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[Photos and videos are available on request.]

**Women’s Stories Shared – In-person and Online**

*Better Said Than Done Presents the 2023 Women’s Storytelling Festival, both in-person in Fairfax City, VA, and online*

November 29, 2022 -- Fairfax, Virginia -- The Women’s Storytelling Festival, hosted by Better Said Than Done, will take place March 24 - 26, 2023, in-person at The Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. The festival will also be live-streamed online. Showcasing a wide range of storytelling styles, the 2023 festival features 15 storytellers performing in-person, 5 storytellers performing in a virtual-only showcase, and 7 storytellers competing in the People’s Choice Storytelling Contest. All ticket holders, whether in-person or virtual, will be able to watch the festival videos for one month after the festival concludes.

For schedules, other details, and tickets, visit

<https://www.bettersaidthandone.com/womens-festival/>.

The 27 storytellers in the 2023 Women’s Storytelling Festival are coming from California, Connecticut, Virginia, and many states in between. They will be sharing personal stories, folk tales, and stories of adventure. Some of them are new-ish to storytelling, and some have been performing for over 20 years. Among the festival performers are authors of books, creators of CDs, stars of TV shows, podcasters, and contributors to Risk, Stories from the Stage, and the Moth storytelling shows.

Storyteller Lyn Ford (OH) describes the Women’s Storytelling Festival as an event “where the voices of women are unconditionally honored, valued, and recognized as limitless in their scope and power.” Virtual showcase storyteller Rachel Ann Harding (Longmont, CO) adds, “Women have unique wisdom and expression in storytelling. I appreciate the festival's celebration of women's voices in the art form.”

Storyteller Carol Moore (Herndon, VA), has this to say about being chosen to perform in the festival, “When I first heard about the WSF in 2019, I never imagined that I would have the opportunity to participate. Being a part of a moment like this that purposefully highlights and celebrates women is nothing short of a privilege.”

“I performed with the Women's Storytelling Festival online in 2021, and it was a profound experience,” returning storyteller Mo Reynolds (Rexburg, ID) adds. “The stories and the women

and the community that was created over a weekend stunned me. The lineup of talent was remarkable, as was the generosity of the audience--and that was all through a computer screen. There was such a variety of voices and styles, I was humbled to be a part of it and thrilled to be invited back again.”

About the evolution of the festival, producer Jessica Robinson has this to say, “2023 will be our 4<sup>th</sup> event. The festival debuted in March of 2020, days before Virginia shut down due to the pandemic. 2021 was entirely virtual, and, in 2022, we returned to in-person but kept the virtual option for the many people who chose to watch from home. For 2023, we’re excited to once again perform in-person in Fairfax City, and are excited to again offer the live stream, and recordings for one month after. In addition, we’ve added a virtual-only showcase so that we can include some more storytellers from across the country. And as a continued effort to expand our circle of storytellers, we created the People’s Choice Storytelling Contest. Over 300 people voted to nominate their favorite storytellers. Seven were chosen to compete in a story contest during the festival weekend.”

People’s Choice Story Contestant Teri Lott (Thornville, OH) says, “I was a virtual audience member of the 2022 WSF. I was wowed by the variety of extremely talented storytellers and the amazing stories that were presented. By the end of the festival, I decided that I'd like to be a part of this fantastic experience. I applied to be a People's Choice teller. I'm excited to be joining the festival and am looking forward to being a small part of this fabulous festival.” Fellow contestant Julie Bradshaw (Irmo, SC) adds, “I am tremendously excited about performing in the 2023 Women's Storytelling Festival alongside such incredibly talented storytellers!”

The Women’s Storytelling Festival kicks off Friday, March 24, 2023, at 5 pm EDT, with our virtual showcase, and the in-person storytelling begins at 7 pm EDT. The festival concludes Sunday, March 26, 2023, at 6 pm. [Performer [bios here.](#)]

Early-bird pricing for a full festival pass, effective through February 24, 2023, is \$30 for a virtual ticket and \$50 for an in-person ticket. Starting February 25, 2023, the price of a virtual ticket will be \$40, and an in-person ticket will be \$60. There will also be one-day in-person passes available at the door for \$35 per day. Those who only want to watch and vote in the People’s Choice Story Contest can purchase a virtual-only ticket for the contest for \$23.

“Women's stories have never been showcased to the same extent that men's stories have,” says Laura Deal (Boulder, CO). “It's essential to have venues where women have the stage, to expand the reach of those stories and help bring some balance into the culture.”

Cindy Rivka Marshall adds, “There’s something about bringing women together to speak our truths, in all our diversity, that is very powerful. While we all may have a variety of stories in our repertoires, we make choices about what to tell depending on the context. A Women’s Storytelling Festival brings forth an expansive sense of women’s lived experience and creativity.”

"It's a unique flavor and offers opportunities for emerging tellers to push the storytelling envelope, and established tellers who want to try powerful new works," says Anne Rutherford (Portland, OR). "I had the pleasure of jumping in at the 2021 Festival and was wowed by the quality of MCs and other tellers. I told a story that is risky in general storytelling-land and the audience and teller response was hugely positive. The WSF brought out my best storytelling!"

"It was a tremendous experience to be a part of the online festival in 2021," adds Misty Mator (Pittsburgh, PA). "I loved how the festival highlighted diversity AND common humanity simultaneously. It was delightful to get all the rich flavors of so many women's unique backgrounds from their stories, and through those stories see (again) the common life experiences that unite us all, particularly as women. It was inspiring."

"The word storytelling conjures up ideas of a grey-bunned woman at the library reading to children. That is not a bad thing...but it is not this thing," adds Kim Weitkamp (OH). "This festival gathers a diverse group of women, vibrating with wisdom and creativity, who offer up the ancient art of storytelling as something to be witnessed by men and women of all ages."

Jennifer Munro (Madison, CT) continues, "The women who perform at the festival are as diverse as their stories, which represent a wide range of experience, from poignant, to thought provoking, to downright hilarious. "

"The cool part is that there really is something for everyone. You get your funny, you get your heart felt, you get adventure, and you get the mundane elevated to adventure," says Sammie James (NJ).

As to why we still need a festival for women, Stacy Parish (Appleton, WI) explains, "Because women's voices MATTER. Connection matters. And women lifting other women up MATTERS." Cyndi Wish (Kingston, NJ) adds, "Women are interesting. It's all the unpaid domestic labor and the federal government taking away our rights to reproductive health. Makes women good storytellers and as long as that remains true, it's important to have this festival."

As Mo Reynolds puts it, "History is full of muted women. This festival builds a community, and fosters a space where women encourage women to tell their stories and use their voices. Women need this, they need each other. Storytelling is all about connection."

Festival tickets are on sale now at <https://www.bettersaidthandone.com/womens-festival/>. The stories are intended for a mature audience; people of all gender identities are welcome to attend.

Of producing the festival Jessica Robinson concludes, "I've been a storyteller for 16 years, and storytelling show producer for 11. I can honestly say, the Women's Storytelling Festival is what I am most proud of as a producer and, as a fan of storytelling, some of the best damn storytelling I have ever seen. 2023 is going to be another amazing weekend of stories and I cannot wait to watch and enjoy."

Gwendolyn J. Napier (Atlanta, GA) says, "This will be my first year. I am excited to be part of the festival and sharing a story!"

"I'm a newbie and very excited and honored to be part of the 2023 festival," exclaims Bowen Lee (Monterey, CA). "Already I feel a part of a warm, strong, powerful community - joining the sisterhood of storytellers. They can make you laugh and cry, sing and dance, reflect and look far into the future. And, yes, they can tell a great story."

When asked what the audience can expect, storyteller Laura Deal says, "Though storytellers have long known it, science has only recently shown how the audience's brains and breathing sync up when we're all experiencing the same story. The shared experience of an art form that goes back into human's pre-history is not only entertaining, but builds our compassion as we find ground where we can all stand, recognizing each other as fully human. It's not only fun, it's good for our brains to participate in this ancient and uniquely human experience."

Jennifer Munro cautions, "Don't come with any preconceived notions about what to expect and be prepared to leave profoundly transformed."

"Storytelling & Narrative Performance is like the best combination of theatre and a heartfelt conversation," Misty Mator concludes. "It's an artform everyone should experience - more than once!"

**Better Said Than Done** defines storytelling as the art of performing a story in front of a live audience. Storytelling is a performance, an art, a form of entertainment, and, from our mouths, a reality the audience will not forget. **Better Said Than Done, Inc.**, was launched in May 2011 by **Jessica Piscitelli Robinson**, to bring the art of storytelling to Northern Virginia. For more information on upcoming shows, storytellers, or workshops, please visit <https://bettersaidthandone.com>.

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#### Storyteller Bios:

Festival attendees will find a range of stories and storytelling styles featuring diverse experiences and cultures. Learn more about the festival's 27 storytellers here:

<https://www.bettersaidthandone.com/womens-festival/2023-storytellers/>