

Summerhall Arts – to offer vital support for the creative arts

A new arts charity has been established to offer support and opportunities to local and national creative arts practitioners, while making a contribution to culture in Edinburgh

Summerhall Arts will be based at the former Dick Vet but will be run independently, by a team with a board of trustees. The arts venue created at Summerhall has become such an important cultural centre in the capital and will provide ways for creatives – both companies and individuals – to consolidate. This move is set against a backdrop of government cuts to culture budgets, and the need for it is urgent, although has been planned for a long time.

Sam Gough, CEO of Summerhall Arts said: “There is a moment just before its too late, that if nothing is done at that point, all you can then do is stand by and watch what is treasured become lost. I think that pivotal moment is now.

“I am so excited to be working with this talented group of people, we have ambitious plans to unveil a programme of support and development opportunities across the performance and visual arts sector, along with year round new writing commissions and performances. To be there at the start of a new arts organisation that will put creating work and supporting the artists first is inspiring and we cant wait to

get going.

“We are lucky to be able to house this charity and the work we will be doing in this fantastic Arts Village – the work Summerhall has done over the years is phenomenal, but as invariably everyone is cutting back and being more cautious about how many and whom they support Summerhall Arts is looking to enable so much more, bring it all under one roof and give the incredibly talented artists in Scotland more opportunities to be able to compete on the world stage.”

Trustee Harry Mould said: “It’s vital, now more than ever, that we provide meaningful and affordable opportunities for those who want to make and participate in art, and that those opportunities actively dismantle barriers to access and authentic, long-term inclusion.

“I’m really delighted to be one of the team of trustees for Summerhall Arts, and to have the chance to play a part in building an arts organisation from its inception with the mission of providing a properly community-engaged platform that nurtures and celebrates a real variety of exciting voices. I hope to contribute to establishing best practice, so that underrepresented artists and underserved communities in particular can be a part of all that we do whilst feeling safe, centred, seen and supported. “

Chair of the Summerhall Arts board Marcus Pickering said: “I am so thrilled that we are launching Summerhall Arts as we recognise the importance of sustaining and supporting the arts here in Scotland. It has been a delight watching the arts develop over twelve years at Summerhall and it would be a shame if it is lost.

“We are here to ensure the survival of it and galvanise the arts community by bringing it together in one place and to witness the wonderful output of so much creativity is magnificent. It is a joy to work with such an amazingly talented mix of arts professionals in the core team and a

wealth of industry experience across our board. We hope that the arts community and arts fans engage with and support this essential new organisation.”

Summerhall Arts is setting out to be the leading arts organisation in Edinburgh and will provide professional development spaces with artist residencies and surgeries. The Performance programme will host visiting companies throughout the year and will offer up to 40 weeks of paid and free development space. In addition and in a welcome move while Filmhouse is still in a state of limbo, the venue will curate a cinema programme of independent and art house films.

The key team that will deliver the Summerhall Arts programme are Sam Gough, CEO; Samantha Chapman, Visual Arts and Cinema Curator; Arusa Qureshi, Music Programmer; Tom Forster, Performance Programmer and Imogen Stirling, Development and Producing Lead.

The independent board of trustees responsible for the governance of the organisation are Harry Mould – Policy and Public Affairs Lead, Federation of Scottish Theatre; Debbie Christie – TV Executive, documentary maker and Chair of SDI; Nancy Riach – Development, Arts Culture Health & Wellbeing Scotland; Jonathan Seddon – Partner, Morton Fraser MacRoberts Lawyers; Colin Ferrier – Bass Rock Financial Management Ltd and Marcus Pickering (Chair) Founder and Managing Director of Pickerings Gin.

www.summerhallarts.co.uk



Summerhall Arts, a new charitable arts organisation, is launched in Edinburgh by members of the programming team and board of trustees.

[L-R) Marcus Pickering, Harry Mould, Samantha Chapman, Arusa Qureshi, Sam Gough, Tom Forster and Nancy Riach