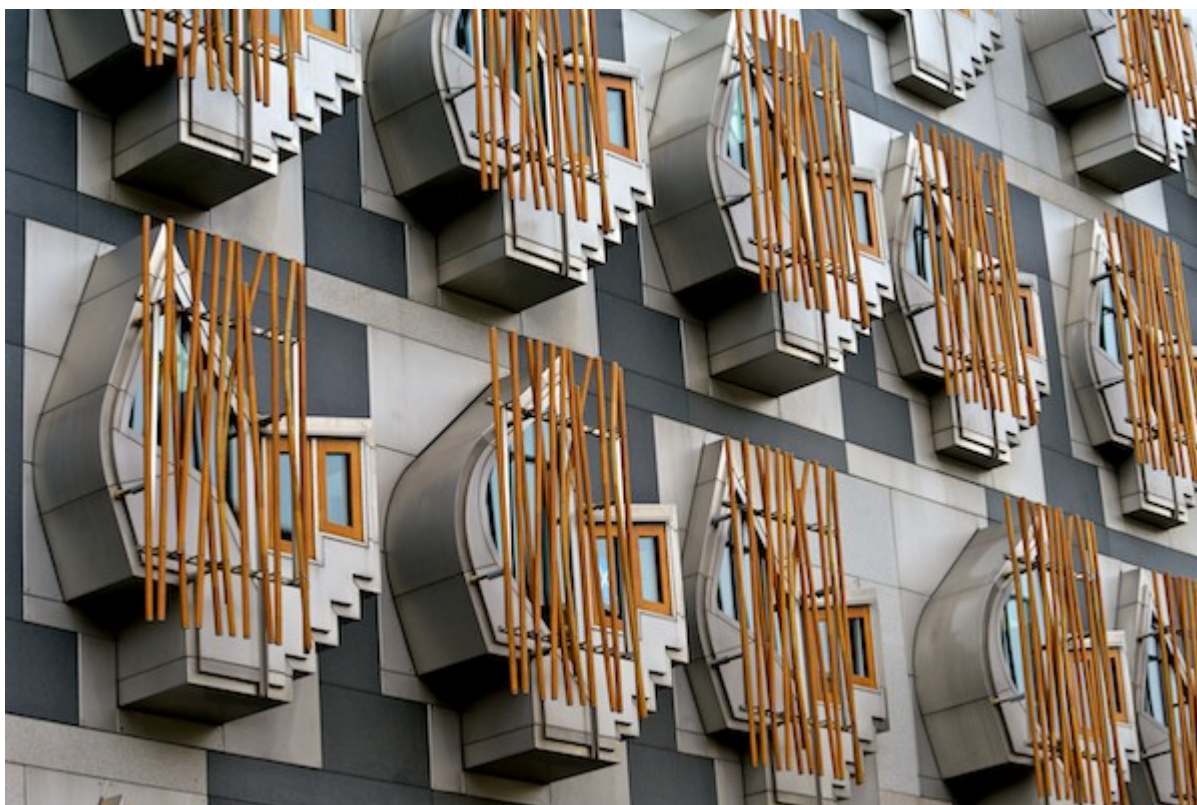


Edinburgh International Culture Summit begins at Holyrood

The Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh this week hosts world leaders from the cultural sector at the fourth Edinburgh International Culture Summit, from Wednesday 22 to Friday 24 August 2018, during one of the world's greatest cultural events, Edinburgh's Festivals.

Ministers and Cultural Policy delegations from 44 countries are expected to attend the Summit this week from the UK, Europe, Asia, Australasia and the Americas, presenting a unique and vital platform to facilitate collaboration between artists, practitioners, thinkers and policy makers from across the globe.



Now in its 4th edition this year the theme of Summit 2018 is ***Culture: Connecting Peoples and Places***. Building on the

succinct and successful format of previous editions, Summit 2018 will address three key themes; **Culture in a Networked World**, **Culture and Investment** and **Culture and Wellbeing**. Each theme will be the focus of a plenary session in the Debating Chamber of the Scottish Parliament, supported both by private policy discussions and workshops.

An impressive line-up of **over 80 speakers** from countries including Denmark, South Africa, China, Romania, India, South Africa, Italy and the US will contribute to the plenary sessions, policy discussions and workshops including **His Excellency The Rt Hon Sir Jerry Mateparae** GNZM, QSO, KStJ, High Commissioner of the New Zealand High Commission, **Dr Catarina Vaz Pinto**, Councillor of Culture from The City of Lisbon, **Joshua Ramo**, Vice Chairman and Co-Chief Executive of Kissinger Associates, USA, **Pu Cunxin**, President, The China Theatre Association, **Wesley Enoch**, Festival Director of the Sydney Festival, **Fairouz Nishanova**, Director, Aga Khan Music Initiative, **Ong Keng Sen**, Artistic Director of TheatreWorks in Singapore, **Constantin Chiriac**, President of Sibiu International Theatre Festival in Romania, **Dr Maria Balshaw** CBE, Director, Tate Art Museums, **Eng Ahmad Al-Maziad**, Chief Executive Officer of General Culture Authority of Saudi Arabia, **Prof Richard Sennett** OBE, Founder and Chair of the Advisory Committee of Theatrum Mundi, **Elizabeth Diller**, Founder of Diller Scofidio + Renfro in the USA, **David Leventhal**, Programme Director and Founding Teacher, Mark Morris Dance Group's Dance for PD® Programme, **Prince Totto Théogène Niwenshuti**, a Multidisciplinary Artist, Dancer and Scholar from South Africa, **Dr Assal Habibi**, Assistant Research Professor at the Brain and Creativity Institute in The University of Southern California, **Prof Bas Bloem**, Medical Director and Consultant Neurologist at Radboud University Medical Centre in The Netherlands, and **Faisal Abu Alhayjaa**, a Fellow from Georgetown University Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics.

The Youth Forum, which was introduced in Summit 2016, has been developed and further integrated into the Summit programme with greater international participation, marking the 2018 Year of Young People in Scotland.

Summit 2018 gives Ministers and senior policy-makers the opportunity to work in collaboration with artists and practitioners and share global best-practice in these areas of cultural welfare, economics and globalisation, in order to develop relevant, effective policies, designed to achieve lasting impact. Participation in high-level bilateral and multilateral meetings will enable them to identify areas for future collaboration and delivery in their home countries.

The Edinburgh International Culture Summit is a collaboration between the British Council, Edinburgh International Festival, Scottish Parliament, Scottish Government and UK Government, delivered on behalf of the partners by the Edinburgh International Culture Summit Foundation.

Summit 2018, in conjunction with the Edinburgh International Culture Summit Foundation acknowledges the significant support of its five founding partners and the significant support of its public, corporate, philanthropic and individual supporters: Aberdeen Asset Management, Baillie Gifford Investment Managers, Creative Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council, Scottish Graduate School for Arts & Humanities, Dundas Global, Edinburgh Partners, Sir Ewan and Lady Brown, Sir Angus and Lady Grossart, The Morton Charitable Trust, Dunard Fund, Binks Trust.

Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Europe and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop MSP said: *“There is no other forum in the world that brings together Culture Ministers from all over the world. The Scottish Government has a strong message to all delegates – we are a modern, outward looking, open and inclusive country and we continue to open our doors and welcome the world. The Summit provides unique opportunities to*

forge new relations, rekindle old ones, for us to learn from each other and for discussions to take place on the role and value of the arts.

“As the Government Minister involved in establishing this Global summit in 2012 I am delighted to see how it has grown and developed. Edinburgh is steeped in a history that is defined by the coming together of people, cultures and ideas from around the world. It is as open to the world now as it ever was and during the Festival it feels as though Edinburgh belongs to the entire world.

“Edinburgh’s Festivals shape and promote Scotland’s identity as a confident, creative and welcoming nation. Edinburgh is hosting the largest celebration of the arts anywhere on the planet with the Edinburgh Festival Fringe the largest arts festival in the world. At the festivals’ peak, 25,000 artists, entertainers and thinkers populate the city with over 1,000 shows per day. Audience attendance is the equivalent of hosting a FIFA World Cup every year.

“And in addition to Edinburgh’s festivals, all the year round there are hundreds of Festivals and celebrations across the length and breadth of Scotland. We’re a nation that cherishes culture for its empowering and transformative power – as underlined in our draft culture strategy. We’re proud of the vibrancy, diversity and excellence of our traditions and our contemporary cultures.

“And of course it feels hugely important now, when the UK – despite Scotland’s vote to remain – is set to leave the European Union. The festivals aren’t just a brilliant excuse for a party – although they are! – they also demonstrate, celebrate and strengthen a sense of internationalism that we hold dear.

“That internationalism is why we established this Edinburgh International Culture Summit in 2012. At a time where

international dialogue and hearing the voices and views of everyone is increasingly important the theme of 'Connecting Peoples and Places' for this Summit is very apt."

Jeremy Wright MP, UK Government Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, said: *"The Edinburgh International Culture Summit provides a unique platform to discuss the incredible power of culture and how it can be used to bring people together from different backgrounds, communities and countries.*

"Edinburgh Festivals encapsulate the creativity that is found across Scotland and the UK, and is the perfect city to host these important discussions.

"The conversations held this week will underline how culture can strengthen bonds between nations, and show that the UK remains an outward looking country that is open to visitors and ideas from across the globe."

Sir Ciarán Devane, Chief Executive of British Council said: *"I am delighted to be at the opening of the 2018 Edinburgh International Summit at the Scottish Parliament. This summit will allow us to share experiences from around the planet – experiences which will help our societies to prosper, which will build trust within and between our communities, and which will establish cooperation between the 44 nations here. In the difficult context in which many of our citizens are living and working, sharing our diverse cultural experiences and programmes, what works and what does not, is more important than ever."*

Fergus Linehan, Director of the Edinburgh International Festival said: *"Each year since 1947, the International Festival and our colleague festivals have created a stage for artists and audiences to meet in a spirit of understanding and friendship. The addition of the Edinburgh International Culture Summit to this family of events has added an essential*

platform for leaders from around to world to examine ways in which culture can drive social wellbeing and prosperity. We are delighted to partner in what I'm sure will be an important and inspirational exchange of ideas."

Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament, Rt. Hon Ken Macintosh MSP who will Chair the Summit said: *"The Scottish Parliament is proud to support art and culture in Scotland and we are delighted to host this unique event which brings together artists, politicians, experts and academics from across the globe. I hope this Summit will lead to new connections and many new opportunities to explore how the arts can further enrich all our lives."*

Sir Jonathan Mills, Director of the Edinburgh International Culture Summit Foundation said *"The theme of Summit 2018, Culture: Connecting Peoples and Places allows us to explore three areas of common interest internationally: Culture in a Networked World, Culture and Investment, and Culture and Wellbeing.*

"In choosing these topics, we hope to encourage delegates to think about how art and culture can help us all to find common ground in a world increasingly dominated by the unprecedented challenges of social media; about the ways in which the policies of many different governments might best balance investment in individual artists, creative communities, and infrastructure; and to explore ways in which culture can make a direct contribution to the health and wellbeing of every sort of human society.

Since the first Summit in 2012 I have a growing appreciation of the complex challenges that each and every minister of Culture faces in advocating for culture within the processes of governments and bureaucracies. I hope that the Summit will emphasise the importance of artistic exchange in a world that is increasingly complex and multi-lateral."

For further information on the Edinburgh International Culture Summit visit: www.culturesummit.com

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