

# At the RSE this summer – #CuriousRSE

The RSE has the most spectacular exterior on the corner of George Street and Hanover Street – and this summer there will be interesting things going on inside the building too.

*Curious* is a month of talks, workshops, exhibitions and performances exploring some of the most pressing issues and ideas, and they are also offering afternoon tea.

From 2 to 26 August the programme includes topics such as the politics of migration and border control to forensic science, fake news and the science of gin. See the programme below.



[www.iangeorgesonphotography.co.uk](http://www.iangeorgesonphotography.co.uk)

Rebekah Widdowfield, CEO of the RSE said: "Our aim with *Curious* is for everyone who steps through our door to gain a better understanding of who we are, what we do and to come away having learnt something new or having been inspired.

“We believe that knowledge is only useful when it is shared, and our summer events programme will be an opportunity to listen to and talk with some of the fantastic leaders and thinkers living and working in Scotland today. We want as many people as possible to have the chance to come along to the RSE, exchange views and ideas and, hopefully, leave feeling a little more knowledgeable”.

Highlights include :

The *Tea and Just Talk* series takes inspiration from the coffee house discussions of the Scottish Enlightenment as it invites visitors to enjoy a cup of tea while engaging with experts in a friendly café environment. There will not be any presentations, notes or formality, just the chance to ask questions and have a conversation with some of Scotland’s leading authorities on subjects as diverse as Scotland’s energy future, problems around menstruation, the impact of dance on neurological conditions such as dementia, forensic science and the role of law in determining what science is permitted before the court and, in the light of the recent D-Day remembrance ceremonies, the importance of remembering history.

The exhibition *At Risk Academics and Refugees (ARAR): A Portrait* reflects the RSE’s commitment to recognising young professionals of outstanding talent from Scotland’s refugee and displaced migrant communities. Three ARAR members of the RSE Young Academy of Scotland (YAS) sat for portraits with Glasgow-based portrait painter I.D. Campbell and the results are on display. Related events include discussions with the artist and sitters and three live painting sessions during which Iain finishes off his work using photographs of his subjects.

Val McDermid, RSE Fellow and Scottish crime writer will host a discussion with Tom Wood, one of Scotland’s most senior and experienced operational police officers, and Dr. Lucina

Hackman, Principal Investigator and Forensic Anthropologist from Dundee University's Leverhulme Institute. They will consider forensic science since it was first used in the world-famous Buck Ruxton murder case in the 1930s and how it has developed and is used today.

*The Science of Gin* offers an hour-long immersion into the science behind one of the most favoured of drinks and guides participants through modern distillation, botanicals and flavours. A gin and tonic and various tastings will be included in the ticket.

Interactive shows will focus on topics such as colour and its influence on creativity, how learning a second language impacts on our mother tongue, fake news and responsible debate.



Alongside this, the free *Women in Science in Scotland* photographic exhibition in the RSE reception area will continue to attract attention with 26 portraits of some of the fantastic women working in science in Scotland today.

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the periodic table, a new macramé interpretation of the table will also be on display. Comprising over 200,000 knots (and 350 labour hours),

the artwork represents the scarcity and vulnerability of the elements.

In the art section of the programme, *I Am Just My Words* is a mixed-media installation which features members from Write to Life, a Freedom from Torture creative group based in London. Audiences meet Elif, Hasani, Jade, Yami and Anonymous through picking up a pair of headphones and listening to their stories and experiences of the Home Office's substantive interview.

*I Don't Feel Freedom* is an interactive workshop hosted by Right to Remain for those going through, or with an interest in the Home Office's asylum-seeking process, with practical advice.

*The Dimlight Hours* is a show based on a recently-discovered WW2 diary which brings to life the day-to-day experience of a woman and her family caught in air raids, rationing and years of destruction.

During this festivals season, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) will have a home from home at the RSE. The RCS Principal, Professor Jeffrey Sharkey will chair a panel discussion *Arts & Culture: The Best Solutions to the 21st Century's Biggest Problems?*, a provocation debate around the value, impact and potential of the arts and culture in society, now and in the future.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tea and Just Talk Series:</b> <b>Science and Forensic Science</b> Friday 2 August, 4 – 4.45pm Keith Inman, Leverhulme Research Centre for Forensic Science, University of Dundee When the law dictates which aspects of science are permitted in front of a court of law, what does this mean for the scientist?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Breath</b> Monday 5 August, 4 – 4.45pm Professor Laura Gonzalez, The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland What are the meanings and feelings of breathing – a source of energy for actions, emotions, words and thoughts?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>A Tale of Two Cities</b> Tuesday, 6 August 10 – 10.45am Tom Pow, A Year of Conversation 2019 People make Glasgow. What makes Edinburgh?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Enhancing the Individual Capabilities of Young Women</b> Tuesday, 6 August 4 – 4.45pm   Tuesday, 13 August 4 – 4.45pm Dr Liita Cairney, Kalitasha Limited How can we use the menstrual cycle as a framework to teach self-confidence?</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Rise and Fall of Phrenology</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tuesday, 6 August 1 – 1.45pm   Wednesday 7 August 4 – 4.45pm  Professor David Price FGS FRSE, University of Edinburgh</p> <p>Why did 19th century Edinburgh become preoccupied with the idea that a person's personality can be deduced from the shape of his or her skull?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Scotland's Energy Future</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday, 7 August 10 – 10.45am, 1 – 1.45pm  Professor Rebecca Lunn MBE FICE FEng FRSE, University of Strathclyde</p> <p>How do we tackle Scotland's energy future?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>What is Nature-Inspired Engineering?</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thursday, 8 August 10 – 10.45am   Monday, 12 August 1 – 1.45pm  Professor Marc Desmulliez FRSE, Heriot-Watt University</p> <p>What can we learn from nature when it comes to tackling big societal challenges? Come and learn about nature-inspired engineering.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sequencing the Human Genome</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thursday, 8 August 4 -4.45pm   Thursday, 22 August 10 – 10.45am  Professor Ian Jackson FRSE, MRC Human Genetics Unit, IGMM, University of Edinburgh</p> <p>How was the human DNA code determined and will this revolutionise biology and medicine?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Watson, Crick and DNA</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thursday, 8 August 1 – 1.45pm   Thursday 22 August 1 – 1.45pm  Professor Ian Jackson FRSE, MRC Human Genetics Unit, IGMM, University of Edinburgh</p> <p>When James Watson and Francis Crick discovered the structure of DNA in 1952, they did so without doing any experiments themselves. Does fortune favour the brave in science and innovation?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Dance Health</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Friday, 9 August 10 – 10.45am</p> <p>Dr Bethany Whiteside, The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland &amp; Catherine Cassidy, The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland</p> <p>What impact can dance have for people with neurological conditions such as dementia, multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tackling Taboo: Menstrual Misery</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Friday, 9 August 4 – 4.45pm   Friday, 16 August 4 – 4.45pm  Professor Hilary Critchley FMedSci FRSE &amp; Dr Varsha Jain – MRC Centre for Reproductive Health; University of Edinburgh</p> <p>Can we have an open discussion about menstruation and bleeding problems?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>New Opera</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Monday, 12 August 10 – 10.45am</p> <p>Dr Stuart MacRae, The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland</p> <p>Should opera be a respite from the real world or should it reflect it?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>What is so tricky about young people's mental health?</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Monday, 12 August 4 – 4.45pm  Dr Stella Chan, University of Edinburgh</p> <p>Young people's mental health is a challenge being faced globally. What makes us so vulnerable and what we can do to help?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Parenthood and Creativity</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tuesday, 13 August 10 – 10.45am  Dr Emily Doolittle, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland</p> <p>What are the practical and emotional aspects of being a parent and an artist?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>A conversation on... conversation</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday, 14 August 10 – 10.45am  Tom Pow, A Year of Conversation 2019</p> <p>What is the value of conversation? How can it be nurtured in every aspect of our lives?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>How is Composition Research?</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thursday 15 August, 10 – 10.45am  Dr John de Simone, The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland Discussion</p> <p>How and why is composition considered research at Universities and Conservatoires?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Blackbox: Conversations from the Flight Deck</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thursday, 15 August 1 – 1.45pm  Professor Rhona Flin FBPS FRSE, University of Aberdeen</p> <p>How much information has been gained for aviation safety from the analysis of the cockpit voice records?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Steeped in History</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Friday, 16 August 10 – 10.45am  Tom Pow, A Year of Conversation 2019</p> <p>What is the value of remembering and/or forgetting historical events such as the end of WW1 and D-Day?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Psychiatry: 'perpetually in crisis'?</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Monday, 19 August 4 – 4.45pm   Tuesday 20 August 4 – 4.45pm  Professor Stephen Lawrie FRSE, University of Edinburgh</p> <p>Given that the medical specialty of psychiatry has been described as 'in crisis' ever since its inception, will it ever be able to escape its history?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>When are you grown up?</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tuesday, 20 August 10 – 10.45am  Tom Pow, A Year of Conversation 2019</p> <p>In a time when children are saying 'the issue of climate change is up to us', when exactly is 'grown up'?</p>

**Our Future In Renewable Energy**

Wednesday, 21 August 1 – 1.45pm

Professor Lesley Yellowlees CBE FRSE, University of Edinburgh

If we want to meet global demand for energy for the ever-increasing population – while minimising impact on the climate – it is necessary to use renewable energy sources. What does our energy future look like?

**Adam Smith: Moral Economist**

Thursday, 22 August 4 – 4.45pm

Professor Christopher Berry FRSE, University of Glasgow

Can we synthesise the principles of Adam Smith, 18th Century economist and moral philosopher?

**Unleashing Self-Potential for Health and Wellbeing**

Friday 23 August 1 – 1.45pm | Monday 26 August 1 – 1.45pm

Dr Ayse Cinar, Member of YAS

How do we unleash our potential for a healthier and happier life and overcome stress?

**Exhibitions and related events:**

**A Tale of Two Periodic Tables**

During building opening hours: 10am – 7.30pm Mon-Fri, 11am – 7.30pm Saturday, 12 – 7.30pm Sunday

2nd – 8th Swann Room | 9th – 26th Reception

University of St Andrews/European Chemical Society

A tale of two periodic tables, separated by 134 years: one is the oldest known classroom wall chart discovered at St Andrews University; the other is a brand-new one developed to highlight the scarcity and vulnerability of the elements in International Year of the Periodic Table.

**A Tale of Two Periodic Tables: In discussion**

Wednesday 7 August 12pm, Monday 12 August 12pm

University of St Andrews/European Chemical Society

A discussion of the tale of two periodic tables, 134 years apart: one, the oldest known classroom wall chart discovered at St Andrews University; the other a brand new one, developed to highlight the scarcity and vulnerability of the elements to mark the International Year of the Periodic Table.

**At Risk Academic Refugees: A Portrait**

During building opening hours: 10am – 7.30pm Mon-Fri, 11am – 7.30pm Saturday, 12 – 7.30pm Sunday

I.D. Campbell

The *At Risk Academic Refugees* (ARAR) initiative was launched in 2016 to recognise young professionals of outstanding talent from Scotland's refugee and displaced migrant communities. The RSE's Young Academy of Scotland (YAS) has committed to reserving membership spaces for at-risk academics and refugees in its recruitment rounds until at least 2020. Three ARAR refugees sat for portraits with Glasgow-based portrait painter I.D. Campbell and the results are on display.

**Live demonstration: At Risk Academic Refugees**

Tuesday 6, 13 and 20 August 10am – 4pm

I.D. Campbell

Iain Campbell will complete a portrait using photos of academic refugees taken at a previous sitting to form part of the *At Risk Academics: A Portrait* exhibition.

**'I Am Just My Words' – Installation Piece**

During building opening hours: 10am – 7.30pm Mon-Fri, 11am – 7.30pm Saturday, 12 – 7.30pm Sunday

Mark Maughan (director) & Tim Cowbury (writer) in association with James Quaife Productions

A mixed-media installation with accompanying theatre piece; audience meet Elif, Hasani, Jade and others, through headphones as they listen to their experiences of a Home Office interview.

**Women in Science in Scotland**

During building opening hours: 10am – 7.30pm Mon-Fri, 11am – 7.30pm Saturday, 12 – 7.30pm Sunday

Women scientists are changing the world. Learn more about some of the finest female scientists in Scotland today in this free photographic exhibition.



#### Discussions:

##### **Murder, Maggots and MR Imaging – a journey through forensic science, hosted by Val McDermid**

Sunday, 4 August at 5pm

In 1935, ground-breaking evidence from Scottish forensic scientists helped find Buck Ruxton guilty of the murder of his wife and maid and in doing so, shaped the future of criminal investigations. In this discussion hosted by RSE Fellow and crime writer Val McDermid; Tom Wood, one of Scotland's most senior and experienced operational police officers and author of 'Ruxton' will discuss the case with Dr. Lucina Hackman, Principal Investigator and Forensic Anthropologist from Dundee University's Leverhulme Institute and consider the developments in forensic science today.

##### **The Invention of Colour**

Friday, 23 August 12pm | Friday, 23 August 3pm

Professor Roy Burdon FRSE, University of Strathclyde

What is colour, how do we see it and where does it come from? This interactive event will look at colour, light, the creation of pigment and its influence on artists' creativity.

##### **Is a bilingual just two monolinguals in one brain?**

Sunday, 4 August, 3pm | Thursday, 8 August, 12pm

Professor Antonella Sorace FRSE, University of Edinburgh

Did you know that learning a second language changes your first language and changes how you think too? Discover why this is important in our increasingly multi-lingual society.

##### **Responsible Debate: What does it mean to you?**

Sunday 25 August 2pm

Young Academy of Scotland

Are there better and worse ways to disagree with one another? This workshop considers what underpins and threatens responsible debate.

##### **Public Debate: The ethics of borders and migration control**

Saturday 3 August 1pm

Young Academy of Scotland

Because border control is often used as a divisive political tool, some may hesitate to engage with this topic. However, there are legitimate questions to be asked around human migration. Hosted by the Young Academy of Scotland, this debate will examine the moral, political, and social implications of borders and migration.

##### **To Be The One – You Want To Be**

Dr Ayse Cinar, Member of YAS

Friday 23 August 2:30pm, Saturday 24 August 11am /3pm, Monday 26 August 3pm

How can we unlock and maximise potential for creative solutions to challenges? We will explore "How" in this participatory workshop.

##### **Embodied Thinkers (in early science)**

Friday 23 August 10am/12pm

Move2Learn

Join us on a journey through time and mime to see how research into children's science learning challenges the way we think about mind and body. Warning – contains charades.

##### **The Dimlight Hours**

Sunday 18 until Wednesday 21 August at 5pm

Professor Fiona Stafford FRSE, Rachael Sparkes, Edward Cherrie, Martin Pacey, University of Oxford

A story of suffering, resilience and heroism – a recently-discovered WWII diary brings to life the day-to-day experience of a woman and her family caught up in air raids, rationing and destruction.

##### **New Ways with Words**

Monday, 19 August 12pm

Nutshell Theatre/Queen Margaret University

Academic and award-winning director Kate Nelson offers new ways of applying analysis and interpretation to dramatic texts to open new perspectives on performance

##### **Where is your mind?**

Monday, 12 August 3:30pm

Miranda Anderson Member of YAS

Does your mind extend across your brain, body and beyond? Are our phones already part of our minds? Find out how literature, art and technology are just some of the ways we've always been 'out of our heads'.

##### **Investigating the Impossible**

Saturday 3 August 12pm

Professor Richard Wiseman/Edinburgh Skeptics Society

Professor Richard Wiseman will cast a sceptical eye over the paranormal, questioning whether ghosts really exist, the tricks of the psychic trade, how to walk on fire and the real power of your dreams. 12+

##### **Science and the Paranormal**

Saturday, 10 August 12pm

Caroline Watt/Edinburgh Skeptics Society

Professor of Parapsychology Caroline Watt examines lab experiments into Extra-Sensory Perception (aka your sixth sense), and how this research has been surprisingly beneficial for mainstream science. 12+

##### **Why Skepticism Matters / How Alt Med Tried To Kill Me**

Saturday, 17 August 12pm

Sean Slater & Heather Pentler/Edinburgh Skeptics Society

Fake news. Slippery politicians. Bad ideas. Sean Slater will explore tools such as Scientific Skepticism that we can use to help cut through the junk before Heather Pentler examines alternative medicine and chronic illness: what treatments are being offered by CAM practitioners? Do they actually work? And, most importantly, can they be harmful? 12+

##### **Chemophobia – Should We All Be Running Scared?**

Saturday, 24 August, 12pm

Maria Gauci/Edinburgh Skeptics Society

With the rising popularity of 'natural', 'organic' and 'chemical-free' goods, Maria Gauci asks: Are they really all that they're hyped up to be? Are chemicals so bad? Does natural also mean safe? Can we truly live in a 'chemical-free' world? 12+



**Workshops:**

**The Science of Gin**

Friday 2 August 6pm, Saturday 3 August 4.30pm, Sunday 25 August 5pm, Monday, 26 August 6pm  
Porter's Gin

An hour-long immersion into the science behind one of the UK's most innovative gin distillers as the team from Porter's Gin guides you through modern distillation, botanicals and flavours. G&T and tastings included. (of course). 18+

**Fake News Workshop**

Friday 2 August 3pm, Saturday 3, 10 and 17 August 3pm, Sunday 11 and 25th August 3pm  
Aleksandar Kocic, Edinburgh Napier University

How can we fight back against Fake News? This workshop will share some steps we can take to stop Fake News in its fictional tracks.

**Intersection of Poetics and Science – Energy Futures**

Wednesday 7 August 3pm

Professor Patrick Corbett & Professor Ruth Aylett, Heriot-Watt University

Science meets poetics – the art of writing poetry – in this highly creative event which will capture feelings and issues on Scotland's energy future in the form of a group poem. 18+

**Memory Illusions and How to Avoid Them**

Professor Robert Logie FRSA FBPsS FRSE, University of Edinburgh  
Saturday 10 August 3pm, Sunday 11 August 3pm

Can we improve our memory? Do smartphones make us smarter? Take part in interactive demonstrations on human memory including when it works, when it doesn't and how to make it work better. 12+

**'I Don't Feel Freedom' hosted by Right To Remain**

Thursday 22 August

Mark Maughan (director) & Tim Cowbury (writer) in association with James Quaife Productions

A joint interactive workshop with practical advice run with migrant organisation 'Right to Remain', for those going through or with an interest in the Home Office process.