

Boyack supports Art in Action

Sarah Boyack MSP visited Collective, Edinburgh, this morning as part of the Art In Action campaign marking the first of a series of visits by MSPs to see first-hand the value and importance of art in Scottish life.

Scottish Contemporary Art Network (SCAN) renewed their annual awareness campaign as artists galleries, and visual art organisations await details of how cultural funding pledged last week by the Scottish Government will be distributed.

SCAN Director Clare Harris said before the visits: "SCAN welcomes the recent announcement from the Government regarding new funding for the culture sector, including for both artists and visual art organisations, but we know that the road to recovery will be long and complex."

"During the isolating months of lockdown, art has been a lifeline for many, young and old. It is important that as Parliament and MSPs look to the future recovery of the country that they are able to place art amongst their high priorities for our communities, our economies and our wider wellbeing."

During the visit Sarah saw Collective's recently reopened site and meet with Kate Gray, Collective's Director, and her team. Sarah will view an exhibition by Julijonas Urbonas, an award-winning Lithuanian artist, designer, researcher and engineer, who received the prestigious Prix Ars Electronica in 2010.







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She also toured the outdoor spaces to see permanent sculptures

by Scottish artist Tessa Lynch and discuss upcoming plans for *Not Going Back to Normal*, a resource for Scottish disabled artists in a post-pandemic world. The pair will also discuss Collective's Satellite Programme, supporting Scottish emerging talent to develop and exhibit new commissions.

Collective's Director, Kate Gray, said: "Collective brings people together to look at, think about and produce contemporary art in a new kind of city observatory at the heart of Scotland's capital. From works by leading artists and online programmes and events reaching those across the globe, to programmes engaging the local community and Scottish artists at the beginning of their careers, we urge the government and funders to continue to support our work and that of our peers in the visual arts sector during these difficult times."

Ms Boyack said: "It was great to hear about the work of artists during the pandemic and their exciting plans for the future. Art is part of who we are and we need the hope and inspiration that comes from art more than ever.

"For artists however, being able to survive economic uncertainty and retain employment underscores the importance of supporting those who work in culture, ensuring equality and fair work, with publicly-funded organisations paying union rates and supporting the living wage."

Collective is the first in a series of visits across Scotland to encourage MSPs to learn more about the role art is playing in supporting wellbeing, benefiting communities and contributing to a creative and innovative future for Scotland.

In the medium term, SCAN urge a doubling of the current cultural budget and providing a five-year stabilisation deal for the cultural sector, so that it is able to contribute fully to the national recovery and build a cultural workforce

based on the principles of equality and fair work, enabling publicly-funded organisations to pay union rates and support the living wage.

