

# Launch of the Edinburgh Lectures

A host of illustrious speakers has been lined up to examine the concept of the city for the upcoming Edinburgh Lectures 2010/11 series.

Entitled 'Talking Cities', the theme for The Edinburgh Lectures programme, which will run from October 2010 to March 2011, is inspired by the very recent 'tipping' of the world's population from a predominantly rural to an urban society.

The lecture programme will feature thought-provoking and illuminating sessions about everything to do with cities: their role in society; their potential for the future; their relationship to the rural sphere; how their design influences their identity; how they are presented in literature and the arts and how they can be a force for societal and economic development through their creative industries and architecture.

First launched in 1992, The Edinburgh Lectures take place throughout the autumn and winter months. Previous speakers have included First Minister Alex Salmond, playwright John Byrne, Baroness Helena Kennedy QC, poet and Nobel Prize-winner Seamus Heaney and Alex Kapranos, lead singer of Scottish band Franz Ferdinand.

The City of Edinburgh Council's lecture this year will be given on 17 November by urban policy expert Greg Clark, whose talk at the National Galleries of Scotland's Hawthornden Lecture Theatre will pose the question: "What are British Cities good at? Does it matter?"

Among the confirmed speakers are:

\* Andrew Dixon, CEO of Creative Scotland

- \* Professor Alberto Magnaghi, Professor of Territorial Planning at the University of Florence
- \* Deyan Sudjic OBE, Director of the Design Museum in London
- \* James Robertson, acclaimed Scottish writer and publisher
- \* Professor Bruce J. Katz, urban policy expert and adviser to the US Government
- \* Greg Clark, Senior Fellow, ULI Europe, Middle East, Africa and India

Councillor Deidre Brock, Culture and Leisure Convenor for the City of Edinburgh Council, said: "For the first time, cities have outstripped rural areas as the home to most of the world's population. The Edinburgh Lectures 'Talking Cities' programme promises to be a fascinating and informative exploration of the concept of the city and we're thrilled to have an outstanding line-up of influential speakers ready to engage and enthrall us."

Andrew Dixon, CEO of Creative Scotland, will give the third Edinburgh Lecture of the series, entitled "Shining the spotlight on Scotland's creative cities", at the Filmhouse on 2 December.

He said: "I am delighted that Creative Scotland has been included in this year's programme. The theme of the programme 'Talking Cities' is exactly what Creative Scotland is about. It's important that people across the country hear about the fantastic work that places contribute to Scotland as whole. Creative Scotland intent to shine a spotlight on Scotland's rich cultural sector."

Lord Provost George Grubb said: "This lecture series will shed light on how cities can and will influence our world. Do cities do more than generate economic income for the region and the nation? The 19th Series of the Edinburgh Lectures will explore how cities also have the potential to provide solutions to our cultural, social and environmental challenges."

The 'Talking Cities' lecture programme will be complemented by a brand new Edinburgh Lectures blog, which can be found [here](#)

The Edinburgh Lectures, now in their 19th year, are presented by The City of Edinburgh Council in association with Creative Scotland; Edinburgh Napier University, Heriot-Watt University, National Museums Scotland, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh; The Open University in Scotland; The Royal Society of Edinburgh; The Scottish Government and The University of Edinburgh.