

# THE STORY BEAST

## BEAST BITE

### Women's Storytelling Festival

by Jessica Piscitelli Robinson

*Full behind-the-scenes article coming March 20, 2025!*

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beyond our  
quarterly  
e-publication

Jessica Piscitelli Robinson is the Executive Director of Better Said Than Done and has been producing storytelling shows since 2011. She has performed at Exchange Place at the National Storytelling Festival, on WGBH's "Stories from the Stage," and at festivals including Stone Soup, Washington Folk, Florida, and Hampton. A 2023 ORACLE Award recipient from the National Storytelling Network, Jessica is also the author of *Caged* (2019) and *Stages: My Life in Stories* (2024). Her *Guide to Personal Storytelling* (2024) is available through Story Crossroads.



**Left to Right:**  
Aimee Snow, Claire  
Hennessy, Roopa Mohan,  
Sheila Arnold, Megan Hicks,  
and Bonnie Gardner

The Women's Storytelling Festival (WSF) returns March 20–23, 2025, at the Sherwood Community Center in Fairfax, VA, with online streaming available. Unlike other festivals, WSF features an all-women lineup—sharing personal, historical, folk, and original fiction stories. But the difference isn't just in who tells the stories; it's in the atmosphere. There's a freedom here, a permission to tell stories that might not fit elsewhere. Maybe it's because WSF isn't family-friendly, with no holds barred. Or maybe it's because the audience comes ready to truly listen. The result? A space where women can shed their skins and let their selkie selves shine.

Yet for all the magic, WSF remains small. Even with virtual attendance, we've never broken 800 in a year. Some people, men and women alike, seem unsure about what a women's festival might be. But those who do come return, drawn by the power of the stories and storytellers. There's no big financial reward, just the deep satisfaction of watching it unfold—seeing volunteers return, emcees give their time, and world-class storytellers apply, not for fame or money, but because this festival means something.

That's why we keep doing it. Because women's stories matter. Storytelling connects, challenges, and transforms. Even as we work to grow, we know we've built something to be proud of. We may not be the biggest festival, but we are mighty. And we will keep holding this space, hoping that one day, more people will listen. We are women. Hear us tell.



# storybeast.org

