



Contemporary arts inspired by Robert Burns

Embargo 0.01am Friday 6 October 2017

BURNS UNBROKE: NEW MULTI-ARTS FESTIVAL AT SUMMERHALL
CONTEMPORARY ARTS INSPIRED BY THE LIFE AND WORK OF
ROBERT BURNS

25 JANUARY – 10 MARCH 2018

Embargo: 0.01am 6th October 2017

Burns Unbroke opens on 25 January 2018 at Summerhall in Edinburgh. This new, contemporary, multi-arts festival will celebrate the variety of artistic and performing practices currently on offer in Scotland, and beyond, through the prism offered by new interpretations of the life and work of Robert Burns. The inspiration for the title comes from the epigraph, which Burns marked as 'anon', printed at the beginning of his first poetry collection, the Kilmarnock edition, published in 1786*.

The festival's innovative visual arts programme features over 30 visual artists and there will be newly commissioned work by four Scottish based artists. In addition, the programme of events includes an Alternative Burns Night, spoken word performances, children's performances and a tailor made programme of music. Interdisciplinarity is at the heart of this project and new synergies will be offered to a diverse audience, providing a unique experience of contemporary interpretations of Scotland's national bard.

An advisory panel has been appointed for *Burns Unbroke*: Gerry Carruthers (Francis Hutcheson Professor of Scottish Literature, University of Glasgow), Calum Colvin (Professor of Contemporary Art Practice, Dundee University), Pete Irvine (Founder of Unique Events) and Emma Nicolson (Director, Atlas Arts).

Burns Unbroke will take place at Summerhall where the visual art will be on display in 11 galleries for six weeks, from 25 January – 10 March 2018, with the majority of performance events focussed around the weekend of 26-28 January. The exhibitions will be open to the public, Tuesdays to Sundays, throughout the six weeks and entry is free.

Burns Unbroke is a partnership between Sheilagh Tennant of artruist and Summerhall, Edinburgh's most exciting new centre for visual and performing arts, best known for its innovative Fringe programmes.

The prime aims of *Burns Unbroke* will be to highlight the continuing relevance of Burns's words and the remarkable extent of his influence as well as attracting/inspiring new, younger audiences.

Sheilagh Tennant, *Burns Unbroke* Director, says “*Burns Unbroke provides the opportunity, for the first time, to bring together such an impressive range of visual and performance artists under one banner.*”

Sarah MacIntyre, Visual Arts Officer at Creative Scotland said: “*This new interdisciplinary festival exploring Robert Burns’s enduring influence and legacy will bring together an eclectic range of artists offering audiences contemporary responses to the poet’s life and writing.*”

Robert McDowell, Director of Summerhall said: “*You know you are dealing with a great artist when he is taxing you over two centuries after he died and he will continue to tax us for centuries to come,*”

Dr Alasdair Allan, Minister for International Development and Europe, said: “*Burns Night is undoubtedly one of Scotland’s most well-known and best loved national days, celebrated by millions around the world. Burns is one of our favourite icons and he encapsulates the very essence of being Scottish – creativity, pride and confidence. Each new year millions of people from all corners of the world join hands and come together to sing ‘Auld Lang Syne’ together, perhaps Burn’s best known contribution.*”

“*Every year on January 25th, the day of his birth, Scots, and Scots at heart remember the life and cultural legacy of Burns by hosting a Burns Supper. Glasses of whisky are raised in toast and haggis is addressed like no other food, it is a wonderful opportunity to come together in celebration.*”

Burns Unbroke is supported by the National Lottery through Creative Scotland’s Open Project Fund. Further funding is supplied by Scotland’s Winter Festivals event fund and sponsorship from Isle of Arran Distillers Ltd.



LOTTERY FUNDED



SUMMERHALL
Open Minds Open Doors



Burns Night
scotland.org/winter



artruist
independent
art consultancy

LISTINGS DETAILS

Event: Burns Unbroke
Venue: Summerhall, Summerhall Place, Edinburgh EH9 1PL
Dates: 25 January – 10 March 2018
Times: 11am-6pm Free Entry Tuesday – Sunday (closed Monday)
Website: www.burnsunbroke.co.uk

For further information contact:
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*The Simple Bard, unbroke by rules of art.
He pours the wild effusions of the heart:
And if inspir’d ‘tis Nature’s pow’rs inspire;
Her’s all the melting thrill, and her’s the kindling fire.*

About Creative Scotland

Creative Scotland is the public body that supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all parts of Scotland on behalf of everyone who lives, works or visits here. We enable people and organisations to work in and experience the arts, screen and creative industries in Scotland by helping others to develop great ideas and bring them to life. We distribute funding provided by the Scottish Government and the National Lottery. For further information about Creative Scotland please visit www.creativescotland.com Follow us @creativescots and www.facebook.com/CreativeScotland

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Burns Night

1. Burns, our national bard, is one of Scotland's favourite icons encapsulating the very essence that makes Scots Scottish – creative, proud and confident.
2. Robert Burns, or 'Rabbie' as he is affectionately known, was born in Alloway, South Ayrshire, in 1759. He began writing poetry and songs at an early age and became famous across Scotland for his writings.
3. After his death at the age of just 37, Rabbie's works became internationally renowned and to this day, people from all corners of the world sing 'Auld Lang Syne' to bring in the New Year.
4. Every year Scots and Scots are heart from across the global celebrate Burns' birthday, 25th January, to end the Winter Festival period. This national day has always been steeped in tradition and valued as a natural way of feeling truly Scottish by celebrating Burns' life and cultural legacy by coming together with friends or family and partake in a Burns Supper.
5. A Burns Supper is often an engaging spectacle. The haggis is traditionally piped in to dinner and then specifically addressed in poetry. Further poems including 'A Toast to the Lassies' are exchanged by dinner guests with accompanying drams of whisky, however there are many modern variations and twists on these traditions that befits Scotland, a country that champions fairness, equality and inclusivity.
6. Learn more about Robert Burns himself and how to hold your own modern Burns Supper as well as the meaning behind some of his most famous words and phrases by visiting scotland.org/burns.
7. The Scotland's Winter Festivals event fund is managed by EventScotland on behalf of the Scottish Government.