

The Quaich Project hold their international launch in New York

Olivier and Tony Award-winner, Alan Cumming, hosted a Showcase of Scottish Culture in New York City last night to raise money for the major redevelopment called The Quaich Project in Princes Street Gardens.



Photograph by © Dan Callister www.dancallister.com Alan Cumming's Celebration of Scottish Culture hits New York City Photo shows KT Tunstall with Alan on stage at the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse in the Lincoln Center

The exclusive event featured cabaret performances from Alan

Cumming, BRIT Award-winner KT Tunstall, Broadway's Alexandra Silber, and an emerging Scottish artist, Alannah Moar, chosen by the people of Edinburgh.

Organised by The Quaich Project – the partnership to design and redevelop the Ross Bandstand in West Princes Street Gardens – the redevelopment is a project close to Alan's heart.

Set in an iconic location at the foot of Edinburgh castle, the Gardens is a must-see for the thousands of New York Scottish diasporas who visit the historic city every year.

More than 100 guests were entertained by performers last night, including speeches from sculptor, Andy Scott, as well as Jules Haston, Director of Development at The Quaich Project.

The cabaret, held at the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse in the Lincoln Center, launched the international fundraising campaign to realise the architectural vision for the iconic green space in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Guests raised toasts of premium Scotch whisky from event sponsor Glenfiddich to the project and enjoyed performances from some of Scotland's best-known entertainers.



(L-R): Jules Haston, Alan Cumming, Alannah Moar, KT Tunstall and Andy Scott Photograph by © Dan Callister
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Quaich is a traditional Scottish sharing cup, traditionally used to drink whisky. The topography of West Princes Street Gardens, which sits between Princes Street and the iconic Edinburgh Castle is a similar, bowl shape and this has led to the new name for the project.

The Quaich Project is one of Europe's most significant green space developments and those behind it hope it will allow the Gardens to emerge as one of the most acclaimed city gardens in the world on a par with projects such as New York's High Line and Singapore's Gardens by the Bay. Its vision is to reimagine the gardens as a space for all to celebrate and enjoy in new ways. It began with a gift of £5 million from local businessman Norman Springford. There has been a major capital spend on renovating the Ross Fountain (all backed by private funding) and there is now a new drive to raise the extra funds needed to create a new space fit for the 21st century in the gardens. Work has been carried out to completely renovate The Gardener's Cottage, one of Edinburgh's best known sights. The project is currently within the design development stage, building towards a planning application being submitted in 2020.



A concept design has been produced by award-winning LA and New York-based architectural practice, wHY, and aims to create a space for all in the heart of Edinburgh. wHY's design triumphed in an international design competition to re-imagine the gardens which sit in the shadow of Edinburgh Castle.



The wHY concept design which won the international design competition

Alan Cumming OBE, actor, The Quaich Project North American Ambassador and host of the New York event, said: "Scotland's ties with the USA and New York in particular are incredibly strong. Both are centres of excellence for the arts, and the Scottish diaspora helped to make New York the city it is today.

"Edinburgh has strong emotional connections for many New Yorkers, so bringing the best new talent from the city and outlining the plans to create an inclusive space in the heart of the city, was a great pleasure."

Jules Haston, Director of Development at The Quaich Project, commented: "All the performances were excellent and the

interest in the project was remarkable. Guests were highly engaged with what's happening in Edinburgh and were excited to hear about our plans to create a space for all to enjoy in the heart of the city.

"The event officially launched our international fundraising campaign and we look forward to engaging with the Scottish diaspora around the world as we guide West Princes Street Gardens through the next stage of its evolution."

To find out more about The Quaich Project, visit: www.thequaichproject.org.