

Five things you need to know today

The Scottish Portrait Awards 2026

The 2026 Scottish Portrait Awards are back – and bigger than ever. The Scottish Arts Trust and National Galleries of Scotland have announced that the 2026 awards will be hosted at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery for the first time.

The organisers behind the awards hope that this exciting new home will bring attention to the many talented contemporary portrait artists in Scotland today. Applications to take part in the 2026 Scottish Portrait Awards will open on 1 September 2025 and close on 15 January 2026. Submissions are open to anyone over the age of 16 on 1 November 2026 and born or living or studying in Scotland, regardless of experience.

[Read the full story here.](#)



The Scottish Portrait Awards will be shown at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in 2026.

L-R are Imogen Gibbon Curator of Portraiture at National Galleries of Scotland, Gordon Mitchell RSW RSA RGI, Director, Scottish Portrait Awards and Fine Art Chair, Kirsty Wark Guest Judge, television presenter and journalist, Sara Cameron McBean Scottish Arts Trust trustee who had the original idea for the Scottish Portrait Awards and Calum Stevenson Scottish Portrait Awards Fine Art Judge and former shortlisted artist.
PHOTO Julie Howden

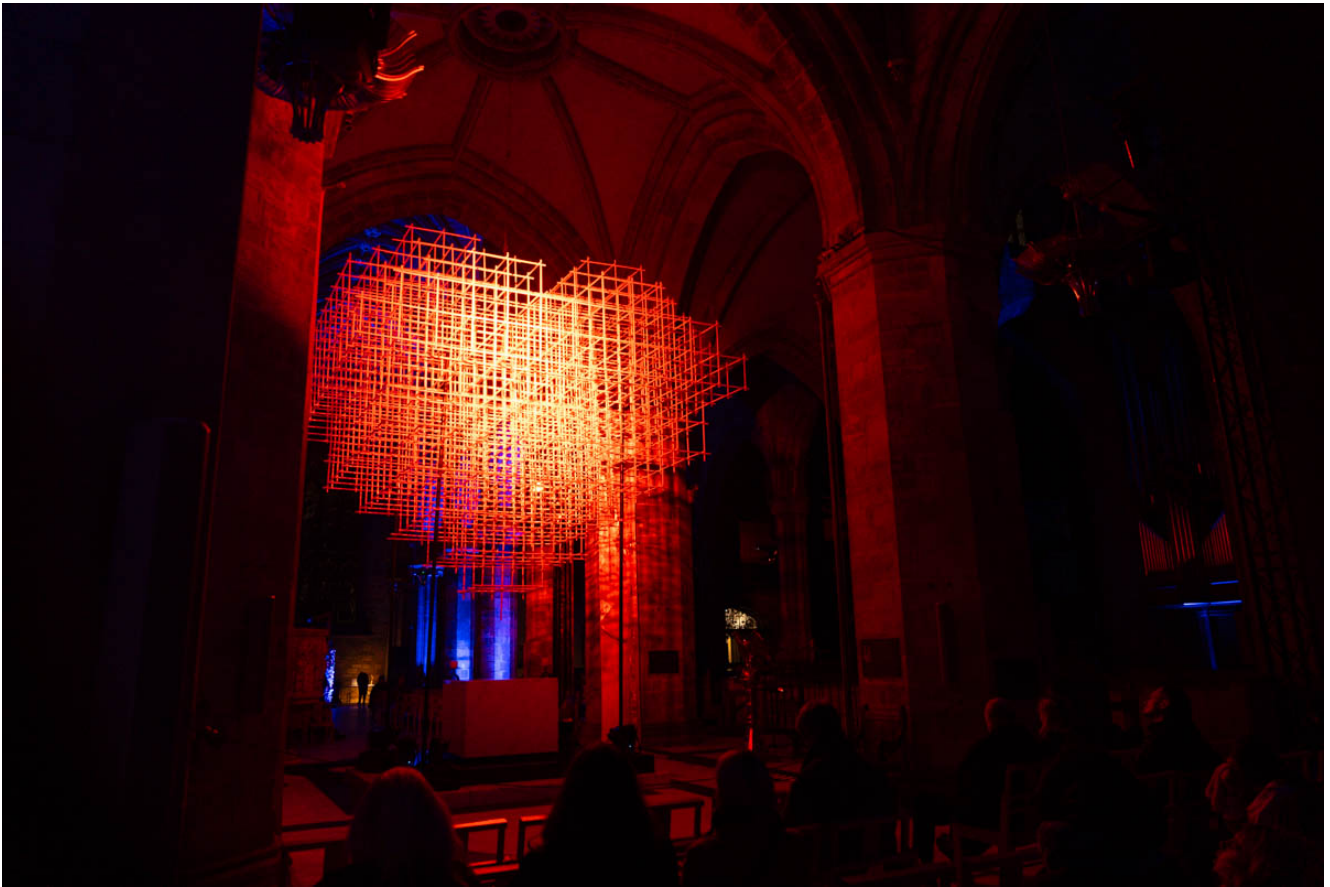
Burns&Beyond – how to celebrate Burns in Edinburgh this year

In very disappointing news, the government funding for Burns&Beyond has not been forthcoming, leading to one of the most innovative festivals set up in recent years being cancelled.

But the organisers Unique Events have set up a fairly comprehensive list on the B&B website encouraging everyone to

celebrate Rabbin Burns at a selection of other venues this year.

[Read more here.](#)



Michael Pendry's HEART at the first showing in the UK In St Giles' Cathedral as part of Burns + Beyond PHOTO ©2024 The Edinburgh Reporter

At the House of Commons today

Tuesday 14 January

The House will sit from 11.30am, starting with questions to the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, [David Lammy](#). The main business will be:

Remaining Stages of the [Renters' Rights Bill](#).

Wednesday 15 January

The House will sit from 11.30am, starting with questions to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, [Hilary Benn](#). Prime Minister's Questions will take place at 12 midday. The main business will be:

- Remaining Stages of the [Non-Domestic Rating \(Multipliers and Private Schools\) Bill](#).

Thursday 16 January

The House will sit from 9.30am, starting with questions to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, [Lisa Nandy](#). The main business will be:

- Motion to approve the draft Deposit Scheme for Drinks Containers (England and Northern Ireland) Regulations 2024.
- Performance of the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency. The subject for this debate was determined by the Backbench Business Committee.

Friday 17 January

The House will sit from 9.30am on Friday and the main business will be Private Members' Bills, starting with:

- Second Reading of the New Homes (Solar Generation) Bill.

Increase in drop off charges at the airport

Edinburgh Airport has announced an increase of £1 to the charge made for dropping passengers at the airport, saying they hope it will encourage “more use of public transport”.

From this week the cost to use the pickup and dropoff area will start from £6 for the first ten minutes of parking at the airport.

The airport says that 37% of passengers already use public transport and this is “competitively priced” against that mode of transport, and that “our Surface Access Strategy seeks to grow that number further while reducing the emissions caused by transport to and from the airport”.

Revenue raised will “assist in improving passenger experience, growing connectivity and investing in the airport’s infrastructure”. We had always thought this money was to be used for charitable purposes and if anyone out there has a better memory than us and can find that source we would be delighted to hear from you.

The airport continues to operate a free dropoff and pickup area which has recently been upgraded and moved a little closer to the terminal, while local residents and users of electric cars will still qualify for a 50% discount for the first ten minutes.

Gail Taylor, Chief Commercial Officer (XAero) at Edinburgh Airport said: “We have just had a record year for passengers at Edinburgh Airport and that number is likely to grow year-on-year, and we want to make sure that people are making more sustainable choices when getting to and from the airport.

“The use of cars is the most polluting mode with four journeys for each passenger compared to just two when using public

transport. We want more people to use the robust transport links we have as this both reduces emissions and congestion.

“We have a number of large capacity projects planned over the next few years and reinvestment back into the airport infrastructure will improve the overall experience for passengers.”

More information on drop off and pick up areas, as well as how local residents and EV owners can get discounts: <https://www.edinburghairport.com/transport-links/pick-up-and-dropoff-zones>

More information on the **Free** pick up and drop off area: <https://www.edinburghairport.com/edinburgh-airport-parking/free-drop-off-pick-up>

Dame Barbara Rae – exhibition planned for August

Artist Barbara Rae, CBE, was awarded a Damehood in the New Year Honours. The Open Eye Gallery which represents Dame Barbara has announced it will hold an exhibition of her work in August.

Dame Barbara studied at Edinburgh College of Art from 1961 to 1965, and taught art in secondary schools, lectured at Aberdeen College of Education and later at Glasgow School of Art from 1975 to 1996.

Born in Falkirk, she is now based in Edinburgh and was made a CBE in 1999. Her work has been shown around the world in both group and solo exhibitions, including venues in Chicago, New York, Washington, Santa Fe, Oslo, Hong Kong, Dublin and Belfast.

Dame Barbara hopes this recognition will help raise the profile of the arts in Scotland. She said: “I hope it helps to

draw attention to the many talented Scots artists painting and printmaking in Scotland”.

www.openeyegallery.co.uk

