

# Cultural Olympiad funds new commissions by Scottish artists

✘ The London 2012 Cultural Olympiad, the UK Arts Councils, Creative Scotland and the British Council have today awarded £820,000 funding to a new round of major commissions for Unlimited, the ground-breaking programme that celebrates arts and culture by disabled and deaf artists on an unprecedented scale for the Cultural Olympiad.

Of the 13 new commissions, three have been awarded to Scottish artists including Claire Cunningham, Caroline Bowditch and Marc Brew.

The works will take place across the UK and with support from The British Council some of the commissions will see collaboration between the artists in the UK and other countries including Brazil, China and South Africa.

Unlimited encourages collaborations and partnerships between disability arts organisations, disabled and Deaf artists, producers, and mainstream organisations to celebrate the inspiration of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and produce work like never before. The programme, with a total fund of £3m, is principally funded by the National Lottery through the Olympic Lottery Distributor, and is delivered in partnership between London 2012, Arts Council England, Creative Scotland, Arts Council of Wales, Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the British Council.

The new commissions for round two of Unlimited announced today include:

✘ Claire Cunningham – Ménage à Trois  
Ménage à Trois is a physical performance piece created,

conceived and performed by Claire Cunningham combining dance, puppetry, projection, animation and music, created in partnership with the National Theatre of Scotland.

In a dark, private chamber, echoing with the chimes of hundreds of silver strands of threaded crutches suspended high above, the story of a lonely woman unfolds. Her need for companionship drives her to begin to craft a man. The perfect man...out of the only thing she knows, the only companion she has...crutches. A study of love, obsession, loneliness, manipulation and all the insecurities and misconceptions we face in our search for someone that accepts us, and of trying to accept ourselves.

A beautiful, haunting study about the nature of love, loneliness and the search for a perfect partner will be created by Cunningham together with a team of highly respected collaborators including Video Artist Gail Sneddon.

Caroline Bowditch – leaving-limbo-landing

Leaving-limbo-landing is a new multi-artform collaborative work that will be created by independent disabled dance maker and performance artist, Caroline Bowditch. Presented by East London Dance, leaving-limbo-landing is about journey, placement, displacement, settling, arrivals and departures. It will include an interactive installation with performance elements in air, water and on land. Caroline is interested in working in non-traditional performance locations with bodies that don't generally fit the dance mould and she is passionate about creating work that is accessible to audiences.

✘ Marc Brew – Fusional Fragments

Choreographer Marc Brew, in partnership with DanceEast, will create a new dance work exploring the concept of fusion of fragments between classical ballet and contemporary dance. Accompanied by original music by Philip Sheppard and acclaimed composer and percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie, a cast of six dancers will investigate the difference and influences of the

two styles, questioning whether elements can be fused together or if they should remain as fragments in isolation.

Fusional Fragments will be created and presented at DanceEast in Ipswich, The Royal Opera House in London and DanceXchange in Birmingham.

Ruth Mackenzie, Cultural Olympiad, Director, said:- 'This commission is about world-class artists creating brilliant work which will change perceptions of the work of disabled and deaf artists. Congratulations to the commissioned artists and we look forward to seeing how their work develops.'

Andrew Dixon, Chief Executive, Creative Scotland said:- 'Claire, Caroline and Marc have consistently produced amazing work and I congratulate them on their success today. The Unlimited commissions offer another opportunity for Scotland's talent to shine during the Cultural Olympiad and show the quality of our disability arts. Each project has strong collaboration at its heart and it is so exciting to see the quality, range and the scale of ambition that audiences will enjoy in the run up to 2012. '

Claire Cunningham said:- 'I am very excited that my project has been selected for Unlimited. I am aware of the high standard of the artists selected in the first round, and the calibre of those who applied for the second round – in this regard I am very surprised and honoured to have been selected. I am also incredibly happy to have the National Theatre of Scotland as my presenting partners in this ambitious new work and look forward to the new possibilities offered in this collaboration'

Caroline Bowditch said:- 'To have the opportunity to create work on such a large scale to be presented on an international stage is something I have never been brave enough to even dream of doing before now. It's a really exciting time and I can't wait to get started!'

Marc Brew said:- 'I am delighted to have received the Unlimited Commission and to have the opportunity to work on such an exciting collaboration with Evelyn Glennie and Philip Sheppard.

This ambitious new work will explore the physicality of dance and music, and I am looking forward to the impact that Evelyn and Philip will make on my choreographic process and the possibilities that this collaboration brings.'

Applications for the third and final round of commissions are now welcomed from disabled and deaf artists or disability arts groups wishing to create high quality work to form part of high profile showcase events across the UK. The British Council will continue their support for applications who wish to develop partnerships with any of the participating countries which include Brazil, China, Columbia, Croatia, Germany, India, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Venezuela. Further information on the application process can be found on the [website](#).