



for immediate release 13/09/15

BLOODY SCOTLAND ANNOUNCES 2015 FIGURES, MOST SUCCESSFUL YEAR YET

Organisers of the Bloody Scotland International Crime Writing Festival are today delighted to announce their most successful year yet, having issued 5884 tickets over three days, and to confirm that in 2016, the festival will run from **9-11 September**.

Authors like **Martina Cole, Val McDermid, Ian Rankin, Ann Cleeves, Linwood Barclay, Arne Dahl** and **Peter May** held court over five historic, atmospheric venues in the centre of Stirling during a packed-out, exciting and varied weekend (11-13 September 2015). The opening Friday night alone attracted over 900 audience members for two events: **McDermid** and **May** in conversation, and *Whose Crime Is It Anyway*, a raucous comedy event hosted by **Hardeep Singh Kohli** in which authors **Chris Brookmyre, Caro Ramsay** and **Kevin Wignall** improvised a crime novel live onstage.

Sold out events this year included a session examining the infamous World's Ends Murders, an event looking at the poisons Agatha Christie used to kill her victims, a session on how to self-publish your own books, and author events with **Denise Mina, Belinda Bauer** and leading Nordic writers **Gunnar Staalsen, Johan Theorin** and **Ragnar Jonasson**. The festival also took over famous Stirling whisky bar The Curly Coo for a night, with songs and storytelling from authors like **McDermid, Brookmyre, Lucy Ribchester** and **Ian Rankin** at a lively, fun and completely unprecedented late night session.

The England versus Scotland all-crime-writers football match had high stakes this year, after Scotland beat England 13-1 in 2014. Team captains and bestselling authors **Ian Rankin** and **Simon Kernick** lead their sides to a 5-5 draw.

New initiatives this year included Crime in the Spotlight – a programme offering emerging Scottish novelists Philip Miller, Graham Smith, Col Bury, Graeme Macrae-Burnet, Margot McCuig a five-minute reading ahead of the headlining acts at the Albert Halls. **Ann Cleeves**, author of the *Shetland* series, is currently taking a party of twenty Bloody Scotland audience members on a three-day guided tour round the islands of her inspiration, organised by tour partners McKinley Kidd. Authors including Denise Mina, Val McDermid, Alex Gray and Chris Brookmyre also took part in Bloody Scotland Sees Syria, a rally demonstrating solidarity with refugees, on the afternoon of Saturday 12.

Over 75 authors attended the festival, the largest number to date, including **Arne Dahl, Christopher Brookmyre, Lindsey Davis, Philip Kerr, Margie Orford, Alex Gray, Caro Ramsay, Craig Robertson, Lin Anderson, Simon Sylvester, Louise Welsh, Alexandra Sokoloff, Mark Douglas-Home, Sophie Hannah, Matt Bendoris** and **Simon Kernick**. **Craig Russell's** *The Ghosts of Altona* won the Bloody Scotland Crime Book of the Year Award, which was announced on Saturday 12 September; a separate press release about this is available on request.

COMMENT

Festival Director Dom Hastings said 'The audience response this year has been phenomenal. We try particularly hard to create unusual and exciting events that will help bring the books off the page, so it's gratifying to see so much enthusiasm when we try, say, taking over a whisky bar and making our authors sing for their suppers! There have been some truly special events this year, in what has been an exceptionally strong year for crime fiction in Scotland. The audience's passion for crime writing and the kind of experience Bloody Scotland can offer is really helping to make Stirling in September a destination for internationally bestselling authors, and their readers.'

NOTES FOR EDITORS

Bloody Scotland is Scotland's International Crime Writing Festival and takes place in a number of venues in Central Stirling each September. Established in 2012, the festival aims to showcase the very best Scottish and international crime writing, nurture the next generation of writers through masterclasses and provide opportunities to highlight Scottish crime writing on an international stage. Bloody Scotland 2015 ran from 11-13 September. Bloody Scotland is supported by Creative Scotland, EventScotland and Stirling Council. Excellent high res images from the festival weekend are available on request.

ENDS