

Filmhouse – first patrons announced and lease signed

Filmhouse have announced that two new patrons are backing their project to bring back the cinema after the collapse of its parent charity eighteen months ago, and have issued an update on progress.

Charlotte Wells and Jack Lowden have agreed to be the first patrons, lending the Filmhouse team their crucial support.

And the team have said that the 25-year lease with owners Caledonian Heritable was signed this week allowing them to proceed with the practicalities of refurbishing the building.

Charlotte Wells, the film director who began her career as a member of Filmhouse's early education initiative *Scottish Kids Are Making Movies* and went on to wow Cannes with the multi-award winning *Aftersun...* said: "I'm so pleased that these doors will finally reopen, providing an essential space in Edinburgh for audiences to discover films they might not otherwise see – films that challenge their perceptions of people, places, and the form itself. The Filmhouse was an essential part of my own story and I'm delighted it can continue to be that for others too through its film and education programming and its role as a public forum for film lovers. I'm proud to be an inaugural patron and can't wait to sit back down there myself."



Filmhouse Edinburgh with Open the Doors banner outside PHOTO ©2023 The Edinburgh Reporter

Scots actor Jack Lowden, currently known for TV hit series *Slow Horses*, has been a loud champion of the cinema before and after its closure in 2022 said: "I made a bee-line for Filmhouse when I lived in Edinburgh and loved the diversity of its programme -showing films from around the world as well supporting independent and local filmmakers – and so many film festivals happen there. I'm delighted that it's on track to re-open and honoured to be a patron and champion of what will be again a truly great, independent cinema."

A Filmhouse spokesperson said: "We are delighted that Jack and Charlotte will be patrons and champions of Filmhouse. Charlotte is living proof of the opportunity that exists for young people to find their feet – and their voice – in the medium of film at Filmhouse and, if they choose to, go on to work internationally. Jack is hugely articulate about the importance of Filmhouse as a place that screens and

makes accessible every form of cinema – particularly the independent voices – which Filmhouse does day in day out. Signing the lease means we are a significant step further down the road towards re-opening the doors and putting great cinema back on the screens.”

The City of Edinburgh Council Culture and Communities Convener, Councillor Val Walker said: “We’re delighted to see Filmhouse (Edinburgh) Ltd. sign the lease with Caledonian Heritable. It’s wonderful that they can now begin the refurbishment which will take us all a step closer to re-opening this key cultural asset.

“Filmhouse is much loved by the community, and this upcoming re-opening is very exciting for residents and visitors alike.

“We’re committed to having a home for cultural cinema in the heart of the city and for the wider sector going forward. Edinburgh is rightly one of the great cultural cities of the world and cinema is a key part of this landscape.”