

Demarco Archive Trust dinner raises thousands

Professor Richard Demarco, CBE, is the embodiment of what is meant by a living legend.

Which other 94-year-old in Edinburgh could throw a party at Prestonfield and command the room as only he can? His great friend James Thomson who owns Prestonfield had generously offered the five star venue for a fundraising dinner. The need for funds is growing each day to enable Demarco to move his extensive archive (which apparently includes some three million photos...) to a new safer location.

The dinner at Prestonfield House on Friday evening raised at least £25,000 for The Demarco Archive Trust. (If you wish to donate to The Demarco Archive Trust then [click here.](#))

Ricky Demarco remembered James Thomson in his first speech (yes there were two!) saying that he and Robert McDowell of Summerhall have both been huge supporters of his work.

He is primarily an artist and has a 70 plus year history with the Edinburgh Festival which explains the existence of his extensive archive of all kinds of material linked with theatre, the festival, art and photography. Professor Demarco was responsible for bringing many artists of all genres to the Festival and making it what it is today – although he roundly criticises what it has become. He said: “We have seen the Edinburgh Festival reduced to something called the stand up comic festival. Art is no laughing matter! Art is the stuff and substance which causes us to rejoice, as we are doing here tonight.”

He continued about the festival which he was an integral part of and said: "We have a great responsibility to come together as friends, to remember the fact that the Edinburgh Festival once was all about Edinburgh, not as the capital of Scotland, but the world capital of culture. Can you imagine that it wasn't Berlin, it wasn't Paris, it wasn't New York, it was Edinburgh. And Edinburgh is responsible for the modern world because of the Scottish Enlightenment.

"Art is not about being a money making machine. It is about caring for one's fellow human beings. There are problems with our national health service, our prison service. Art should be about how we can help in every possible way by using the highest level of artistic endeavour and to use the language of art seriously."

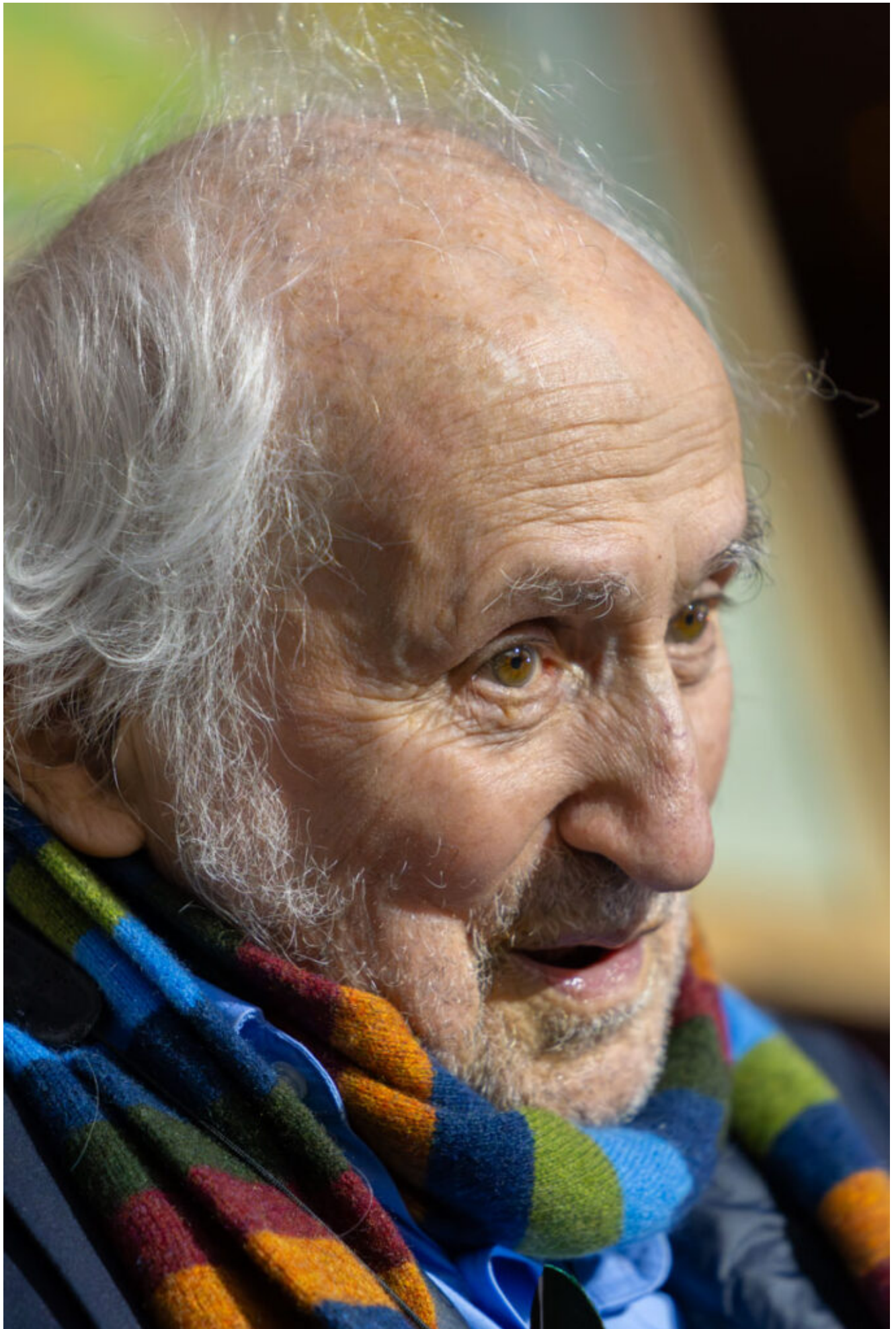
The archive

Demarco's life's work, which is of national and international significance, is now split between an out of town location and the beleaguered arts venue at Summerhall which is being sold with Edinburgh property developers, AMA declared as the preferred bidder. It is becoming more urgent to move the archive to a new location at The Crichton in Dumfries, but that move will take thousands of pounds. This estate contains the Dumfries campuses of Glasgow University, the Open University and Dumfries and Galloway College.

A spokesperson for The Demarco Archive Trust said: "We are now faced with raising the funds needed to facilitate an initial move of half the archive, while continuing to pay rates and rent on the remaining seven rooms at Summerhall, until the final move to a new permanent home in the Spring of 2025.

A conservative estimate for all of the above, as well as taking this opportunity to do the necessary conservation and repairs of the works damaged in the recent second flooding at Summerhall is estimated at more than £50k.

If you wish to donate to The Demarco Archive Trust then [click here.](#)



Richard Demarco. © 2024 Martin McAdam



Barbara Dickson sang for the audience © 2024 Martin McAdam



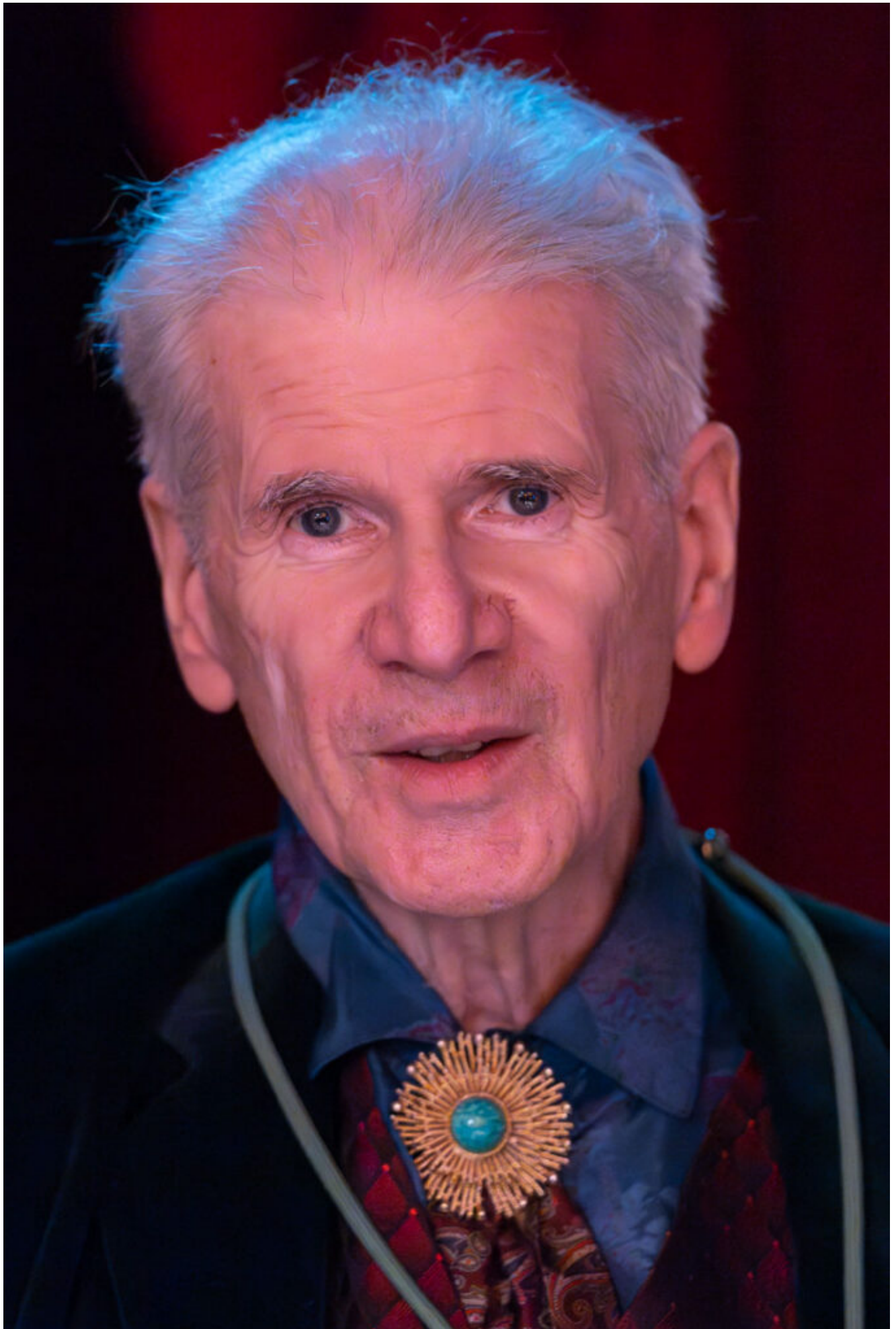
Richard Demarco Fundraiser. © 2024 Martin McAdam



Robert McDowell. © 2024 Martin McAdam



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