

The Core now open in Stockbridge for would be performers

There is a new space in Stockbridge designed to help performers in Edinburgh start their careers off on the right foot.

This is a drop in café in the style of an airport lounge and it is now ready to welcome you if you just fancy a coffee or would-be performers who can go in and get career advice if they need it.

It is a theatre-themed shop, resource and meeting place for local dancers, actors and performers.



Murray Grant and Drew Gowland have opened The Core to raise funds for the MGA Foundation. Photo Neil Hanna

The Core on Glanville Place offers the opportunity to shop for all things theatrical, provide information on local performing arts events and offer guidance on opportunities to practise and train in performing arts across the city, including children's classes, dance groups, and degree-level tuition. It will also host signings and talks by theatre stars, including performers from London's West End.

It is an unusual name and we asked Drew Gowland what was behind it. As a performer himself he knows all about the importance of the body's core to dancers and he explained the inspiration came from that.

When you buy a coffee or a cake there is an optional donation to The MGA Foundation, the charity that will run the shop. This charitable organisation was established to enable performers to train for careers on stage regardless of their financial background.



The Core in Stockbridge sells theatre tickets, coffee and advice to budding actors and singers. Murray Grant and Drew Gowland are the founders of both the shop and the MGA Foundation

Drew Gowland co-founded the MGA Foundation along with Murray Grant said: "The Core shop will look and feel something like an inviting and relaxing airport lounge.

"The shop will not only offer some incredible items for sale but it will also host regular events with some of the theatre's biggest visiting stars so that our guests can meet and learn from the industry's finest performers in a relaxed and accessible environment.

"We will encourage people to pop in and engage with opportunities in dance, acting, and musical theatre in Edinburgh – really any performing art, at any level, and for any age, audience or participant. We hope to do all of this whilst raising much needed money for The MGA Foundation."

With signed theatre memorabilia on the walls, the space will take on the atmosphere of a Hard Rock Café for stage aficionados, who will also be able to purchase show tickets across the UK at the shop's on-site box office.

The MGA Foundation was established earlier this year to ensure aspiring singers, dancers, actors and musical theatre performers are to be given financial freedom to pursue education in their chosen art at reputable schools across the UK.

The founders of the charity, Drew Gowland and Murray Grant, have distributed more than £600,000 in tuition fees in the past ten years for students on part-time and full-time performing arts courses.

Drew continued : "The establishment of a registered charity and our very own "charity shop (with a difference)" to continue our work and encourage even more people into performing arts training seemed like the natural next step.

"It is so important that young people, regardless of their background, have the opportunity to find out about the wealth of opportunities out there in the performing arts and then be able to access them should they so wish."

Applications for funding from The MGA Foundation will be welcomed from mid-2019. Successful applications can secure funding to participate in classes, workshops, summer schools and youth theatre projects and even to train full-time on CDMT-accredited courses across the UK.

The MGA Foundation is a Scottish registered charity (SC047592). For further information, visit www.themgafoundation.org or email info@themgafoundation.org

There will be a special Family Day will take place on December 18.

At the recent opening carol singers performed – and wow they were great!



One of the carol singers who performed at the opening. The Core in Stockbridge sells theatre tickets, coffee and advice to budding actors and singers.

Here we chat to [@DrewGowland](#) about the new venture by [@mgafoundation](#) in Stockbridge Have a coffee at The Core on Glanville Place and help the charity help young performers! pic.twitter.com/8TMzGIpfMQ

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [December 5, 2018](#)