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UNIQUE PUBLICATION BY EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL

The Edinburgh International Book Festival today launched its own new book of specially commissioned work from four of Scotland's most internationally acclaimed and award-winning authors. For the first time in its 25 year history, the Book Festival is commissioning, publishing and touring writers, as well as presenting their work within the world's premier book festival, thanks to support from the Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund.

John Burnside, Janice Galloway, A L Kennedy and Don Paterson – who have won a remarkable array of Scottish, UK and international literary awards – have created new stories and poems for the new publication, *Lights Off The Quay*. The authors read from their work in a special, sold-out event today, introduced by Minister for Culture Linda Fabiani, and attended by members of the public as well as 80 international delegates brought to the festival by the British Council. The event will be available to view on the festival's website, www.edbookfest.co.uk in a few days.

In the autumn, the authors will tour to Norway where they will be part of the programme of Stavanger, 2008 European Capital of Culture. The Scottish director of Stavanger's Year of Culture, Mary Miller, attended today's celebrations.

Linda Fabiani said "*Lights Off The Quay* is exactly the kind of opportunity we established the Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund for – to showcase Scottish-based talent at the Festivals and beyond. These very talented authors are fantastic ambassadors for Scotland and will be demonstrating to readers across the world that Scotland's strong literary tradition is thriving."

Catherine Lockerbie, Director of the Edinburgh International Book Festival said "This is an incredibly exciting project, a whole new development for the festival. I was overjoyed to be able to commission these four writers, who represent the very best of contemporary writing, and even more overjoyed when they all instantly agreed. The work they have produced is quite

brehtaking – testimony to the extraordinary literary talent present in Scotland.”

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