

October fests get together

Andrew Welsh

MORE than 25,000 visitors are expected to flock to Perthshire next month for four linked cultural attractions.

The Pitlochry Autumn Festival, Dougie MacLean's Perthshire Amber, the Heartland Film Festival and Scotland's largest outdoor light show, the Enchanted Forest, have joined forces in a bid to lure a record turnout in late October.

The Enchanted Forest, set around Loch Dunmore in Faskally Wood, just outside Pitlochry, attracts up to 17,000 spectators each year.

This year's show on the theme 'A Journey Through Space', will see visitors being transported to the forest by special coaches made to look like shuttle orbiters.

Aimed at a younger audience, Pitlochry Autumn Festival, which was launched last year with the support of over 90 local businesses, features a Halloween marquee in Pitlochry's main street, storytelling in a Mongolian yurt, half hourly ghost tours and street entertainment.

More than 60 musicians will vie to be voted the public's best busker during the free event, which runs for the duration of the Enchanted Forest.

Meanwhile, musical feast Perthshire Amber will again revolve around Highland



FESTIVAL: Dougie MacLean's Perthshire Amber is one of four autumn festivals in Highland Perthshire.

Perthshire's internationally acclaimed composer Dougie MacLean, who is best known for the song Caledonia.

Including performances by the likes of MacLean, Deaf Shepherd and Benny Gallagher, from Gallagher and Lyle, the 10-day event attracts fans from all over the world.

Completing the line-up, Made In Scotland is the theme of this year's Heartland Film Festival in Aberfeldy, which runs from October 24-26.

Pitlochry Autumn Festival Committee chairman James Rattray said it was decided

to combine the four events to boost the prospects of a bumper attendance.

"Each festival's flyers, web sites and communications include reference to the others," he said yesterday.

"By combining and working together we will hopefully heighten the awareness of all the activities available and encourage visitors to the area to be a part of all four festivals."

The Enchanted Forest and Pitlochry Autumn Festival run from October 17 to November 2.

Perthshire Amber starts a week later.