# Dame Judi Dench honoured with live sculpted bust to raise £40,000 for lymphoedema charity



Dame Judi Dench, the celebrated English actress, was honoured at a charity event in London, where a live bust of her was crafted by royal sculptor Frances Segelman. The occasion not only celebrated Dame Judi’s remarkable 90-year journey but also sought to raise awareness and funds for the Lymphoedema Research Fund (LRF) affiliated with St George's Hospital Charity.

Frances Segelman, known for her prominent portfolio including sculptures of royalty, demonstrated her craft in front of an audience of 200 guests at Claridge's. Over the course of just two hours, she moulded a bust that captured the essence of Dench, a feat she described as a "magical" experience despite the frenetic pace. Frances expressed her amazement at completing such intricate work in such a brief time, stating, "I don't know anyone that can get a bust finished in two hours and look exactly like someone."

This event was particularly meaningful for Gemma Levine, a renowned photographer and long-time friend of Dench, who serves as an ambassador for St George's Hospital Charity. Diagnosed with lymphoedema fifteen years ago, Levine said, "Dame Judi has given so much to the world through her art; it felt only right to honour her in this way while supporting a cause that's so close to my heart." Levine has not only helped promote the LRF but is also involved in creating a documentary on lymphoedema that features Dench and is narrated by fellow actress Dame Joanna Lumley, scheduled for release in 2025.

Lymphoedema is a chronic condition characterised by swelling in the body’s tissues, often affecting arms or legs. It can significantly impact individuals’ quality of life, a fact that resonated with Frances who pointed out the presence of young people suffering from the condition at a similar event she attended. "What really got to me was there were teenagers with this awful condition. I felt so sad. I really felt I had to do something to help," she said.

The charity event raised an impressive £40,000 for the LRF, facilitating vital advancements in the diagnosis and treatment of lymphoedema. This was not Dame Judi’s only foray into philanthropic efforts; she has also lent her support to initiatives aimed at combating age-related macular degeneration through her role as patron of the Yorkshire Macular Degeneration Fund, demonstrating her unwavering commitment to various health causes.

Meanwhile, the event came amidst a backdrop of recent controversy when a joke made about Dame Judi at the Breakthrough Awards was edited out of the official broadcast. The quip by former chat show host James Corden, which referenced an improbable romantic engagement between Dench and Dr. Anthony Fauci, drew mixed reactions from the audience. Corden later moved on without further comment, reflecting perhaps a collective hesitance to delve into humour that may tread too close to personal sensitivities.

Events like the one celebrating Dame Judi Dench not only honour legendary careers in the arts but also serve as a powerful reminder of the potential for that celebrity influence to drive meaningful change in healthcare and other pressing societal issues. As Frances Segelman continues her work on the sculpture, it serves as both a tribute to a titan of stage and screen and a tangible effort towards supporting those who suffer from conditions like lymphoedema.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-14729063/Dame-Judi-Dench-recreated-clay-royal-sculptor-crafts-bust-actress-live-charity-event-celebrate-90th-birthday-impressive-career.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
2. Paragraph 5: [[2]](https://woundsinternational.com/journal-articles/the-british-lymphology-society-update-and-a-look-forward-to-the-40th-anniversary-year/), [[4]](https://gemmalevine.co.uk/news/)
3. Paragraph 7: [[3]](https://www.york.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/2024/research/judi-dench-yorkshire-macular-degeneration-fund/)
4. Paragraph 8: [[6]](https://fundraising.co.uk/2023/06/01/tony-hadley-launches-hospice-art-trail-other-celebrity-charity-support/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-14729063/Dame-Judi-Dench-recreated-clay-royal-sculptor-crafts-bust-actress-live-charity-event-celebrate-90th-birthday-impressive-career.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://woundsinternational.com/journal-articles/the-british-lymphology-society-update-and-a-look-forward-to-the-40th-anniversary-year/> - The British Lymphology Society (BLS) is preparing for its 40th anniversary, focusing on developing resources like the MLD Position Document and educational materials for co-existing lymphoedema and heart failure. Trustees attended a fundraising event for the St George’s University Hospital Lymphoedema Research Fund, organized by Gemma Levine, a former society photographer and lymphoedema sufferer. The event was a huge success, bringing together figures from the arts and healthcare industry, including Dame Judi Dench, Dame Joanna Lumley, Simon Callow CBE, and others, to support lymphoedema research.
3. <https://www.york.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/2024/research/judi-dench-yorkshire-macular-degeneration-fund/> - Dame Judi Dench has become Patron of the Yorkshire Macular Degeneration Fund, established by the University of York and Hull York Medical School. The fund supports research into age-related macular degeneration (AMD), a condition affecting approximately 700,000 older adults in the UK. Dench, diagnosed with AMD in 2012, expressed her delight in supporting projects aimed at improving treatment for the condition, which impacts central vision and makes activities like reading and recognizing faces challenging.
4. <https://gemmalevine.co.uk/news/> - Gemma Levine, a renowned photographer, has been appointed as an Ambassador to St George’s Hospital Charity for her advocacy in raising awareness and funds for the Lymphoedema Research Fund. She is organizing a documentary on lymphoedema, featuring Dame Judi Dench and narrated by Dame Joanna Lumley, set to be released in 2025. Additionally, Levine is hosting a unique event in aid of the Lymphoedema Research Fund at St George's Hospital Charity, featuring a conversation with Dame Judi Dench, compéred by Simon Callow CBE.
5. <https://stageberry.com/gyles-brandreth-and-dame-judi-dench-to-celebrate-great-theatrical-dames-with-london-charity-concert/> - Gyles Brandreth and Dame Judi Dench are co-hosting a special birthday concert at the London Palladium on March 5, 2023, to celebrate Brandreth's 75th birthday and raise funds for Great Ormond Street Hospital. The event, titled 'GOSH! It’s Gyles & Judi & ALL The Dames!', will feature performances by Dame Eileen Atkins, Dame Floella Benjamin, Dame Sheila Hancock, Dame Maureen Lipman, Dame Joanna Lumley, and Dame Siân Phillips, among others. The concert aims to raise money for the hospital, a cause close to Brandreth's heart.
6. <https://fundraising.co.uk/2023/06/01/tony-hadley-launches-hospice-art-trail-other-celebrity-charity-support/> - Tony Hadley launched the 'March of the Elephants' sculpture trail to raise funds for St Giles Hospice. The trail features over 400 original artworks, including contributions from celebrities like Dame Judi Dench, Suzie Fletcher, Mel Giedroyc, Mark Gatiss, Paul Chahidi, Siobhán McSweeney, and Annie Sloan. The artworks are available for auction, with proceeds supporting the hospice's services. Hadley also visited patients, volunteers, and staff at the St Giles Hospice Inpatient Unit in Whittington, highlighting the therapeutic benefits of art in supporting cancer patients.
7. <https://www.standard.co.uk/showbiz/celebrity-news/dame-judi-dench-and-ed-sheeran-auction-off-their-own-artwork-for-cancer-charity-a3228021.html> - Dame Judi Dench, Ed Sheeran, and Mark Rylance are among celebrities auctioning their artwork to raise funds for Breast Cancer Now through Art for Cure's 'Make Your Mark' online auction. Dench is showcasing a watercolour painting, while other participants have submitted various artworks, including self-portraits and creative doodles. The exhibition aims to support breast cancer research by donating a percentage of sales to the charity, with the event taking place at Suffolk's Glemham Hall from April 30 to May 2.