

Edinburgh International Festival announces a new annual youth exchange programme with this year's project inspired by the World Premiere of *The Outrun*, based on Amy Liptrot's best-selling book



Young creatives from Orkney and Edinburgh during their meet up in Orkney, credit Fionn McArthur

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(Credit Fionn Mc Arthur)

Edinburgh International Festival devised a new exchange programme for young creatives to connect young people from Edinburgh with peers from another national or international location. Each year, the project will be connected to an artist or performance within that year's programme.

This year's Festival sees creatives aged between 16 and 18 in Edinburgh (from Lyceum Youth Theatre) and Orkney (Kirkwall Grammar School) exploring themes of home, nature and identity in connection with *The Outrun*, directed by Vicky Featherstone and written by Stef Smith, based on a book by an Orkney-born author Amy Liptrot. They are supported by local artists and the artists from the production.

The groups have met separately over the last few months and recently came together in Orkney (28-30 June) and are scheduled to meet again in Edinburgh between 9 and 11 August. The project will culminate during the Edinburgh International Festival in August 2024 where the groups will attend a performance of *The Outrun* and view an installation of their creative work presented in the Church Hill Theatre throughout August as part of the Festival.

Clara, a young participant from Edinburgh said: “I’m really excited to see The Outrun in August on stage. I haven't read the book, but I think I'm a very visual person, so seeing it on stage might inspire me to read it afterwards. Being in Orkney and seeing what all of this has been based on will be really cool. All the themes of home, some of the like scenes of Orkney, and how she feels about it - I'll be able to picture somewhere and really connect with it.”

Izzy, a young participant from Orkney said: “I haven't worked with people in like a big group creatively outside of like school class so it's nice to do it in a more relaxed environment. I've got to work with people who have different experiences to me which has made me reflect on my own perspectives. And then you listen to them write about their experiences and what I can take from that and put into my own writing.”