

EDINBURGH'S HOGMANAY 20

EDINBURGH'S HOGMANAY THANKS SCOTLAND'S NHS AND KEY WORKERS WITH A SPECTACULAR TORCHLIGHT MOMENT

- *Edinburgh's Hogmanay presents a fantastic Torchlight Moment pyro show as part of this year's online celebrations*
- *The dazzling Torchlight Moment is a stand-alone tribute to thank all of Scotland's NHS and key workers who have worked so tirelessly and selflessly in 2020*
- *The Torchlight Moment will be followed by Fare Well, the UK's largest ever swarm drone show, narrated by an array of incredible Scottish voices including David Tennant*

Picture caption: *Edinburgh's first virtual Hogmanay kicked off last night with a stunning rainbow flare tribute of thanks to key workers for their efforts in 2020 with Edinburgh Castle as the backdrop. The moment marked the start of the celebratory and reflective series that will run from 28th December – 1st January 2021*



28TH December 2020, Edinburgh, Scotland – In 2020, Edinburgh's Hogmanay is going online with a fully digital programme. After an unprecedented year, in which Covid-19 has impacted every part of society in Scotland, Edinburgh's Hogmanay kicks off the celebrations with a heartfelt thank you from Scotland's capital city to NHS staff and key workers throughout the country.

Opening this year's series of virtual celebrations, the stunning multi-coloured flare display was ignited on the Esplanade at Edinburgh Castle. Historically the launchpad for thousands of fireworks lighting up the sky at midnight on Hogmanay, this year pyrotechnics came to life in a flaming tribute to NHS staff and key workers for their continued efforts throughout 2020 in keeping everyone safe and well.

Each letter depicts a different rainbow colour, taking inspiration from the rainbows Scotland the rest of the UK placed in windows and homes across the country during the past year to show support for NHS and key workers. Over 193 custom-made flares were used to create the moment, which was facilitated by Titanium Fireworks, who have historically delivered Edinburgh's Hogmanay firework midnight moment.

Forming part of a week-long programme of remarkable online celebrations, the **Torchlight Moment** will be followed by a three-part film, titled **Fare Well**, to be released in the three days leading up to Hogmanay. *Fare Well* brings together the words of Scots Makar **Jackie Kay**, the music of **NiteWorks** from the Isle of Skye,

the voices of acclaimed Scottish talent including **David Tennant** and the pioneering drone technology and filming of **Celestial** to create the UK's largest swarm drone display. Taking inspiration from Scotland's land and air, the new work takes viewers on a breath-taking visual journey with the help of 150 individual drones from the Scottish Highlands to the capital city, Edinburgh – a journey that closes the year on 2020 and looks forward to a more hopeful year of 2021.

We swing aroon and turn tae the day.

We give thanks fir solidarity;

Drap parcels tae food banks.

Clap oor haunds frae balconies

fir the gift o' nurses.

Jackie Kay, Fare Well, Edinburgh's Hogmanay 2020

Charlie Wood & Ed Bartlam, Directors of Underbelly who produce Edinburgh's Hogmanay, commented: *"At the end of a year no one could have imagined, it was important that we started our week of Edinburgh's Hogmanay celebrations with a heartfelt thank you to those across the UK who have worked so tirelessly to keep us safe during 2020.*

The NHS and our key workers have provided an immeasurable level of help and support and this Torchlight Moment sings Scotland's gratitude with flaming torches in front one of our greatest national monuments, Edinburgh Castle."

City of Edinburgh Council Leader, Councilor Adam McVey, said: *"Edinburgh is the home of Hogmanay and this year's digital celebrations will continue, albeit very differently. This is a fantastic and innovative way to pay tribute to all of our front-line workers – both in Scotland and across the globe - that have done so much to support us and keep us safe throughout this year. To our NHS staff and key workers – for those in the labs working on vaccines, those in food preparation and delivery, for our refuse collectors, postal workers, supermarket workers, police and so many more – we thank you all from the bottom of our hearts and hope that 2021 brings with it positive change as we battle to suppress and eradicate this virus."*

Depute Leader, Councilor Cammy Day said: *"We all clapped for carers and put up rainbows in our windows over the summer and now we light rainbow torches to show our enormous gratitude at the end of this year of tremendous strain on all of our communities. It's wonderful to see this excellent online programme coming to life so that the undisputed Home of Hogmanay can still reach so many people around the world. It will serve as a virtual invitation for everyone to look forward to visiting us again when we're all able to travel and live more freely in the future."*

Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop said: *"Scotland is the world-renowned home of Hogmanay and every year thousands of people, right across the globe, look forward to the spectacular of Edinburgh's Hogmanay to welcome in the New Year.*

Although we're not able to come together physically to bring in the bells this year, we can enjoy a fully digital programme that continues the tradition of celebrating Hogmanay with poetry, music and performance. I encourage everyone to take part in this year's series of virtual events and celebrate Hogmanay safely at home."

Paul Bush OBE, VisitScotland's Director of Events, said: *"The Torchlight Moment is the perfect way to kick off Edinburgh's week-long programme of online Hogmanay celebrations while also recognising the incredibly work of our NHS and frontline workers in keeping us safe and well this year. By taking this year's celebrations online, audiences around the world will still be able to enjoy the magic of Edinburgh's Hogmanay while staying safe at home."*

Fare Well will be show on www.edinburghshogmanay.com at 7pm each night from 29-31 December 2020.

ENDS

Underbelly

Underbelly is a UK based live entertainment company that specialises in live events and festivals in city centres. Since starting at the Edinburgh Fringe in 2000, Underbelly has produced and presented events in locations from theatres to roundabouts in London, Edinburgh and Hong Kong; and produced substantial events including Pride London and Edinburgh's Hogmanay. In 2019, more than 1.5 tickets were issued to Underbelly Events with footfall of over 5 million.

Edinburgh's Hogmanay is funded by the City of Edinburgh Council, EventScotland, Creative Scotland and the Scottish Government.

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