

Protest planned for Saturday – World Art Day

The group which is trying to Save the Filmhouse will join in the National Protest for the Arts on World Art Day this Saturday, 15 April, in Festival Square.

The event is flagged up on the Save the Filmhouse website where the demands are set out:

- More financial support from Scottish Government for the arts sector**
- Greater access to Arts and Culture for all residents of Scotland**
- Fair Pay in the Arts sector for artists and arts workers**

“This protest is both an invitation to exercise our democratic right to defend the Arts and a proud celebration of the Arts as an essential component of our lives – not an added luxury. We march to protest against Climate Change, we stand up for Women’s rights on International Women’s Day... We should also stand up for our right to cultural life, as recognised in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”

national protest for

THE ARTS

on World Arts Day

Saturday 15 April, 12pm

@ festival square



for more information visit
savethefilmhouse.com

or email
info.savethefilmhouse@gmail.com



The Filmhouse closed in October and as the company which owned the building went into administration, its future is determined by the joint administrators, Tom MacLennan and Chad Griffin of FRP Advisory.

Offers have been made to the administrators, but there is no formal move as yet to accept any offer to buy the building. It had already been identified by the Centre for Moving Image that the building would either need a lot of refurbishment or replacement by a fabulous new building in Festival Square.



Filmhouse. Photo © 2023 Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com
All members of staff employed by CMI and Filmhouse in Edinburgh and Aberdeen were made redundant when both cinemas closed in autumn last year.

A campaign group was set up to Save the Filmhouse comprising former staff, film lovers and filmmakers to campaign against the closure but by the time the company was in administration it was already too late. Even a fundraising initiative which gathered about £700,000 was too little to buy the building as much more is needed to spend on renovating it.

The Signature Group pulled out of any purchase in the middle of March apparently because they would not be able to get a licence to sell alcohol in the building. Then it was left to councillors to make an attempt to express their support for the building to be used for cultural purposes.

The council approved a motion suggested by the SNP group as follows: "Committee notes that while the Council isn't formally part of the decision making process, the Council does

have a stake in making sure the cultural ecosystem of the City is retained and enhanced.

“Notes reports of discussions that the Filmhouse may be sold by administrators for a non-cultural purpose following the administrator’s preferred bidder reportedly withdrawing their bid.

“Further notes there were previous bids submitted in the previous competitive bid process which would have retained a cultural film presence on a sustainable commercial basis.

“Committee reiterates the Council’s position in favour of retaining cultural film and film education as the central use for the Filmhouse.

“Committee agrees officers will engage with Screen Scotland, the Administrators and any potential bidders who can keep the Filmhouse as a centre of film culture in Edinburgh, to try and meet the City’s expectations and protect Edinburgh’s cultural landscape. Requests that the Convener makes contact with the Administrators to reaffirm the Council’s preferred position.

“Agrees that Officers will provide a briefing to all elected members no later than April 17th to update Councillors on the situation as known.”