

# Global Storytelling Lab

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21 - 25 OCTOBER

BEYOND WORDS

SCOTTISH INTERNATIONAL  
STORYTELLING FESTIVAL '19 18-31 OCTOBER

An opportunity to discover the power of storytelling and role of storytellers in the 21st century. Each day features keynote stories, talks, discussions and workshops in open sessions, allowing for shared reflection ahead of the evening's storytelling performances.

**TRACS** TRADITIONAL  
ARTS & CULTURE  
SCOTLAND



Supported by the Edinburgh Festivals PLACE programme

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# WELCOME

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Welcome to Scotland and, specifically, to its capital city, Edinburgh. And a special welcome to the Netherbow area, gateway to the Old Town and an ancient crossing place where north, south, east and west meet. To mark this place, the modern Scottish Storytelling Centre has a tower in which the bell from the original city gate is hung and rung. Most recently, on Friday 20 September, the bell rang throughout the day to welcome a crowd of 20,000 walking to the Scottish Parliament in support of global climate action.

Edinburgh was named 'Queen of the North' by poet and storyteller Sir Walter Scott. It has been shaped by millions of years of fire and ice and by a succession of peoples. Prehistoric nomads and farmers were followed by Celtic, Saxon and Norse cultures. In its Celtic inheritance, Edinburgh and the surrounding Lothians became the land of Arthur. In old Celtic mythology, he is the force of life and of death in cycle. Sitting like an ancient giant on his seat or mountain, Arthur connects with Arcturus, the brightest star in the northern hemisphere. Arcturus is also the Bear star, symbolically embodying the turning seasons. Legend has it that Arthur is now a sleeping lord or king, ready to return to the light in time of need.

Alongside Arthur is the threefold goddess of nature – the creator, the sustainer, and sometimes the destroyer of life. In some lore each of her faces is also threefold, making nine embodiments, or attendants. Celtic and Norse mythology recognise her as the Cailleach (the veiled one on the hills) or 'the auld mither'. Her symbolic creatures are the deer, which she herds and milks in the mountains. In spring, the mither also transforms as bride or the the maiden goddess.

Everyone coming to the Global Lab will bring and share their own cultural background and traditions, but it is always good to hear the traditions of our gathering place.

“ If this is your land,  
where are your stories? ”

# Henry Moore



*'Hand Series'*

The five days of the Global Lab are like the five fingers of a hand. Each one is distinct, yet they all work together to form a vibrant whole. What is the role of storytellers in the twenty-first century and how can we realise the principles and goals of The Earth Charter Initiative? Visit [www.earthcharter.org](http://www.earthcharter.org) for more information.

When a hand is open, the fingers can move, create, interpret and express. Open hands can clasp each other, cradle, sign and bless. All over the world, hands are clenched in anger, hidden behind backs or shaken in threat.

Each day of the Global Lab has a pattern, with a short introduction or reflection, presentations with questions, lunch, smaller participative sessions, and lastly an open forum, in which we will be joined by others via the internet.

On Wednesday, when we are in the Botanics Cottage, in the Royal Botanic Garden of Edinburgh, the pattern will be a little different from the other four days when we are at the Storytelling Centre.

We hope you find this world-first storytelling lab thought-provoking and insightful. Enjoy!

# DAY ONE Politics of Folktales

## Monday 21 October

Traditional stories are our core inheritance as storytellers. They are gift and a cultural currency. What do folktales offer us in a time of global crisis and conflict? How do we tell these stories in different ways and contexts? Can folktales help us be true to different human identities and shared values?

10.45am	Tea/Coffee
11.00am	Welcome and Introduction - Ruth Kirkpatrick
11.15 am	Presentation - Heidi Dahlsveen
11.45am	Presentation - Jan Blake
12.15pm	Questions and Discussion
12.45pm	Lunch
1.45pm	Group Sessions – with Ruth Kirkpatrick, Heidi Dahlsveen and Jan Blake: sharing and exploring our creative practice
3.00pm	Tea/Coffee
3.30pm	Open Forum
4.15pm	Thoughts from the Day



## Tuesday 22 October

The Global Climate Emergency raises as never before humanity's relationship with the natural world – which is, in the words of the Earth Charter, 'our common home'. Yet this crisis has been formed by centuries of arrogance, ignorance, aggression, repression, materialism, racism and inequality. How can we as storytellers contribute to awareness, healing and renewal? In addition to the advanced programme, we welcome Ana Maria Lines.

10.45am	Tea/Coffee
11.00am	Welcome and Introduction - Donald Smith
11.05 am	Presentation - Chief RoseAnne Archibald
11.40 am	Presentation - Grian Cutanda and Marta Ventura
12.15pm	Presentation - Ana Maria Lines
12.50pm	Lunch
1.45pm	Group Sessions – sharing and exploring our creative practice, with Grian Cutanda, Dawne MacFarlane and Alette Willis
3.00pm	Tea/Coffee
3.30pm	Open Forum
4.15pm	Thoughts from the Day



# DAY THREE

## The Wild Nature & Garden Cosmos

**Wednesday 23 October**

For millennia gardens have been places where nature and culture meet. But there are also calls and action that will re-wild our planet. Do gardens offer ways in which we can green our cities, and reconcile human dreamings with our planet's health? Do we also need to experience the wild? We enjoy a day of cosmic and practical imaginings in one of the world's oldest Botanic Gardens.

11.00am	Welcome and Introduction – Donald Smith
11.10 am	Group Sessions – Margot Henderson and Giovanna Conforto
1.00pm	Lunch (not included, please use Garden Cafes)
2.00pm	Presentation – Interview with Joanna Geyer-Kordesch
2.45pm	Walking; Thinking; Talking
3.30pm	Open Forum
4.15pm	Thoughts from the Day





# DAY FOUR

## Talking Cures

### Thursday 24 October

'Jist Blethers,' Grannie would say as she launched into another vivid memory or encounter. But heartfelt listening and talking may be the vital sub-soil of everything we are and can do as human beings. So how can that work in a time of crisis and change? Are we as storytellers more inclined to talk than to listen? Today, we explore conversation in search of the groundswells we desire and need.

10.45am	Tea/Coffee
11.00am	Welcome and Reflection – Tom Pow
11.15am	Presentation – Michael Williams
11.45am	Group Sessions - Tom Pow and Michael Williams
1.00pm	Lunch
1.45pm	Group Sessions – sharing and exploring our creative practice, with Amanda Edmiston, Ailie Finlay and Ethel Roddy, and Michael Williams
3.00pm	Tea/Coffee
3.30pm	Open Forum
4.15pm	Thoughts from the Day



# DAY FIVE Transforming Myth

## Friday 25 October

Stories can change the ways we perceive and feel. Why? At the heart of creative language are metaphors; they use familiar things in unexpected ways to help us look afresh. Mythology and rich local traditions encompass metaphor, symbol and dream to convey something about our past, present and future. Mythology informs science, art and religion; and often connects human consciousness with the nature. How should we tell and receive myths today? Do they contain deeply grounded sources for change? Can we adapt or even invent myths for our time?

10.45am	Tea/Coffee
11.00am	Opening Reflection – Margaret Grenier
11.30am	Presentation – Seoras (George) Macpherson
12.00pm	Presentation – Giovanna Conforto
12.30pm	Questions and Discussions
1.00pm	Lunch
1.45pm	Group Sessions – sharing and exploring our creative practice, with Grian Cutanda, Seoras Macpherson and Giovanna Conforto.
3.00pm	Tea/Coffee
3.30pm	Open Forum
4.15pm	Thoughts from the Day

