

Edinburgh Diwali – light show signals the beginning of the festival

Edinburgh's City Chambers provided the backdrop to the launch of the Edinburgh Diwali 2020 – which usually fills the High Street with sounds, colour and light as the dancers move from there to the Ross Bandstand.

The Rt Hon Lord Provost invited Diwali to begin this year's online event from the quadrangle before all events take place online on Sunday. You can see the light show between 5 and 7.00pm on Saturday too.

Edinburgh will miss the light and colour of [@edinburghdiwali](#) this year as it has moved online but there are lights to launch the festival at the City Chambers tonight and tomorrow evening from 5pm pic.twitter.com/PEq0TjE1Kd

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [November 13, 2020](#)

The 2020 celebrations, which traditionally fill Edinburgh's City Centre with light, music and dance, are taking place online on Sunday 15 November from 5.00pm – 7.00pm. The free to view Digital Diwali presents a packed two-hour programme of dance and music from India and Scotland to be enjoyed in the comfort of viewers' own homes.

With music from Edinburgh's own **Ajay Dixit**, classical Indian dance by **Bharatiya Ashram** from Dundee, fusion dance from Edinburgh's **Dance Ihayami** and songs by **African Connections CIC** the programme reflects the multi-cultural tradition of Diwali. The power-packed programme is brought to a close by a stunning performance of the Odissi Dance presented by **SRJAN Ensemble**, one of India's leading Odissi dance repertory groups, followed by a display of virtual fireworks.

The Festival of Diwali was originally celebrated by Hindus, Jains, Sikhs and Buddhists but is now the most popular Indian festival celebrated around the world. While each religion marks different historical events and legends, all represent the victory of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, good over evil and hope over despair.



President of Edinburgh Diwali, Rajnish Singh. Diwali Festival of Lights 2020. Photo: Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com
Edinburgh Diwali has been organised since 2015 by a dedicated team of volunteers, now headed by President of Edinburgh Diwali, Rajnish Singh, who said "In this time of darkness, we believe it is even more important to celebrate the triumph of light and of good over evil. While we cannot come together in the city centre this year to celebrate Diwali, we can come together with our own families in our own homes to watch the celebrations together virtually. Edinburgh's Digital Diwali is free to watch and we hope that Edinburgh's residents from all cultures and communities will join our celebrations on Sunday evening.

We are grateful to Lord Provost and his office, City of Edinburgh Council Culture and One City Trust for their continued support. Also, I extend my gratitude to all the Committee Members for their effort in organising this year's event despite all the challenges."

Edinburgh's Lord Provost Frank Ross said: "There is no doubt

that it has been a challenging year for our city and our communities. Although we can't come together in person this year to celebrate – I'm very pleased that with a Digital Edinburgh Diwali, we can still participate in the City's most famous Indian Festival – the Festival of Lights, encouraging our citizens and visitors from around the globe to share, participate and celebrate the victory of good over evil and hope over despair.

“Edinburgh Diwali continues to go from strength-to-strength, as part of a worldwide celebration involving around 1.5 billion people, together warding off the darkness, and welcoming the light into our lives. My thanks to the President and the Committee for working so hard to make sure Edinburgh Diwali in 2020 has a strong presence. Please have a great Diwali, stay safe, stay well, and please tune into the packed two-hour programme of dance and music from India and Scotland.”

Dr Shashank Vikram, Acting Consul General of India Edinburgh, said “This year has been very difficult for many of us. Many have sadly lost loved ones and others have been kept apart for far too long. Sadly, this year we won't be having the usual celebrations in person which are such wonderful occasions full of light and joy. However, at a time of great national difficulty and darkness the need for festivals that bring light into our world have never been more important. I hope that, even though celebrated differently, its message of light, hope & joy will resonate the same feeling.”

Edinburgh Diwali would not be possible without the support of The City of Edinburgh Council – Culture and One City Trust and the wider communities in Edinburgh.

For full details of the Edinburgh Digital Diwali celebrations go to

<http://www.edinburghdiwali.co.uk>.

All performances are free to view via Youtube – links can be found on the Edinburgh Diwali website.



Rt. Hon. Lord Provost, Frank Ross. Diwali Festival of Lights 2020. Photo: Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com