

Poetry on the Rocks

“Look to the living, love them, and hold on” was projected onto the north face of Castle Rock from dusk on St Valentine’s Day to celebrate the importance of love in all its forms. The line is from ‘Disenchantments’, a poem by the award-winning Scottish poet, Douglas Dunn.

The projection took place from 5.30pm to 11.00pm today. The Edinburgh Reporter went up to have a look. The image was being projected from the back of a pick-up in Castle Street where the Carry a Poem staff were handing out ‘business cards’ with a line from a poem on them, but were reluctant to be interviewed at length. Here are some of our images from this evening.....

Edinburgh was designated the first UNESCO City of Literature in late 2004 and as a result the Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust charity was formed to promote reading in Edinburgh, encourage involvement with Scotland’s literature and nurture literary partnerships around the world.

Poetry Projections in Edinburgh

Ali Bowden, Director of the Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust, said “We are delighted that Historic Scotland is supporting the Carry A Poem campaign, and joining us in bringing poetry to Edinburgh Castle, the iconic cultural image of Scotland’s Capital City. This one-off projection joins 5 other poems shining throughout the city – 2 onto the City Chambers, the new extension of the Usher Hall, the National Library of Scotland and at the Foot of Leith Walk – all of which can be enjoyed until March.”

Fiona Hyslop, Minister for Culture and External Affairs, said “Edinburgh Castle is a fitting choice to be one of the key focal points of this innovative campaign, which celebrates Edinburgh’s status as a UNESCO City of Literature. As a city

and as a country we are extremely proud of this and by celebrating it in this way I hope that it provides local people and visitors alike with a powerful and memorable symbol of our diverse and renowned literary heritage.”

The Poet

Robyn Marsack, Director of the Scottish Poetry Library, said “Douglas Dunn’s lines are so appropriate: they say that love endures, like the Castle rock which they’ll illuminate for a night.”

Douglas Dunn commented “I’m really chuffed – it’s like having my name in lights above a theatre – and what a theatre! I’m so pleased to be involved.”

Carry a Poem Campaign

Jenny Dawe, Leader of City of Edinburgh Council said “There can be few cities in the world as romantic or inspiring as Edinburgh, and what better focal point for this St Valentine’s Day poetry projection than our iconic Castle? Carry a Poem is proving to be a hugely thought-provoking campaign in this City of Literature, demonstrating the power of words to move, amuse and console us.”

Poems are being animated, raced in the Poetry Olympics, narrated, read and most of all carried around Edinburgh this month as part of the Carry A Poem citywide reading campaign. Co-ordinated by the Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust and the Scottish Poetry Library, the campaign aims to encourage and inspire Edinburgh’s residents to carry poems they love with them. Thousands of free Carry A Poem books and pocket poetry cards have been distributed throughout Edinburgh and energetic poetry fans can take the Carry A Poem Olympic Challenge in Holyrood Park next weekend with poem and spoon races, sack races, toss the poem and much more athletic activity. Events and activities will be running throughout the remainder of the month.