

The World of Islam at the Edinburgh Festivals

Compiled by the Alwaleed Centre for the Study of Islam
in the Contemporary World, University of Edinburgh

2014

One-off Events:

The Middle East: Lines in the Sand

Tuesday 12th August, 13:00

In the first of Raja Shehadeh's events, he brings together three leading historians to consider how the First World War and its aftermath, including the unravelling of the Ottoman Empire and the emergence of new nations, borders and colonial masters, continue to shape the region today. Do the 'lines in the sand' drawn by the secretive Sykes-Picot Agreement in 1916 haunt the present? Shehadeh joins historians James Barr and Avi Shlaim, and Salim Tamari, an expert in Palestinian and Ottoman studies.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

Ramita Naval and Alev Scott: Real Life in Tehran and Istanbul

Tuesday 12th August, 14:30

Iran and Turkey are put under the microscope: Ramita Navai's City of Lies is an energetic but gorgeously sympathetic portrait of Tehran and life under a hugely repressive regime, while Alev Scott's Turkish Awakening lifts the lid on a country waking up to new possibilities. Each explores how these complex countries differ from the one-dimensional images often portrayed by western media.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

Syria: A Country at War With Itself

Tuesday 12th August, 17:00

Why has Syria descended into such an intractable civil war? And what does the conflict tell us about the region more generally? Three experts on Syria join us to discuss the country's tragedy: Robin Yassin-Kassab is a journalist and novelist; Syrian writer Samar Yazbek has been a key voice for civil rights in her country and an opponent of the Assad regime; and Malu Halasa is co-author of Syria Speaks, an anthology of work from over 50 artists and writers. Chaired by Thomas Pierret, lecturer in Contemporary Islam at Edinburgh University.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

The Middle East Now

Wednesday 13 August, 14:00

Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, Egypt, Libya - a partial list of the sites of tension in today's Middle East. With so much at stake for the people of the region - and the human toll mounting - what are the sources of hope and the grounds for fear? Why are tensions in the region so high today? Author and Channel 4 journalist Ramita Navai, Manchester professor of modern Arabic studies Zahia Smail Salhi, and Cairo-based history professor Khaled Fahmy discuss the Middle East's current state of unease. Chaired by Patrick Cockburn, Middle East correspondent for the Independent.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

Living and Writing in the Middle East

Thursday 12 August, 12:00

Images on British television often portray crisis in the Middle East. But what is life like for writers living and working there? How do writers use their imagination to give voice to what is taking place around them? Kuwaiti author Mai Al-Nakib, Egyptian novelist Khaled Al Khamissi and British-Palestinian writer Selma Dabbagh discuss the challenges and pleasures of writing about the Middle East. Chaired by Marilyn Booth from the Centre for the Advanced Study of the Arab World.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

The Future of the Middle East

Thursday 14 August, 15:30

Can the Middle East escape perpetual conflict and political division? Has the initial promise of popular rebellion against dictatorship dissipated or is there still hope that demands for justice will be fulfilled? Three writers from the region discuss hopes for the future. Tamim Al-Barghouti is a young poet highly acclaimed in Palestine and Egypt; Justin Marozzi is a political journalist and advisor to the prime minister of Somalia; Alev Scott is a journalist whose new book is *Turkish Awakening*. Chaired by Raja Shehadeh.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

1001 Arabian Nights with James Mayhew

Thursday 14 August, 16:00

Come and discover the mysterious tales of the Arabian Nights, stories originally compiled in Arabic during the time of the Islamic Golden Age. Our Illustrator in Residence, James Mayhew, takes you on an unforgettable journey as he recounts some of the 1001 tales, drawing as he goes to the evocative sound of Scheherazade by Rimsky-Korsakov.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

Justin Marozzi: From Ancient Capital to War Zone

Friday 15 August, 16:00

Baghdad may be one of the most strife-filled cities on the planet, but this was not always the case. The Iraqi capital is now known for sectarianism and misrule, but it was once one of the greatest cities on earth. An authoritative commentator on the Muslim world and author of *Baghdad: City of Peace, City of Blood*, Justin Marozzi interrogates how it slid into violence. Chaired by James Mayhew.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

Where Scottish and Palestinian Ideas Meet

Monday 18 August, 16:30

Scotland's poetic links with Palestine are celebrated in a new book, *A Bird is Not a Stone*. As part of a fascinating initiative, 25 poems by Palestinian writers have been translated to create new versions in English, Gaelic, Scots and Shetlandic. Liz Lochhead is joined by fellow Scottish writer Alasdair Gray and Palestinian writers Maya Abu al-Hayyat and Tareq al-Karmi to discuss their collaboration on this intriguing project.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

One Scotland, Many Cultures: Celebrating Difference

Wednesday 20 August, 18:00 - 19:30

We explore the Church of Scotland's report 'One Scotland, Many Cultures' and the 'Cultural Heritage Project' addressing first-generation immigrants to Scotland. We ask our panel members to consider how migration, hospitality and celebrating difference require a continued willingness, from host and immigrant communities, to be counter-cultural and embrace the possibility of transformation.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

The Mirror of the Word: Spirituality in Islamic Calligraphy

Saturday 23 August, 14:00 - 15:00

A visual journey into the world of Islamic calligraphy and spirituality, focussing on the contemporary Turkish calligraphic tradition in Istanbul. Led by Francesco Stermotich-Cappellari, PhD researcher at the Alwaleed Centre, University of Edinburgh. Turkish tea and baklava will be provided.

Free but ticketed. Click [HERE](#) for more information and free tickets.

Rug of a Thousand Colours: Poetry inspired by the Five Pillars of Islam

Sunday 24 August, 14:00 - 15:00

Scottish poet Tessa Ransford and Palestinian poet Iyad Hayatleh (now living in Glasgow) invite you to a reading of their collaborative project 'Rug of a Thousand Colours'. Published in 2012, this collection of poems in English and Arabic were inspired by the Five Pillars of Islam. Although from very different backgrounds, the two poets form a dialogue which is interwoven throughout the poems creating a vivid tapestry of ideas. As each poet translates the other, unpredictable but revealing symmetries begin to emerge. Hosted by the Alwaleed Centre for the Study of Islam in the Contemporary World at the University of Edinburgh.

Free but ticketed. Click [HERE](#) for more information and free tickets.

The revolution Will Be Visualised: Katharyn Spellman-Poots, Martin Webb & Pnina Werbner

Monday 25 August, 14:30

One noticeable aspect of the Arab Spring uprisings was the use of images, videos, songs and poetry that helped animate them and spread the word. Far from anaesthetizing the protest, these tactics helped mobilise the young and the disaffected. In this event three leading academics – editors of *The Political Aesthetics of Global Protest* – look at protest today from anthropological and sociological perspectives.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

Events/Shows taking place on multiple dates:

The World History of Rashid al-Din, 1314: A Masterpiece of Islamic Painting

Daily Monday - Saturday throughout the Festival, 10:00 - 17:00 (FREE)

This festival exhibition highlights the Jami' al-Tawarikh (World History or Compendium of Chronicles) of Rashid al-Din, one of the masterpieces of medieval Islamic manuscripts. Celebrating the 700th anniversary of its production (1314/2014), the exhibition features approximately 15 folios from Edinburgh University Library's manuscript (Or.MS.20). Curated and organised in collaboration with the Centre for Research Collections and the Alwaleed Centre for the Study of Islam in the Contemporary World, both at the University of Edinburgh.

For more information click [HERE](#).

Blood Orange

1-24 August, 19:45

Set in Scotland's club scene past, with a cocktail of drunken, disgusting cruelty. A young man loses control of his tolerance for race, religion and faith in a tragedy about rural Scotland being invaded by the SDL. Zander loses his mum and he blames those Asian market sellers for his dad shutting down the shop. Mole lurks on the top soil of Zander's darkest thoughts only to unleash a racist crusader to deliver the fatal blow. Blood Orange examines the turbulent rise of the new far right in modern Scotland. Written by Graham Main.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

Scott Capurro Islamohomophobia: Reloaded

30 July - 25 August, 22:00

Painkillers. Check. Koran bashing. Check. Barebacking. Check mate. In Islamohomophobia: Reloaded, award-winning comic Scott Capurro, now a married and poignant gasper, inches closer toward auto-erotic asphyxiation with his blah blah against bigotry, fag bashing and Bangalore. 'The most fearless and technically perfect stand up on the circuit' ***** (Guardian). 'Vaingloriously poisonous' ***** (Scotsman). 'Sheer audacity' ***** (Chortle.co.uk). 'The best way to spend an hour' ***** (ScotsGay). 'White trash' (Asian Age). 'He's evil and should be forced to leave the country' (Daily Mirror).

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

Domestic Labour: A Study in Love

1-23 August, 14:00

War, bicycles and the withdrawal method. A love story: man and woman, East/West, the mundane and the monumental, the personal and the political, the dust behind the bed and the Iranian baby boom. A love story told through the nitty-gritty of daily life - past girlfriends, marriage, Islamic law and Brigitte Bardot - as a man and his absent wife negotiate the very domestic battle over who does the washing up. Created by award-winning 30 Bird, Domestic Labour is inspired by 1970's feminism and its impact on men. 'Rich inventive theatricality' (WhatsOnstage.com).

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

My Rabbi

5-24 August, 14:00

A Jew and a Muslim walk into a bar...a comedic drama about two Canadian best friends who go on spiritual journeys that change their lives forever. A laugh out loud thought-provoking story about the lines that occur between faith and friendship. World premiere.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

No Guts, No Heart, No Glory

18-24 August, times vary

'We are sick of it, being ignored. Sick of it, being indoors'. A site-specific play staged in a boxing gym, based on interviews with Muslim female boxers, 'No Guts, No Heart, No Glory' is devised in collaboration with four 16-19 year old Muslim female performers and explores being young, fearless and doing the unexpected. With a live electronic sound score, epic visual design, cinematic lighting and the energy of a club. Staged in Craigmillar, approx 20 minutes from Edinburgh City Centre by bus (Routes 12 and 30).

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

A Game of Soldiers

1-23 August, times vary

A social and political drama about the morality of Iraq war. This new play by Scottish Bafta New Talent Award nominee Joe McArdle questions individual and group morality through barrack banter and black humour. It examines the relationship between soldiers and Iraqi civilians. 'Very exciting, realistic, emphatic, great dialogue and physicality throughout' (National Script Reader, PlaywrightsStudio.co.uk). If you liked Black Watch, served in the armed forces, interested in the referendum, politics, sociology, morality or religion, then you must see this. Contains strong language, violence and bigotry. Not suitable for children. Directed by Andrew Byatt.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

Mush and Me

31 July - 24 August, 14:50

People talk. Rumours spread. No one approves. In greasy spoons and hotel rooms, two young believers are reluctantly falling in love. Cultural pressures and contemporary life collide in this stirring new play by Karla Crome (star of Misfits and Prisoners' Wives). A story about faith, family and bacon butties. Winner of IdeasTap Edinburgh Award. 'Thrilling ... a hugely effective spectacle' (Time Out's Critic's Choice), Our Days of Rage, co-written by Karla Crome: 'an angry and vital piece of theatre ... impressive and exhilarating.' (Exeunt).

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.

Fundamentalists

18-23 August, 13.05

Fundamentalists is a documentary-style drama involving an ex-serviceman from the Afghanistan war who is at a recovery hospital in Wiltshire. His nurse is from Somalia, a country hounded by war, now under constant attack from Al Shabaab. This play is touching, funny and revealing about the truth behind Islamophobia, and how such brave civilians and service personal have witnessed and survived. A strange friendship is forged of mutual respect and equal loss. Performed in International Sign by the hugely talented David Bower and with dance and the poetry of the Somalian language.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and tickets.