

Doddie's in the Portrait Gallery

Gerard M Burns has created a masterpiece and it is now hanging in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery on Queen Street.

The subject is literally larger than life, as it is former rugby internationalist Doddie Weir OBE. He stands 6'6" tall – although the portrait is not life size.

Weir is one of Scottish rugby's well-kent faces who has played for Stewart's Melville RFC, Melrose RFC, Newcastle Falcons and the Border Reivers. He was capped 61 times for Scotland and played in three World Cups. He was also selected for the British and Irish Lions tour of South Africa in 1997, and played six times for the Barbarians.



PHOTO Gerard M Burns with Kathy and Doddie Weir at the unveiling Neil Hanna Photography
www.neilhannaphotography.co.uk

Bill McLaren the voice of rugby described him as 'being on the charge like a mad giraffe'.

He is now sadly just as well known for having Motor Neuron Disease (MND) and for the charity which he set up to aid research into the causes of MND. IN the first two years the My Name's Doddie Foundation has invested £4 million into MND research projects and helped hundreds of families living with the disease.

In 2018 The Doddie Weir Cup was established to bring awareness to the disease and is played for annually between Scotland and Wales rugby teams.

One of Scotland's most respected artists, Gerard M Burns was born in 1961 and graduated from GCA with a degree in Fine Art in 1983. He has been a lifelong passionate artist and taught at St Aloysius College, Glasgow before leaving to become a full time painter.

Burns painted Denise Mina and that is on display in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in The Modern Portrait collection.

Lovely to meet [@DoddieWeir5](#) again and to see the great portrait created by Gerard Burns which was auctioned at the [@MyName5DoddieHK](#) last year and is now on loan to [@NatGalleriesSco](#) pic.twitter.com/S3FNRkjN6x

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [January 29, 2020](#)

The portrait of Weir was auctioned for £80,000 for the Foundation in 2019. The buyers then gifted it back with a note saying : 'To Doddie with love from your rugby friends in Hong Kong, to always remember the Daft Yin's passion and inspiration in seeking a cure for MND'. The artwork has a plaque naming all those who donated to the painting.

It is now being loaned to the NGS by the Weir family and it shows Weir in the Scottish Borders where he grew up as a farmer. He is of course wearing his trademark tartan suit.



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Doddie Weir OBE said : “It is a great honour to have Gerard’s painting on display at the SNP Gallery among so many notable and notorious Scots. I have had a great deal of fun in Hong Kong over the years and the support of the Scottish and rugby communities there has been incredible since I shared my diagnosis. I would like to thank everyone involved for their contribution and especially Gerard for doing such a fine job with the limited source material! And a big thank you to the National Galleries of Scotland for including the painting in their fine collection.”

Gerard Burns said : “I felt strongly from the beginning that this painting should show some of Doddie’s inner strength, that to make something too trivial would have been completely wrong given the circumstances of his life at this point.”

