

Usher Hall – our city's 5 star venue

✘ Many famous stars have played at this historic building since 1914. This year, the Hall welcomes a handful of new stars: a 5 star award for excellence from VisitScotland.

The Council-owned venue is the only concert hall in Scotland to hold this award.

The rating was awarded following anonymous visits to the Usher Hall by VisitScotland inspectors, who praised the venue's exceptional facilities, acoustics and the customer service provided by its staff.

Councillor Deidre Brock, Culture and Leisure Convener, added: "This is an amazing achievement and very well deserved. Since it underwent its major refurbishment, the Usher Hall has reclaimed its rightful position as a major international concert hall and this new rating helps cement its already sterling reputation. Once again, the Hall was a hive of activity during the Festival month and we're gearing up for a sensational autumn with several sell-out concerts including Adele, Jessie J and the only Scottish tour date by Noel Gallagher's new band High Flying Birds. Heartfelt congratulations and thanks to all the Usher Hall staff for the tremendous job that they do."

Karl Chapman, General Manager of the Usher Hall, said: "We have the world's greatest artists gracing our stage and we've been working to ensure that our customer service is also of the highest standard. Winning this award proves that we're giving our audiences both 5 Star Music and a 5 Star Experience! I am very proud of the hard work put in by our dedicated staff who helped win this award and I hope they are pleased to have their turn under the spotlights. This

recognition of their efforts is truly a big pat on the back for everyone.”

Manuela Calchini, VisitScotland Regional Director said: “A 5 star award is only given to places of an exceptional standard, and the Usher Hall is a magnificent example of how to combine a unique venue with excellent customer service. Edinburgh is blessed with some wonderful venues and this award makes sure that the Usher Hall is recognised as one of the very best.”

Jonathan Mills, Edinburgh International Festival Director said: “The Usher Hall is a terrific venue with a world class acoustic. The Festival has enjoyed presenting concerts there since its very first opening concert on 24 August 1947. With the recent investment by the City of Edinburgh Council it now gives audiences and artists an even more comfortable and enjoyable experience. I’m very pleased to hear it has been awarded 5 star status”.

Eddie Brogan, tourism director at Scottish Enterprise said: “The Usher Hall is the jewel in the crown of Edinburgh’s concert venue offering and undoubtedly plays a key role in the economic success of Edinburgh’s festivals programme. The unveiling of the refurbished Hall in 2010 marked a new chapter for the venue and this 5 star achievement is testimony not only to the high quality of the venue itself but to the exceptionally high standard of customer service.”

A report about the new VisitScotland 5 star rating will be considered by members of the Council’s Culture and Leisure Committee tomorrow Tuesday 20 September 2011.

