

andfinally

# Burns v Marley... the gloves are off

LINDA FABIANI, the culture minister, had the chance to sell Homecoming Scotland 2009 to a really international crowd this week. Delegates from 30 countries, creative or arts professionals, all filled the tables at Glasgow City Halls. Unluckily, however, Scotland's culture chief went toe-to-toe with Jamaica's. The match-up seemed to pose the question of just how big is Robert Burns's fan club, against Bob Marley's, or even Jimmy Cliff's?

The three-day Creative Clusters conference seemed the perfect venue to spread the word about the Scottish Government's dream, of a global tide of roots tourists to celebrate the Bard's 250th birthday next year.

First up: Fabiani, Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture, to give her title in full, with the welcoming address. In a brisk eight minutes she duly informed the crowd of several hundred that the telephone and television were invented by Scots, "as were ATM cash machines, radar, fingerprinting, ultra sound, and MRI scanners!" Perforated sheets of postage stamps were invented by a man from Dundee, and she threw in Joseph Lister and games-makers Rockstar North.

For 2009, Fabiani talked of "exciting and inspirational" events for the birthday of "an international cultural icon". She promised: "They will celebrate some of Scotland's great contributions to the world. Burns himself. Whisky. Golf, great Scottish minds and innovations, and our rich culture and heritage... as Burns himself said... "For Auld Lang Syne".

## Round two

Next up: Olivia Grange, grandmother, community newspaper founder, reggae act manager. She came to Glasgow with a Jamaican delegation of five.

"My prime minister is a very creative person," she began. "He gave me an appointment portfolio that seems to be unending. I am minister of information, culture, youth and sports, with responsibility for women and gender affairs, entertainment and community development."

This was promising. In a leisurely half hour, with the screen showing an island behind her, Grange detailed Jamaica's "awesome culture": reggae, Jamaican rum, Tia

## timcornwell's diary



Maria, the Rastafari religion, the world's fastest men, Blue Mountain Coffee, and the national breakfast of ackee and saltfish, for starters.

Jamaica has developed marijuana-based treatments for glaucoma and asthma that are sold worldwide, she said.

"It has been my pleasure to share," she ended. "Please accept the heartfelt thanks of the government and people of Jamaica. As Miss Lou [their 'First Lady of Comedy'] would say in Jamaica "walk good", and as Bob Marley would say, "One Love".

Homecoming Jamaica, anyone?

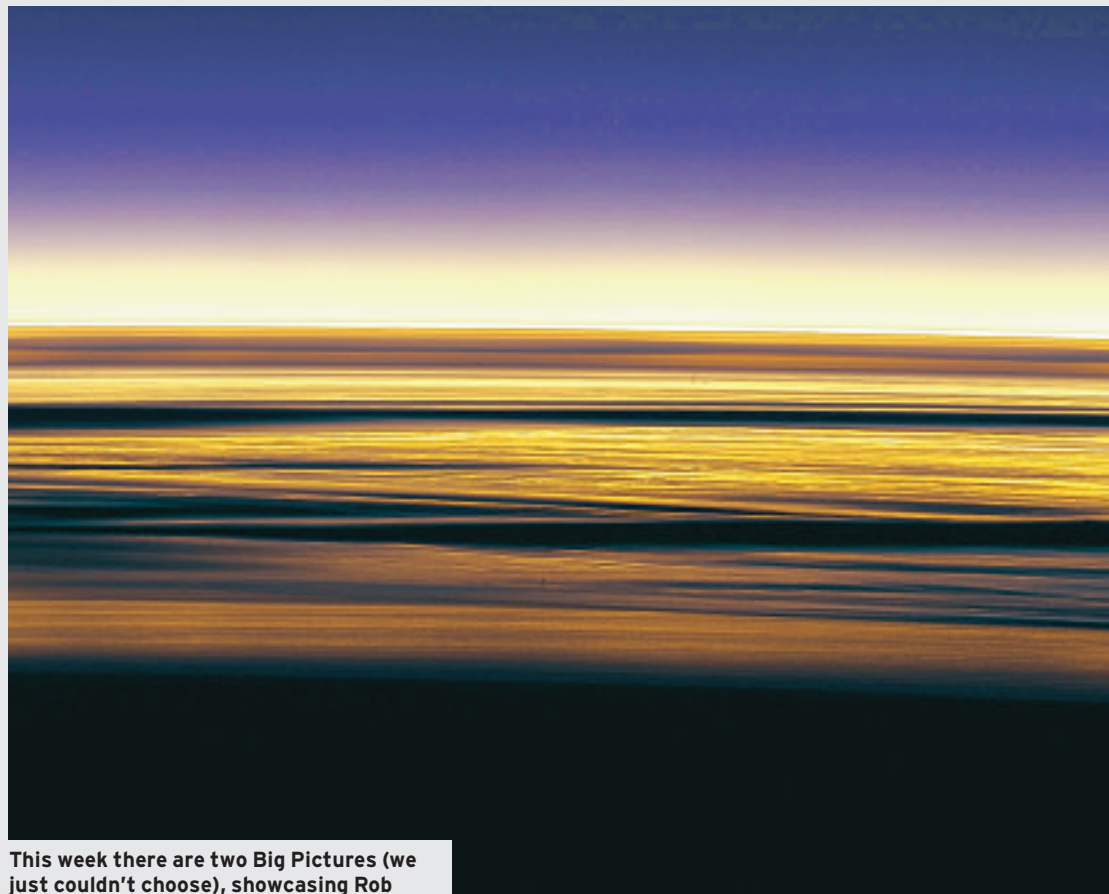
## Get the gender right

BROADCASTER and journalist Kaye Adams, comedian Karen Dunbar, presenter Gail Porter, and *Pop Idol* famous person Michelle McManus are to take the stage in the *Vagina Monologues* at the Edinburgh Playhouse in February. In the show's last Edinburgh staging, it is reported Elaine C Smith asked Christine Hamilton if she had had a romantic liaison with John Major. Hamilton snapped: "We're talking about vaginas here, not pricks".

## Dr Mo, I presume?

JOLOMO won an honorary doctorate last night from the University of the West of Scotland. At its graduation ceremony at Coats Memorial Baptist Church, Paisley, the university honoured the painter John Lowrie Morrison for his "significant contribution to Scottish culture", ranging from Alex Salmond's Christmas card picture to a prodigious output of over 1,000 paintings a year. The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama handed an honorary doctorate to the producer and director Lord Attenborough, and a fellowship to actor James McAvoy, an alumnus. Also receiving fellowships at their graduation ceremony: the RSAMD's head of performance and McAvoy's former tutor, Hugh Hodgart; music tutor Myra Soutar, and retired librarian, Marian Fordom.

## thebigpicture(s)



This week there are two Big Pictures (we just couldn't choose), showcasing Rob Carter's Travelling Still photographic series: *Coral Reef II, Barbados*, above, and *Tokyo IV*, below. The images will also feature in a book



THE SCOTSMAN



READER OFFER

# Scotland Recommends

New Word-of-Mouth Guide to Scotland Only £6.99 (RRP £7.99) plus £1.00 P&P

[www.shop.scotsman.com/recommends](http://www.shop.scotsman.com/recommends)

Call 0870 787 1722 Please Quote: LP100 Lines open from 8.30am to 5.30pm - Monday to Friday

