



**Press Release: For Immediate Release 15 June 2016**

**Findhorn Bay Festival announces "Brave" start - promising a spectacular six-day programme featuring internationally renowned singer in Moray the last weekend of September**

Multi-award winning Gaelic singer Julie Fowlis and her band will open the second Findhorn Bay Festival in a very special concert at the historic St Laurence Church, Forres in the heart of Morayshire. The announcement marks the date's launch for the festival, which will take place from September 21-26, 2016.

Julie who was nominated for BBC Radio 2's Folk Awards 2015, as 'Folk Singer of the Year', and 'Best Artist' at the Songlines World Music Awards and is known for singing the theme song to Brave, Disney Pixar's Oscar, Golden Globe and BAFTA winning animated film will perform with her band and especially for this opening will be joined by Moray flautist, Uilleann piper and composer Calum Stewart and the Nairn Gaelic Choir.

Speaking about being the opening act Julie Fowlis said: "I'm delighted to be coming to the festival, and especially to be collaborating with local musicians and singers. I love the idea of performing in the beautiful setting of St Laurence Church in Forres."

Building on the success of the first festival in 2014 Year of Homecoming Scotland which was visited by 12,721 spectators attending over 65 events during the celebration, this year's festival is part of Scotland's Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design and will showcase a series of exhibitions, installations and tours spotlighting Moray's important contribution to the country's built environment. There will be a special focus upon green innovation taking place at Brodie Castle with events highlighting ground-breaking conservation and environmental projects and celebrating our built environment through a number of lighting events and installations including a first for Scotland Guerrilla Lighting events and tours in Forres and Findhorn.

Festival director Kresanna Aigner said: "The biennial Findhorn Bay Festival is a spectacular six-day celebration of arts and culture, showcasing artists of national and international renown and our opening concert demonstrates the quality of our programme. I cannot wait to launch the full festival programme on July 14th. There is a range of creative talent from near and far participating in this second edition of the Festival – something to inspire everyone. I can truly say Forres area is a 'Creative Place Winner.'"

The Findhorn Bay Festival 2016 programme will be launched on July 14.

For more information about Festival highlights and to buy tickets, visit [www.findhornbayfestival.com](http://www.findhornbayfestival.com)

ENDS

For further information, interviews or images of artists, natural landscapes, historic buildings etc, please contact one of the team on:

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Notes to editor:

### 1. Findhorn Bay Arts

Findhorn Bay Festival is produced by Findhorn Bay Arts, based in Forres and is a non-profit arts organisation, connecting creativity, people and place by:

- Delivering high quality arts events and projects.
- Nurturing and showcasing the creativity of the people of Moray.
- Celebrating and promoting Moray as a place for outstanding arts.

### 2. National Festival Funding Partners

Creative Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Event Scotland

All partners including regional, local and creative partners will be announced at our programme launch on 14 July.

### 3. Creative Place Award

Forres area – Winner of the 'Creative Place 2015' award

The Creative Place Awards is for smaller communities across Scotland, outside of the main cities, to enable them to enhance and promote the creative activities and programmes in their area. The awards recognise the communities' ambitions in using the arts for the benefit of both local residents and visitors to their area.

Run by Creative Scotland and supported by EventScotland, the awards encourage cultural organisations, community groups and/ or local authorities to represent their village, town or community, and bid for an award to further develop their creative programme and profile.

### 4. Accommodation partners

For visitors from further afield the local accommodation is eclectic and takes in hotels, self-catering, eco cabins, wigwams and a B&B built of straw.

To assist your visit, Findhorn Bay Arts have compiled a list of local area accommodation providers for your information.

Official Festival Accommodation partner is Findhorn Bay Holiday Park which is offering discounts to festival ticket holders.

[www.findhornbayholidaypark.com](http://www.findhornbayholidaypark.com)

### 5. Year of Innovation Architecture and Design

The Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design 2016 is a Scottish Government initiative being led by VisitScotland and supported by partners Scottish Government, Creative Scotland, Architecture + Design Scotland, Scottish Tourism Alliance, Scottish Enterprise, The National Trust for Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.