



**POMEGRANATES FESTIVAL
OF INTERNATIONAL TRADITIONAL DANCE**

WORLD TRAD DANCE ON SCREEN

WHERE CHOREOGRAPHY MEETS CINEMATOGRAPHY

**25 APR 2025
18:30**

**SCOTTISH STORYTELLING CENTRE
43-45 HIGH STREET, EDINBURGH, EH1 1SR**

TRADITIONAL
DANCE
FORUM OF
SCOTLAND

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#pomegranatesfestival

“By turning the lens toward movement, the World Trad Dance on Screen programme offers more than a cross-cultural showcase — it’s an effort to redefine how traditional forms can be experienced in the 21st century. In bringing these films together, the Pomegranates Festival signals an appetite for innovation within the field of traditional dance, and – hopefully – a growing audience for the genre in its evolving, screen-based form.”

The Quinttessential Review

Pomegranates Festival is curated by Traditional Dance Forum of Scotland in partnership with

TRADITIONAL
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WHY POMEGRANATES?

INTRODUCTION BY ILIYANA NEDKOVA AND WENDY TIMMONS



We are very pleased that this year's Pomegranates Festival opening evening show is all about world traditional dance and music specifically devised for the camera, not for the stage. An opportunity to reframe our traditions anew through the cinematic lens, from Scottish step to street dance.

Following years of curating, judging and producing short dance films and screen dance festivals, we know that magic happens when cinematography meets choreography. Yet, there is no dedicated platform for trad dance on screen. Wait for the dance film festival circuit to create such a platform? Instead, we decided to launch our own global programme and sow the (pomegranate) seeds by selecting ten of the best and rarest examples in this emerging new genre from the last decade, spanning styles such as Scottish Highland, Chinese Ji Guan, Indian Kathak and Hip Hop.

World Trad Dance on Screen is bookended by three films by multi-award winning Canadian filmmaker **Marlene Millar**, *Offering*, *Bhairava* and *To Begin the Dance Once More*. The first is a defiant body-percussive procession featuring street dance artist **Omari Motion Carter**, the latter - our first-ever screen dance set to an epic poem by **Donald Smith**, weaving Scottish and Egyptian tales of the deities Beira, Bride and Isis, reimagined as climate refugees. Millar's *Bhairava*, co-directed with **Philip Szporer**, evokes Shiva, another deity, filmed at the Indian world heritage site of Hampi.

Olga Maloney's *Echoes of a Taiko Drum*, continues with *Bhairava's* exploration of Indian Kathak on screen by joyfully entwining it with Irish and Georgian trad dance forms, all set to Japanese Taiko.

Local traditions are represented too. *Home*, by Canadian cinematographer **Kes Tagney**, features Scottish step dancer **Sophie Stephenson** in a lyrical homage to place and belonging, while *Second Guessing*, by the Scottish Bgirl **Emma Ready**, takes a hard look at coercive control through the language of breakdance.

Other Scotland-based artists' works include **Hanna Tuulikki's** *Deer Dancer*, a striking meditation on masculinity inspired by dances said to imitate deer, including the Highland Fling; **Lyuxian Yu's** *Crowned by Flame*, that fuses cigarette-box percussion dance with Chinese Yi culture iconography and landscape; **Mare Tralla's** *The Bright Fabric of Life*, which positions screen dance as activism using African traditional dance to explore motherhood and kinship, echoing the activist poet's voice and the trio of Hip Hop dancers in **Jonzi D's** *Autocorrect*.

We hope this Pomegranates Festival programme and the post-screening Q&A with the filmmakers will urge us to consider how we could continue to honour and celebrate traditional dance sensitively by zooming in on any problematic, colonial or patriarchal stories inscribed in its living heritage.

PROGRAMME

OFFERING

2023, DIR. MARLENE MILLAR AND SANDY SILVA



HOME

2024, DIR. KES TAGNEY AND SOPHIE STEPHENSON

CROWNED BY FLAME

2024, DIR. LYUXIAN YU AND YINGYING LI

THE BRIGHT FABRIC OF LIFE

2024, DIR. MARE TRALLA AND VINCENT HANTAM

DEER DANCER

2019, DIR. HANNA TUULIKKI

AUTOCORRECT

2022, DIR. JONZI D

SECOND GUESSING

2023, DIR. EMMA READY AND THERESE LYNCH

ECHOES OF A TAIKO DRUM

2022, DIR. OLGA MALONEY AND ANNE PARISIO

BHAIRAVA

2017, DIR. MARLENE MILLAR AND PHILIP SZPORER

TO BEGIN THE DANCE ONCE MORE

2023, DIR. MARLENE MILLAR AND VINCENT HANTAM

FIND FURTHER DETAILS ABOUT THE PROGRAMME BY VISITING THE THE FESTIVAL WEBSITE OR SCANNING THE QR CODE

WWW.TDFS.ORG/POMEGRANATES

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: TRADITIONAL DANCE FORUM OF SCOTLAND AS PART OF TRADITIONAL ARTS AND CULTURE SCOTLAND (TRACS) | CURATED FOR POMEGRANATES FESTIVAL 2025 | CURATORS/PRODUCERS: **WENDY TIMMONS AND ILIYANA NEDKOVA** | ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE: **LORRAINE PRITCHARD** | SOUND & PROJECTION: **RODDY SIMPSON** | CURATORIAL SUPPORT: **XIAOXUAN ZHONG, JINGYIN CAI AND YU XIE** | PR AND PUBLICITY: **EMMA HENDERSON** | SOCIAL MEDIA: **ALISON HARM** | INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT: SCOTTISH STORYTELLING CENTRE AND MORAY HOUSE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND SPORT, UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH