



## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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### ***Slam 2016***

#### **Throughout the year, across Scotland**

The first ever national young person's poetry slam will take place this year, with Scotland leading on a unique model to deliver slam poetry across the country and in doing so provide increased access to poetry for young people.

Over the coming weeks the search is on for groups to take part in a series of workshops, culminating in the regional slams in Edinburgh and Stirling during September and October, with the runners up of each regional event coming together to compete at the Slam Final, at the Beacon in Inverclyde.

The idea behind the project began with poet and writer **Anita Govan** and it builds on eleven years of her working with **conFAB**, delivering poetry slams. The **Scottish Youth Poetry Slam** will bring together young people from six Scottish regions, in partnership with a range of organisations – see *Notes for Editors* section (pages 2/3).

*Anita Govan said 'I am hugely excited to finally get started on our dream of a Scottish Youth Poetry Slam. Since conFAB and I started youth poetry slams more than 11 years ago we have worked hard towards this goal. Over the years I have become convinced that it has huge value as a teaching tool, enabling young people to reflect, understand and negotiate the world around them. It gives them a voice and 'the right to speak', helping them to gain confidence and self-knowledge in a self-empowering way.'*

*Rachel Jury of conFAB said 'Love them or hate them Poetry Slams have been with us since the 15<sup>th</sup> century when slamming was known as 'Flyting'. Today it is a great honour to be working with such a fabulous range of partners and poets to provide access and participation for young people to discover and explore their poetic potential and heritage. We are ready to SLAM.'*

The Scottish Youth Poetry Slam is supported by the National Lottery through Creative Scotland Open Project Funding.

**Kaite Welsh, Literature Officer at Creative Scotland** said: "The Scottish Youth Poetry Slam is a fantastic opportunity to get young people engaging with poetry, giving them a chance to work with some of Scotland's best performance poets. Poetry slams are a great way of empowering young people, particularly ones who have never seen themselves as writers, and to help them overcome barriers to enjoying literature. We are delighted to support conFAB to introduce a new generation of performers to the invigorating world of slam poetry."

- ends

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## **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

### **Dates and Locations:**

### **Participating Regions**

Grampian, Tayside, Highlands and Islands, West Central, South, East & Central

### **Thursday 29th September**

Regional Slam, National Library, Edinburgh

Regions: Grampian, Tayside, Highlands and Islands

### **Thursday 6th October**

Regional Slam, macrobert, Stirling

Regions: West Central, South, East & Central

### **Thursday 27th October**

Slam Final, Beacon, Inverclyde

### **conFAB**

conFAB is a multi-artform arts organisation. They produce an eclectic range of art ventures, ranging in scale, format, genre, medium and output. Art asks questions at every step of the process, engaging all participants in a continuous dialogue with those questions both as practitioners and consumers. As with a conversation, so conFAB's work is a fluid, shifting, proactive, responsive, eclectic and open-ended dialogue.

Central to the organisation is a very real and deep-rooted commitment to community and education-based work, which strives for artistic excellence as well as respecting the crucial development process. As a cross-artform company they seek to not only question the boundaries between art forms but also to challenge and question demarcations between professional and community/education practice. They create artistically bold community

productions where professional practitioners and community actors/performers work alongside each other. [www.confab.org.uk](http://www.confab.org.uk)

## Anita Govan

Anita was born in Stirling and has for many years been active in the artistic communities of Edinburgh and Scotland. She has produced, directed and showcased across the creative industry and was involved with the Bongo Club and the New Street Artists in their early conception.

She discovered poetry at the age of 10 with *Scots Wha Hae*, not long before she was discovered to be severely dyslexic. From the age of 12 to 18 she then went on to trained as a professional ballet dancer at a ballet boarding school. She then qualified in Community Drama and now works as a self-employed creative practitioner based in Edinburgh, with a portfolio career in performance, poetry/spoken word.

For the last 15 years she has worked with a host of community groups and organisations, including Wellcome Trust and Scottish Book Trust. In 2010 she graduated with a BA (honours) in Humanities with the Open University.

A performance poet of long standing, she was Stirling Makar from 2012-15 and has been described as a 'driving force' for performance poetry in Scotland. She now travels around Scotland and the UK, facilitating workshops for schools, communities, festivals, colleges, universities and businesses. [www.anitagovan.com](http://www.anitagovan.com)

## Creative Scotland

Creative Scotland is the public body that supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all parts of Scotland on behalf of everyone who lives, works or visits here. We enable people and organisations to work in and experience the arts, screen and creative industries in Scotland by helping others to develop great ideas and bring them to life. We distribute funding provided by the Scottish Government and the National Lottery. For further information about Creative Scotland please visit [www.creativescotland.com](http://www.creativescotland.com). Follow us @creativescots and [www.facebook.com/CreativeScotland](https://www.facebook.com/CreativeScotland)

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