

# At National Museum of Scotland – Robots

There is a new exhibition for you to see from Friday at the National Museum of Scotland.

The major new display explores 500 years of humanity's quest to re-imagine ourselves as machines. Developed by the Science Museum, *Robots* features a unique collection of over 100 robots, from the earliest automata to those from science fiction and modern-day research labs.

Looking at five different time periods, the exhibition considers the role of humanoid robots in religious belief, the Industrial Revolution, popular culture and society's dreams of the future. Recent developments from robotics research are also on display.



Taking a look at Robots Photo Neil Hanna

Visitors can see some of the latest humanoid robots in action, and find out more about what a shared future with robots might be like. There will also be the opportunity to interact with

some of the robots on display.

We spoke to Dr Tacye Phillipson, Senior Curator of Modern Science at National Museums Scotland about the developments of robots and what to look out for. She said : “This fascinating exhibition explores the long history of our attempts to make robots which resemble and move like humans, from clockwork automata designed to amaze and entertain to cutting edge modes robots which can mimic our speech and movement.”

Robots have been at the heart of popular culture since the word ‘robot’ was first used in 1920. Visitors to the exhibition will come face to face with Eric, a modern re-creation of the UK’s first robot and a T800 Terminator used in the film Terminator Salvation.

Also on display will be an astrolabe, made in France in about 1300 and the oldest astronomical instrument originating in western Europe. These clockwork machines provoked ideas about the human body as a machine, leading to the creation of the earliest robots.

Edinburgh is a major centre of robotics research and a new section will be added just for the exhibition’s Edinburgh run, exploring the ground-breaking robotics work going on in the city.

*Robots* is a touring exhibition developed by the Science Museum, London. Its Edinburgh run is the last chance to see it in the UK before it tours internationally. *Robots* at the National Museum of Scotland is supported by players of People’s Postcode Lottery.

**#RobotsExhibition**



Robots – Curator Dr Tacye Phillipson cleans George (1949) who was one of the uk's first humanoid robots.  
Photo Neil Hanna Photography