



Hi folks,

Welcome to our mid-way-point-of-the-Fringe newsletter!

Had a very chilled birthday on Sunday – apart from 10,000 steps and doing Sunday's show. Then feet up, watched The OA. Birthday bliss.

Hoping to catch a few more shows I haven't seen yet at the [Scottish Storytelling Centre](#). It's good to be a part of a great wee tribe of performers there. And I'm very aware of how great the staff are. Always a smile on their faces and willing to do what they can. Thank you!

We've also had an amazing 4-star review in the Scotsman and lovely coverage in The National. It's also been described as exquisite, a live theatrical concept album, a musical odyssey, a meditation.

On the flip side, numbers are on the small side. 27 on Sunday. It might look like everything's tickety-boo, but the reality is that if I break-even I'll be lucky. And that's a one woman show!

I'm offering 5 'Buy 1 get 1 FREE' tickets to the first 5 folk who message me. Just email me at mairi@mairicampbell.scot, and let me know what performance you'd like your tickets for and if you're one of the first to email I'll send you the details.

For those who have already seen it, please also consider leaving an

programme. <https://tickets.edinboro.com/whats-on/mairi-campbell-living-stone>. It's a place most folk will look at if they're considering coming.

Anyway, 'tis a roller coaster and I'm lucky to be able to do what I love!

On Sunday it did feel very 'flowey'. I was enjoying the feeling and sound of the words floating over the top of these gorgeous tracks that underscore most of the first half. There's something about this show that is spellbinding because it's so immersive and I can feel that from the audience.

Mairi x

Reviews of the show

Mairi Campbell - Living Stone ★★★★★

at the Scottish Storytelling Centre this year, the magnificent Scottish singer and theatre-maker Mairi Campbell is presenting her new show *Living Stone*, which - probably by no coincidence - offers a masterclass in that process of listening.

Campbell has strong family connections to the island of Lismore, just off Oban; and this new show tells the story of a stone unearthed there a few years ago, an ancient millstone of hard rock, which appears as a strong second presence on stage.

Campbell's meditation on this stone, and the story it tells, has produced both an exquisite 60-minute show - full of peace and contemplation, but also of powerful history, and 21st century observation and mirth - that is illustrated throughout by Campbell's beautiful songs; and also an accompanying exhibition, exploring her myriad responses to the stone's shapes and colours.

The show is co-devised and directed by Cath Burlinson, with fine music and musical direction from David Gray. And it is transfigured by beautiful AV projections from Roddy Simpson and Julia Fayngruen, which project the textures glimpsed in the stone across the stage, and over the very stuff of Campbell's plain hessian dress; making her seem truly part of the landscape she sings, in a show full of wisdom, and the clear perception that as the world spirals towards crisis, "the old ways are leaning in", offering us insights that we would be wise to heed.

Joyce McMillan

14

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'How did we manage to get

Historic stone sits at heart of show running alongside exhibition

BY NAN SPOWART

A SCOTTISH quern stone made from 400-million-year-old rock is the focus of a new show by award-winning musician Mairi Campbell whose voice was featured in the hit film *Sex And The City*.

Found on her great-gran's croft on Lismore, the quern or millstone weighs 25 kilos but looks as though its edges were deliberately chipped - probably as part of a 17th-century move to force poor crofters to use their landlords' mills.

For Campbell, the stone is symbolic of how humans' relationship with nature has been chipped away over the centuries, leading to today's environmental crisis.

It is why the stone is the focus of her new show, which explores healing and self-discovery. Running at the Scottish Storytelling Centre for the duration of the Fringe, it is already receiving rave audience reviews.

An exhibition of Campbell's stone paintings will run concurrently at the Scottish Storytelling Centre, offering a visual exploration of the themes presented in the show. Each painting captures the intricate details and textures of the stone, symbolising the connection between past and present.

While the stone is the focus of the work, it is not the first time it has been on stage as it featured in Campbell's previous solo theatre shows, *Pulse* and *Auld Lang Syne*. A version of the song by Campbell and her husband David Francis was on the soundtrack of the 2008 movie *Sex And The City*, and they have performed it at the Presidential Awards in Washington in front of president Bill Clinton and Sean Connery.

Like the shows *Pulse* and *Auld Lang Syne*, Campbell's new show *Living Stone* is also autobiographical and tracks her move from Edinburgh

to Lismore where she now lives six months of the year, runs an island dance band and teaches violin at the primary school.

"My journey is one of going from darkness into the light and how I connected to my geographical community on Lismore," she told the Sunday National.

"It's about letting go of life in Edinburgh, being stuck and being in a bit of a hole and then gradually coming out of that so it is most definitely a message of hope."

"Folk say we are all connected and we need to understand we are not the only thing on this earth. We need to look after the land and my story is a direct experience of trying to figure out what that feels like and means - it is not just plain sailing."

"How did we manage to get so far away from the land, how come we

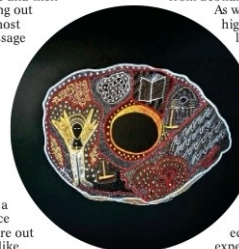
feel so separate from it? Whatever the reasons are, we have been separated from it."

As with her first two solo shows, *Living Stone* is directed by Kath Burlinson and has been described as "brilliantly devised".

It is part of the Scottish Storytelling Centre's Fringe programme, specially curated to showcase the best live storytelling from Scotland and beyond.

As well as *Living Stone*, highlights include long-time Fringe favourite Rick Conte with

An American Love Letter to Edinburgh, which tells the tale of his fellow American Benjamin Franklin's Scottish enlightenment, echoing his own experiences of the city that took him in 35 years ago and has yet "to spit him out". Joyfully Grimm: Reimagining A Queer Adolescence is James



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or anyone like him.

The programme also includes four children's storytelling events, including a new version of the 2023 sell-out smash-hit *Grow* by Niall Moorjani, which offers plenty of stories and clowning around to celebrate nature and things that grow.

Music and spoken word are also strongly represented with two musical *Made in Scotland* showcase events in *STUMPED* and *The Other*, and a short run of *Stupid Sexy Poem Show*, the subversive and powerful debut hour from RJ Hunter, Loud Poets Grand Slam Champion 2023.

"Our Fringe programme offers a platform for storytellers and creatives to share amazing stories, and to create a space of calm energy for audiences to listen and enjoy," said Scottish Storytelling Centre's head of programming, Daniel Abercrombie.

"There are wonderful stories here with messages of hope, enthusiasm and activism, exploring the light and the dark of the worlds we inhabit."



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A Fringe highlight, says The National!

"Campbell's meditation on this stone, and the story it tells, has produced both an exquisite 60-minute show - full of peace and contemplation, but also of powerful history, and 21st century observation and mirth - that is illustrated throughout by Campbell's beautiful songs; and also an accompanying exhibition, exploring her myriad responses to the stone's shapes and colours." [from Joyce McMillan in The Scotsman](#). 4-stars.

And from the audience:

"This show is quite simply outstanding. I was absolutely spellbound and riveted from the get go...

Do yourself a favour folks, don't delay"

"a totally engaging and immersive show...There really is a spellbinding quality to it that is hard to describe... go along and absorb the ancient magic of the living stone for yourselves to appreciate this unique experience."

"A spellbinding journey, masterfully composed and executed. So many layers from humour to shamanic depths. Mairi's command of song and the violin/viola match and amplify her storytelling prowess.

Must see!!!"

"Mairi Campbell is in top form in her atmospheric new show: beautifully staged, a deep, moving journey delivered with a light touch and

The next show is TODAY (Tuesday) at 5pm then every odd day ending on 25th August. We also have an audio-described performance on 23rd August.

Get your Fringe tickets

You can also get the music from the show

 Music from the show also features in my new album *Living Stone* which is out now. As many of you already know, you can find it on my [Bandcamp](#). I'd also really appreciate a follow on Bandcamp.

The album is also available on the [shop on my website](#).

Thank you to everyone who has already given your support and sincerely hope you enjoy the show and the album.

Living Stone album on Bandcamp

Dates

Mairi Campbell: *Living Stone*: 1-25 August 2024 (odd dates only), Scottish Storytelling Centre, Edinburgh (Fringe venue 30), 5pm (60 mins). Audio-described performance on 23 August – [get your tickets](#)

Mairi Campbell Exhibition: 1-25 August 2024 (every day, 10am-6pm). Exhibition of Mairi Campbell's paintings, Scottish Storytelling Centre, Edinburgh.

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We'll also be filming the show for a livestream event via Bandcamp in September. Mairi will be hosting this.

[Get your Fringe tickets](#)

As always, all the best. And hope to see you at the show!

Mairi and team x

mairicampbell.scot/whats-on

[Mairi's website](#)[Email Mairi](#)[Facebook](#)[Instagram](#)[Twitter](#)[SoundCloud](#)

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