

Press release for immediate use
Tuesday 5th February 2019



Big Burns Supper raises the roof yet again after another storming festival in Dumfries



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The **Big Burns Supper 2019** raises a dram today as it's stellar eighth festival comes to a thrilling close in Dumfries. Festival producers are toasting a hugely successful festival which saw an audience **increase of 18%** from 2018, a string of sold out events and significant positive feedback from businesses in Dumfries as the festival continues to provide a **vital boost to the local economy**.

Big Burns Supper this year ran from **24th of January to 3rd February with 11 days** of world class wonderful, and sometimes rather cheeky entertainment **across 111 events** in the historic Scottish town of Dumfries. The festival brought together audiences old and new from near and far to come together with a host of top Scottish and international artists for the biggest contemporary celebration of Scotland's national poet in the town he called home.

The festival opened on 24th January with DJ-driven thrills at **Youth Beatz Takeover**, Scotland's biggest free youth music festival. For one night only, the iconic festival Spiegeltent was taken over for a brilliant night of live music and DJs for a complete sell out.

The festival's own tradition of celebrating the Scottish Bard like no other was continued on Burns Night itself with the triumphant return of home-grown cabaret sensation, **Le Haggis VI**. The unbelievable ensemble of **international circus artists was joined by top Scottish trad musicians Hó-Ró** to create a blistering cabaret experience truly unique to Big Burns Supper. The stellar cast included Romanian born **Andrei Tazlauanu**, an incredibly talented aerial and hand balancing artist who has performed around the world. Britain's Got Talent 2017 semi-finalists, street performance World Champions, Cork's

favourite spandex wearing lads, **The Lords of Strut** and the Australia's fire breathing, rock 'n' roll aerialist **Katrina Louise** collaborated alongside local Dumfries talent to create a cheeky Celtic cabaret that seduced Dumfries audiences for the sixth year running.

The Burns night celebrations continued with a giant rock and roll party and complete sell out at **Burns Night Live**. Headed up by Scottish rock superstar **KT Tunstall**, the line-up also included award-winning contemporary Scottish folk band, **The Peatbog Faeries**, psychedelic cult rockers, **Colonel Mustard & the Dijon Five** and the undisputed masters of Scottish death reggae, **Bombskare**. They were joined by some of Scotland's top party animals to blow the roof off the world famous Spiegel tent for a Burns celebration quite unlike any other in the world!

Another highlight was the locally produced cabaret **Queer Haggis**, which for one fabulous night boasted a heady roster of international queer artists and home-grown talent taking to the Spiegel tent stage. It's provocative celebration of individuality and queer identity cements Dumfries' status as a hotspot for inclusivity and a welcome home for LGBTQ artists and audiences.

The eleven-day festival saw an eclectic programme of world-class artists descend on Dumfries to entertain and wow audiences, including **Ed Byrne, Frank Turner, Craig Charles, Hardeep Singh Kohli, Hebrides Ensemble** and **Bootleg Beetles** to name a few.

The Big Burns Supper brings residents and visitors together to experience world class comedy, cabaret and music in a **celebration of togetherness** that is central to any Burns Supper.

An army of around 150 volunteers from the local community helped form the backbone of this year's festival. Ranging from 14-80 years old, these amazing local champions were the vital cogs in the machine, helping out with tasks ranging from setting up artists dressing rooms to scanning audience tickets and ensuring an amazing festival was shared by all.

The **Big Burns Festival Fringe** ran alongside the main festival strand with an innovative and challenging programme designed to showcase emerging artists and new work from established companies. Performances were housed in the pop-up festival venue, **The Container Theatre** which was created by festival organisers last year as part of their continued commitment to support theatre performers, producers and directors with accessible performance space and programming, once again proving hugely successful this year.

The festival's final weekend saw an interactive arcade game projected through centre of Dumfries with computer games being played on buildings as the finale light show to the festival which ran from the **31st January– 3rd February, titled, Arcade** and co-produced by live art agency, **D-Lux**. Big Burns Supper 2019 had a strong finish with the **Sunday Session on the 3rd February**, the hugely popular festival within a festival which sees bands including **Alabama 3, The Troggs, The Complete Stone Roses** and **Mànran** rock the Spiegel tent and ensured the festival finished in very fine fettle.

Executive Producer, Graham Main said; "As the curtain falls on Big Burns Supper 2019, we are incredibly proud and thankful as festival producers to our artists, audiences, staff, volunteers and the community of Dumfries who all work together to realise what is the largest Burns Supper celebration in the world."

“We are thrilled with the success of this year’s festival with an 18% increase in festival audiences, more sell out shows than ever before and the stand out success of our Festival Hub which doubled in size this year and provided a vital platform to over 60 emerging artists from the local area and across the UK. Businesses have also reported a record boost to the local economy, with many restaurants and hotels at capacity as the festival continues to provide a vital support to the economy in Dumfries during what can be a challenging month.”

The Big Burns Supper will return in January 2020.



www.bigburnssupper.com

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Ends

For further information, images, interview or press ticket requests please contact **Kate Bouchier-Hayes** on **078 25335489** / kate@thecornershoppr.com or **Will Moss** on **07443334085** / William@thecornershoppr.com

IMAGES AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

Notes to Editors

Big Burns Supper is Scotland’s landmark Burns Night event which takes place in Dumfries and features a heady mixture of cabaret, comedy, music and entertainment in over 30 different venues as the town goes bonkers for nine days of winter magic. If you are going to check out Dumfries – this is definitely the time to do it, with events including Burns Night Live – which is streamed live to the world. The festival is also the home of Le Haggis, Scotland’s finest five-star cabaret experience.

www.bigburnssupper.com

Elektronika

Elektronika (formally Electric Theatre Workshop) is a cultural producer which creates platforms for audience engagement through a diverse range of community arts based programmes, including Big Burns Supper Festival, Carlisle Fringe Festival, Creative Schools, Dumfries Community Choir, Dumfries Youth Theatre and our award winning participatory programmes that have helped to transform the communities we serve. We believe everyone has the right to experience culture.

www.elektronika.org.uk

Scottish Winter Festivals

SWF aims to mobilise the people of Scotland and those with an affinity to Scotland to join in the St Andrew’s Day, Hogmanay and Burns celebrations, boosting our key tourism and events sectors and the wider economy, enhancing community engagement and raising Scotland’s international profile.

Scotland's Winter Festivals is a Scottish Government initiative, delivered in collaboration with VisitScotland, BEMIS Scotland, the Fair Saturday Foundation, the English-Speaking Union Scotland and a range of other partners.

Scotland's Winter Festivals will welcome hundreds of thousands of people to funded events celebrating St Andrew's Day, Hogmanay and Burns right across Scotland; significantly boosting the economy and engaging our diverse communities during the winter months whilst showcasing our unique world class tourism assets to a global audience.

Burns Night

1. Robert Burns is Scotland's national poet and his birthday is marked every year on January 25th with celebrations of his life and his cultural legacy at home and around the world.
2. After his death at the age of just 37, Burns' works became internationally renowned and the sentiments of many of his poems and songs continue to resonate to this day with people from all corners of the world singing 'Auld Lang Syne' to bring in the New Year.
3. There are many ways to get involved and celebrate the life and works of Robert Burns. For example, host a Burns Supper. A Burns Supper is an inspiring event to be part of. The haggis is traditionally piped in to dinner and then specifically addressed in poetry. Further poems including 'A Toast to the Lassies' are exchanged by dinner guests with accompanying drams of whisky, however there are many modern variations and twists on these traditions that befits Scotland, a country that champions fairness, equality and inclusivity.
4. In addition, the national and community events programme celebrating Burns Night offers something for everyone with events taking place right across the country. Further information is available at scotland.org/burns.
5. Learn more about Robert Burns himself and how to hold your own modern Burns Supper as well as the meaning behind some of his most famous words and phrases by visiting scotland.org/burns.