



# **Dance from Scotland**

**An introduction**

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# Scotland on the international stage

Scotland is home to a vibrant contemporary dance sector which includes outstanding performing companies and individual artists recognised for their award-winning, pioneering and ambitious work. The sector represents a diversity of practice that reflects the broad backgrounds, influences and interests of the artists and people they are connecting with. Characterised by its generous spirit, care and support for each other, it welcomes new talent and nurtures those at all stages of their careers.

Many of our artists and companies are internationally recognised and a selection of those with strong international connections can be found over the following pages.

[theworkroom.org.uk](http://theworkroom.org.uk) | [creativescotland.com](http://creativescotland.com)

# Explore a selection of Scotland's artists and companies

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## Barrowland Ballet

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Barrowland Ballet, led by Artistic Director and choreographer Natasha Gilmore, creates work of wit and humour from insightful observations of human behaviour, rooted in personal stories. Their productions for adults and children, including *Tiger, Tiger Tale*, *Playful Tiger*, *Poggle* and *Whiteout*, have toured extensively to Asia, Africa, North and South America and Europe. Their repertoire of short-dance films including *Loose Leaf Tea*, *Whiteout*, *Wolf* and *Strings* have won acclaim from international film festivals, while their latest dance-theatre film installation *Family Portrait* is touring extensively and won a 'Bobby' best-in-the-fest award at Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2021. Alongside their professional performance work, they deliver a programme of exceptional participatory activity.

[barrowlandballet.co.uk](http://barrowlandballet.co.uk)

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## Claire Cunningham

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Claire's work is often rooted in the study and use/misuse of her crutches and her deep interest in the lived experience of disability. Claire is a recent Factory Artist with Tanzhaus, Düsseldorf and an Affiliate Artist with The Place, London. Her works *Thank You Very Much*, *Give Me a Reason to Live*, *Guide Gods* and *The Way You Look (at me) Tonight* (co-created and performed with Jess Curtis), have toured extensively across the globe.

[clairecunningham.co.uk](http://clairecunningham.co.uk)



Image: Claire Cunningham in *Thank You Very Much*.  
Photographer Sven Hagolani.

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## **Colette Sadler/ Stammer Productions**

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Stammer Productions is an independent dance and performance company founded by choreographer Colette Sadler. It facilitates the creation and production of Sadler's choreographic work in collaboration with artists from the field of dance, performance, visual arts and experimental music. Stammer Productions works in collaboration with a network of Scottish and international organisations and choreographic centres.

[colettesadler.com](http://colettesadler.com)

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## **Curious Seed**

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Award-winning performance company Curious Seed was formed by choreographer, Christine Devaney to produce and present compelling dance theatre work that questions the world we live in. Curious Seed's work has been presented across the globe from Milan to Macao, New Zealand to Norway; appearing at prestigious international festivals and venues from Sadler's Wells to Sydney Opera House.

[curious-seed.com](http://curious-seed.com)

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## **Farah Saleh**

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Farah Saleh is a Scotland-based, Palestinian dancer and choreographer active in Palestine, Europe and the US. She works between dance, theatre, interactive live performance, video and installation art. Much of her work sets out to archive hidden stories and gestures of migration and refugeehood, particularly from the Palestinian narrative. She works in collaboration and uses bodies, testimonies, memories and imagination to explore collective responsibility and find bridges between the past, present and future.

[farahsaleh.com](http://farahsaleh.com)

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## Janice Parker

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Janice Parker is an award-winning choreographer and dance-maker. Janice works nationally and internationally with people of all ages and abilities, often mixing the community and the professional dance worlds. She creates live performance; movement for theatre; dance for camera; cross media installation; lectures and text responsive to people, place and context. Janice is motivated by the outcomes of collaborative and socially-engaged practice that shifts the ways we live our lives.

[janiceparker.co.uk](http://janiceparker.co.uk)

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## Katrina McPherson

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Katrina is an award-winning director and screendance artist whose creative, scholarly and educational work is at the forefront of the international field. Katrina has made many single, multi-screen and on-line works, in collaboration with artists from a variety of different countries, and these are presented at venues and festivals world-wide. Katrina is the author of the book *Making Video Dance*, the second edition of which was published by Routledge in 2018.

[katrinamcpherson.com](http://katrinamcpherson.com) | [makingvideodance.com](http://makingvideodance.com)

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## Louise Ahl

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Louise Ahl is a Glasgow-based artist originally from Sweden, making experimental and choreographic performance work. She creates both solo and collaborative multi-art-form pieces. Louise makes art around the metaphysical and mystical, using movement, voice, light, sonics and language. Her work has been shown across the UK, Ireland, Germany, France, USA and Australia.

[louiseahl.com](http://louiseahl.com)

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## **Lucy Suggate**

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Lucy is a Scotland-based dance artist, recognised for her articulate and engaging solo performances as well as choreographic installations and public scores. Focusing on choreography as an extended practice, Lucy seeks to emancipate dance from the traditional expectations of a moving body. She has presented her work extensively throughout Europe.

[lucysuggate.com](http://lucysuggate.com)

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## **Marc Brew Company**

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Marc Brew is an acclaimed Scotland-based international disabled choreographer, Artistic Director and dancer, whose work has been commissioned by national companies across the world. His choreography draws on the unique physicality of each performer and exemplifies the beauty of moments shared between people. The company is committed to developing innovative collaborative work to create a series of physical conversations, encounters and interventions that reflect what it is to be human.

[marcbrew.com](http://marcbrew.com)

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## **Robbie Synge**

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Robbie studied science but now makes performance, film and other work rooted in choreographic thinking around the body and its meeting points with people, objects, and the natural and built environment. Based in the Cairngorm Mountains, Robbie works nationally and internationally, and has been an Aerowaves Artist and Associate Artist with Dance Base, Edinburgh.

[robbiesynge.com](http://robbiesynge.com)





Image: *The Life and Times*, Scottish Dance Theatre.  
Photo Sean Millar

## **Scottish Dance Theatre**

Led by Artistic Director Joan Clevillé, Scottish Dance Theatre creates dance that is engaging and engaged. It has a strong international profile and for over thirty years has created thought-provoking work, bringing unique dance experiences to audiences across Scotland, the UK and abroad. It is the only full-time ensemble contemporary dance company in Scotland, made up of a group of inquisitive and versatile dancers from all over the world. It collaborates with internationally acclaimed choreographers and artists, supports the development of emerging and homegrown talent and promotes a plurality of voices.

[scottishdancetheatre.com](http://scottishdancetheatre.com)

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## **21Common**

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21Common is an award-winning interdisciplinary Performance Collective based in Glasgow. It makes work locally and tours internationally, and is led by artists Lucy Gaizely and Gary Gardiner, Scotland's leading learning-disabled artist Ian Johnston, and Executive Producer Louise Irwin. 21 Common aims to make work that is political, vulnerable, visceral and at times controversial. It strives for social justice and, partnering with a wide variety of collaborators, looks to embed social action at the core of its work.

[21common.org](http://21common.org)

# A guide to Scotland's key contemporary dance organisations and resources

The contemporary dance sector in Scotland is supported by a network of organisations that provide resources and conditions for artists to create and deliver their best work. This network is well connected by staff who are passionate about the industry and the well-being of those who work in and with it. They recognise the value of international collaboration and seek to create opportunities for artistic dialogue and exchange through working with international peers and key networks.

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## Arts Infopoint

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Arts Infopoint UK is a pilot initiative developing and sharing resources to guide interested parties through some of the administrative stages of coming to the UK as an artist, cultural professional or organisation. Whether it is questions relating to short term paid work in the UK, or checking social security obligations, Arts Infopoint UK runs events, collates resources, and answers enquiries to assist those planning a creative visit to the UK. Arts InfoPoint UK is delivered by Wales Arts International, in partnership with Creative Scotland and the other arts councils and agencies of the four UK nations (Arts Council England and Arts Council Northern Ireland).

[www.artsinfopointuk.com](http://www.artsinfopointuk.com)

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## British Council

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As the UK's international organisation for cultural relations, the British Council has a network of over 100 offices across the world. The arts team in Scotland is committed to showcasing the rich, diverse wealth of Scottish arts and cultural talent to the world, fostering partnerships and collaboration with international audiences and enabling artistic exchange.

[scotland.britishcouncil.org](http://scotland.britishcouncil.org)

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## **Citymoves Dance Agency**

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Citymoves is the regional dance agency for North East Scotland, aiming to forge strong partnerships, increase participation, develop audiences, nurture talent and place itself on the international dance map. Its professional classes, residencies and workshops help to support dancers and choreographers in producing and promoting new dance work.

[citymoves.org.uk](http://citymoves.org.uk)

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## **Creative Scotland**

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Creative Scotland is the public body that supports people and organisations to work in and experience the arts, screen and the creative industries across all Scotland. One of its core priorities is to develop innovative and sustainable ways of strengthening international collaboration and promoting artistic and cultural exchange. Dance artists from across the world have chosen to make Scotland their home, and many of our companies and artists are working extensively across Europe and the world.

[creativescotland.com](http://creativescotland.com)

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## **Dance Base**

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Dance Base is Scotland's National Centre for Dance, based in Edinburgh. Since 2001 it has built up an international reputation for supporting artists globally and was the first dance house in Scotland to join the European Dance House Network. As well as presenting a cutting-edge international dance programme at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Dance Base offers more than 100 classes to the public in over 40 different forms of dance. The Dance Base residency programme supports Scottish, UK and International artists to experiment and make work with a total of 72 weeks available to artists each year. Through its Artist Support Programme, Dance Base provides a unique resource for the professional dance community in Scotland, offering advice, support and skills development opportunities to smaller companies, and both emergent and established artists.

[dancebase.co.uk](http://dancebase.co.uk)



Image: Fusion Youth Dance Company  
*Together They Dance* at SPECTRA.  
Photo: courtesy of Citymoves Dance Agency

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## **Dance North Scotland**

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Dance North creates space for risk-taking contemporary dance, engaging with people from across the globe to just down the road. They do this by supporting artists and their practice, inspiring audiences and participants, presenting work, empowering through creativity, treating people fairly and working in partnership.

[dancenorth.scot](http://dancenorth.scot)

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## **Federation of Scottish Theatre**

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FST is the development body for professional dance, opera and theatre in Scotland, bringing the sector together to speak with a collective voice, to share resources and expertise and to promote collaborative working.

[scottishtheatre.org](http://scottishtheatre.org)

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## **Indepen-dance**

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Indepen-dance is an award-winning inclusive dance company for disabled and non-disabled people to enjoy, express, and fulfil their potential through dance. It provides opportunities for disabled and non-disabled dancers in both the professional and non-professional dance sectors through dance classes, bespoke professional training and career development opportunities.

[indenpen-dance.org.uk](http://indenpen-dance.org.uk)

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## **Project X**

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Project X is a multi-disciplinary, collectively run organisation based in Scotland, platforming dance of the African and Caribbean Diaspora. It collaborates with artists and organisations to deliver bespoke workshops, facilitate conversations, and produce and curate performances and events in Scotland and beyond.

[projectxplatform.co.uk](http://projectxplatform.co.uk)

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## **The Work Room**

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The Work Room is a studio and resource for independent choreographers, based at Tramway in Glasgow. An artist-led organisation with a membership of artists working in dance movement and choreography, it aims to empower artists to lead in their practice, enabling them to make high quality, pioneering dance for diverse contexts at home and internationally.

[theworkroom.org.uk](http://theworkroom.org.uk)

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## **YDance**

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As the national dance organisation for children and young people, YDance's vision is to offer every child in Scotland the opportunity to realise their potential through dance. The organisation works through key partnerships in education, culture, health and sport; to provide high quality dance experiences in three categories – Access and Participation, Education and Talent Development.

[ydance.org](http://ydance.org)



Image: Rosemary Lee's  
*Threaded Fine* at RISE Festival  
Photo: Diane Smith



# Key festivals and programmers

Scotland is home to a diverse range of festivals and organisations that present regular dance programmes throughout the year, offering audiences the opportunity to discover international productions alongside Scotland's own artistic talent.

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## Dance Base Fringe Festival

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Run by Dance Base, Scotland's National Centre for Dance, and taking place annually during the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in August, this is an inspiring and diverse programme of dance from Scotland and around the world. It also works with the British Council to run an industry hub supporting programmers and producers from around the world to navigate the Fringe and connect with artists.

[dancebase.co.uk](http://dancebase.co.uk)

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## Edinburgh International Festival

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Established in 1947 with the aim of creating an artistic response to building cultural relations across Europe and the world, the annual Edinburgh International Festival presents three weeks of the finest performing arts spanning dance, theatre, music and opera.

[eif.co.uk](http://eif.co.uk)

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## Edinburgh Festival Fringe

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The Edinburgh Festival Fringe is the world's greatest platform for creative freedom. Its open access ethos makes it a hub for cutting-edge work, undiscovered companies and emerging and established talent. The Fringe presents an opportunity for performers and presenters all over the world to platform their work in front of an international audience. It's a space to collaborate, connect and make those discoveries which lead to a flourishing global arts industry.

[edfringe.com](http://edfringe.com)

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## **Made in Scotland**

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Made in Scotland is a curated programme of exciting and innovative theatre, dance and music presented annually across the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, showcasing the diverse talent of Scotland's artists. It has supported a host of Scottish companies to present work at the Fringe and tour across the globe. It also supports international programmers to attend the showcase and offers financial support to aid international tours.

[madeinscotlandshowcase.com](http://madeinscotlandshowcase.com)

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## **The Edinburgh International Children's Festival**

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This annual festival showcases high quality, distinctive Scottish and international performances to an audience of around 19,000 children, their teachers and their families, as well as programmers and artists from all over the world. Produced by Imagine, the national organisation which promotes, develops and celebrates work for young audiences, the festival has also established itself as one of the best places for programmers to see work of the highest standard and for artists to network, see and discuss work.

[imagine.org.uk](http://imagine.org.uk)

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## **Dance International Glasgow**

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DiG is a celebration of dance, aiming to nurture collaboration between artists, promoters, venues and audiences. Produced by Tramway, this biennial festival aims to feature work from around the world alongside new commissions from Scottish artists.

[tramway.org](http://tramway.org)

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## **DanceLive**

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Produced by Citymoves Dance Agency in Aberdeen, the annual DanceLive Festival embraces a broad programme of live dance and performance events by leading UK and Scottish artists, that celebrates creativity, diversity and experimentation within the framework of a dynamic programme of movement, dance and visual performance.

[citymoves.org.uk](http://citymoves.org.uk)

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## **Gathered Together**

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Led by Scotland's inclusive dance organisation Indepen-dance, Gathered Together is a biennial international inclusive dance festival that brings together people from across the world to forge new artistic partnerships. The programme encompasses a series of performances, workshops and conference sessions.

[indepn-dance.org.uk](http://indepn-dance.org.uk)

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## **Innovations Contemporary Dance Platform**

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Innovations is a contemporary dance platform which is structured into seasonal editions throughout the year in Edinburgh. Produced by Dance Horizons, it provides a supportive environment for the presentation of new ideas. It works with artists from a wide range of backgrounds and influences, at all stages of their careers and showcases works from Scottish and International dance makers.

[innovationsdanceplatform.co.uk](http://innovationsdanceplatform.co.uk)

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## **Manipulate Festival**

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Produced and delivered by Puppet Animation Scotland, this annual festival presents the very best of Scottish and international puppetry, visual theatre and animated film to adult audiences in Edinburgh and beyond. It aims to engage and challenge audiences with high-quality visually led work which pushes boundaries, plays with form and challenges perceptions. By bringing together work by artists from across the globe and work developed in Scotland, it aims to spark opportunities for artistic exchange and to offer audiences a diverse palette of rich visually led work.

[manipulatefestival.org](http://manipulatefestival.org)

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## **Rise**

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RISE is Dance North's festival of contemporary dance and performance. A responsive programme that adapts from year to year – sometimes existing as a standalone weekend of performance and sometimes offering performances over the course of several months. RISE often features an emphasis on outdoor work and increasingly exists in conversation with community and ecology in Moray.

[dancenorth.scot](http://dancenorth.scot)

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## **Take Me Somewhere**

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Take Me Somewhere is an international, biennial festival & year-round sector support organisation in Glasgow that provides a crucial support structure and platform for Scotland's most vital artists and showcases some of the world's most cutting-edge contemporary performance makers. The festival's presence pulsates across the city with inspirational work igniting the city's main stages, arts venues, churches, nightclubs and gardens. Their recently acquired Studio Somewhere is a fit-for-purpose studio space with a rolling programme of residencies, international exchanges & workshops, aiming to create the best possible conditions for exceptional, radical new performance to be made in Scotland and be seen by the world.

[takemesomewhere.co.uk](http://takemesomewhere.co.uk)

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## //BUZZCUT//

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Supporting radical performance practises from all over the world, //BUZZCUT// is a festival of Live Art and experimental performance that takes place annually in Glasgow. Throughout the year BUZZCUT produces a regular performance programme called Double Thrills alongside artist development opportunities for emerging artists & those who wish to develop performances in Club-spaces. All their activity aims to build spaces where artists and audiences can experiment with live performance in an accessible, community-focused environment.

[glasgowbuzzcut.co.uk](http://glasgowbuzzcut.co.uk)

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## Tramway

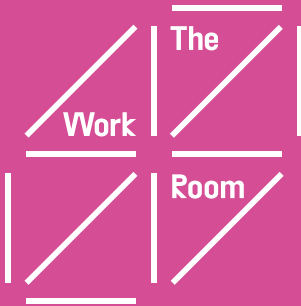
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Tramway is a renowned international arts venue with an interdisciplinary spirit providing ambitious, innovative and culturally relevant contemporary visual art and performance. Through a dynamic year-round programme of dance, live art, engagement activity, festivals and free exhibitions, it aims to stimulate meaningful dialogue between artists and audiences, responding to the urgent cultural, social and political issues of our time. It fosters the development of emergent artists in Scotland whilst also presenting ambitious International work by artists from diverse backgrounds.

[tramway.org](http://tramway.org)



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL



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2-4 Waterloo Place  
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Mitchell Lane  
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