)

Gie's Peace

Morna Burdon

From a Nobel Peace prize-winner in Australia to a child raised in a Scottish peace camp to a Ukrainian Theatre Company who rehearsed in an air raid shelter, Morna Burdon returns with her captivating show highlighting women's peace activism. Combining inspirational storytelling with evocative songs of protest, this show presents entrancing stories of courage and daring alongside the tragic realities of war. Sell-out show 2023. 'Intimate... but a core of steel' (AllEdinburghTheatre.com) ***** (NorthWestEndUK.com)

Music Shows

The Other

The Other

From Scotland, Iran, Chile, Brazil, Yemen and Syria comes a multimedia performance exploring culture and displacement. Nine musicians, a dancer, a visual artist and a filmmaker, some with lived experience of forced displacement, come together to explore the music, stories and experiences of their different cultures. A vibrant and moving experience. madeinscotlandshowcase.com

STUMPED

Stumped

A brand-new miniature opera exploring deforestation through five ancient stories about what happens when you mess with trees, alternating with conversations between internet forum users working overnight. Gradually, the two worlds begin to merge. Ideally suited to both existing opera fans and newbies. Performed by a stellar cast and ending with a short reflection from an invited forest expert.

madeinscotlandshowcase.com

Spoken Word Poetry Shows

Loud Poets: Best of Fringe

Loud Poets

Showcasing the top spoken word talent the Fringe has to offer – from the laugh-out-loud funny, through the wonderfully surreal, to the thoughtful and emotional, Loud Poets continue to prove that spoken word has something for everyone. Each show features a unique line-up and Loud Poets' classic fist-thumping, pint-drinking, side-tickling, heart-wrenching style of spoken word. This is poetry for the masses! 'The most reliably entertaining spoken word show at the Fringe.'
(TheWeeReview.com)

Stupid Sexy Poem Show

RJ Hunter

The subversive and powerful debut hour from RJ Hunter (Loud Poets Grand Slam Champion 2023). Responding to their experience as an emerging artist in the public eye, this award-winning poet is ready to give you a big fat smattering of their signature stupid, sexy style in this spoken-word-comedy-cabaret! Expect hilarity, heartache and hubris in this

poetry show like no other. 'The future voice of spoken word'
**** (CorrBlimey.uk)

Rogues So Banished

Paul Case

New South Wales, 1790. The penal colony is on the brink of starvation. Three convicts escape with murderous intentions in hope of a reward. But as they become lost and dragged deeper into the forest, it's clear they are trapped in a nightmare of their own making... Told in the demotic slang of the era, writer and actor Paul Case's visceral new solo show breaks new ground in horror whilst taking you on a bloody journey into the dark depths of Australia's history.

Address to a Haggis

Haggis Box Cafe & Scottish Storytelling Centre

'Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face...' Where better to hear Robert Burns' famous poem Address to a Haggis than at the Haggis Box Café in the Scottish Storytelling Centre! Drop-in to hear a different surprise performer each day deliver a rousing rendition of Burns' ode to the Great Chieftain o' the Puddin' race.



Festival Exhibition

Exhibition: Living Stone

Mairi Campbell

In 2023, Mairi Campbell embarked on an odyssey in image inspired by a 400 million-year-old millstone found on the island of Lismore. This exhibition of her paintings explores themes from her show *Living Stone*, performed at the Scottish Storytelling Centre throughout August.



Exhibition Living Stone – photo Mairi Campbell