

Edinburgh Art Festival 2023

With 55 exhibitions and events all over Edinburgh this will be one of the largest festivals yet under new director Kim McAleese.

There is a new format this year with a call to action to explore the capital through visual art, galleries and museums.

Running from 11 to 27 August the festival will introduce collaborations including weekend talks and performances.

“From queer histories in brutalist tower blocks; to tracing peace lines and borders through sound, moving image and music; and the festival’s continuing commitment to support structures, the 2023 festival-led programme features artists, thinkers, writer and performers who move through this world deeply connected to feminist and queer practice. This may take various forms: an opera; a poem; the sound of a ricochet along a peace wall; a newspaper excerpt; a bodily gesture; a warming meal.”

Kim McAleese, Festival Director, said: “I am delighted to share this programme, my first for Edinburgh Art Festival. It’s a programme that asks how we can connect with and find mutual support internationally, platforming artists, individuals and communities who can find alternative ways to resist. I believe in the generative process of collaboration and want to embrace it by connecting, amplifying, promoting and sharing individuals, organisations, and projects that have an intimacy with these values. By punctuating the festival with a series of special weekend events, we can open up the festival to new audiences, and in dialogue with other art

forms and other festivals across the city in a spirit of collaboration. This year's programme guides you through our core galleries across the city, to parliament buildings for live performances, to Leith for public artworks, and Sculpture Gardens outside of Edinburgh for queer parties."

There are new commissions and there will be an opening world performance premiere of *History of the Present* on 11 August at Queen's Hall. This work involves Northern Irish writer, Maria Fusco combining her talents and experiences with Scottish artist film-maker **Margaret Salmon** and composer **Annea Lockwood**. The performance is a hybrid opera on stage and screen that will be performed live. It is a new experimental opera-film forefronting working-class women's voices to ask: who has the right to speak and in what way? The film was shot on 35mm and SD video on the streets of Belfast, the Royal Opera House and the Ulster Museum. Fusco lived beside the peace line in Belfast during The Troubles and this work celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday agreement.

There are many many more parts to the Edinburgh Art Festival all over the city and the announcement has only just been made of the exhibitions and events. We will produce a top ten list but this seems unmissable: on the Southside of the city, a showcase of work by graduating students takes place at the Edinburgh College of Art. The show combines new work from the schools of Art, Design and Architecture & Landscape Architecture. Also at ECA ***The Sounds of Deep Fake***, curated by the Institute for Design Informatics, brings together exciting experimental artists including **Martin Disley** and **Theodore Koterwas** who are working with sound and emerging technologies to explore deep fake audio. Dovecot Studios presents their major exhibition ***Scottish Women Artists: 250 Years of Challenging Perception*** with The Fleming Collection, with works by over 45 pioneering women artists including **Rachel Maclean**, **Sekai Machache**, **Joan Eardley** and **Alberta Whittle**.

Head of Visual Arts at Creative Scotland, Amanda Catto, said:

“We’re delighted to be a supporter of the Edinburgh Art Festival, the UK’s largest annual festival of visual art. The spirit of collaboration at the heart of the festival creates exciting opportunities for artist

s and for audiences. If you’re living in or visiting Edinburgh in August the Art Festival is the place to find some of the best exhibitions, events and performances this summer. Taking place in established and less well-known spaces in the city, and with work from world leading artists as well as those at much earlier stages in their career, there’s so much to look forward to. Congratulations to the Festival, its partners and all the artists involved.”

Culture Minister Christina McKelvie said: “The Edinburgh Art Festival is a great opportunity to showcase the work of Scottish-based artists, especially previously under-represented artists who we’re proud to support with £130,000 through the Scottish Government’s Expo Fund. In partnership with The City of Edinburgh Council we also support new artists and curators at the wellbeing arts space at Wester Hailes and Platform with £215,000 through our PLACE Fund to support community engagement.”



Kim McAleese, Festival Director

