

Press Release

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For immediate release

Brewery Arts Evolves

Brewery Arts are preparing to relaunch their iconic venue, thanks to the near completion of an ambitious refurbishment programme. Aiming to become Cumbria's first centre for cross artform innovation, Brewery Arts can now bring together film, live performance, hybrid and livestream events, talent development and digital media production in one location.

The fully refurbished venue will include a modern, state of the art two-screen cinema complex with luxurious seating and giant screens, along with a new purpose built boutique digital lounge for additional immersive screenings and gaming. There will also be a striking redesign of the restaurant, bar and all public spaces, with new signage, branding and contemporary interiors.

The theatre, music venue, creative studios and warehouse will be upgraded with the latest technology, for world-class live performances, audio visual presentations, creative learning and interactive exhibitions. New facilities for music and film production will also be available, placing a new digital-led talent development and production hub at the heart of the centre's activities. These will be launched with new programmes of residencies, workshops, community engagement and outreach projects, to nurture the next generation of artists, creators and innovators.

Live streaming equipment has also been fitted throughout the venue, allowing events such as live music and theatre, festivals, conferences and weddings to be broadcast from the building to digital platforms and viewed anywhere in the world. Together with strengthened digital infrastructure across the site, this will transform the quality and scope of the services on offer to cultural partners and corporate clients.

The revitalised facilities will enhance the profile of Kendal and the surrounding region as a great place to live, work and visit. This will boost its already strong cultural offer and stimulate further growth in the visitor and night time economies as they recover after the Covid-19 pandemic. The programme aims to strengthen partnerships and spark new collaborations, providing growth opportunities for major festivals and creative industries.

The project was generously supported with £850,000 capital grant funding, which was secured before the pandemic and designated for improvements to the building and its infrastructure. The funds were awarded by Arts Council England, Cumbria LEP, South Lakeland District Council, Cumbria County Council, Kendal Town Council, Brewery Arts Centre Endowment Trust, The Garfield Weston Foundation, The Foyle Foundation, anonymous gifts and individual donations through a successful public appeal.

Miriam Randall, CEO/Artistic Director of Brewery Arts said:

“This project puts cultural innovation and talent development at the heart of our work and breathes new life into our venue as we approach our 50th anniversary. When we reopen it will be a space for everyone to enjoy, a creative hub at the heart of community life that develops and showcases some of the most exciting artists and creatives working today. Thanks to the generous support from our funding partners and our fantastic local community, we can face the future with confidence.”

Catherine Mitchell, Director, North, Arts Council England said:

“Congratulations to Brewery Arts on the completion of their capital project. I am proud that our Small Capital Grant investment will help to further secure the Brewery’s position as an innovative and ambitious arts organisation. Over the past fifty years the Brewery has been a cultural hub at the heart of Kendal’s community. It has played a key role in growing Cumbria’s arts and culture scene. These new facilities and digital services will create opportunities for artists and audiences alike to engage with arts and culture. This is an exciting new chapter for the Brewery - I look forward to seeing the work that will be created from this inspiring space.”

Jo Lappin, Chief Executive of Cumbria LEP added: “CLEP was delighted to provide £100,000 of funding to support Brewery Arts’ Our Digital Future project, which will help Cumbria to develop next generation skills and new jobs by providing a state of the art facility in Kendal. Importantly, this will play a part in addressing the digital divide that Cumbria is currently experiencing and create both the skills and appetite to address this gap, going forward”.

Councillor Robin Ashcroft, Portfolio Holder for Economy, Culture & Leisure at South Lakeland District Council said: “This is tremendous news and the team at the Brewery are to be heartily congratulated. This arts centre is very much at the heart of South Lakeland’s cultural and creative life – providing immense social and economic benefits for all of us. It’s particularly impressive that they’ve stuck to their objectives and delivered on their ambitions during the worst of times most of us have ever known. I’m very clear that they will play a key role as our whole district emerges from the current crisis.”

More details will be revealed on the Brewery Arts website and social media channels in the coming weeks about the refurbishments, which are currently in the final stages of completion.

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Notes to Editors

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Brewery Arts is a thriving centre for combined arts in Kendal, with an inspirational programme of performance, music, cinema, exhibitions, international festivals, youth programmes and creative learning. It is Cumbria’s flagship arts venue and in 2018 it was named in The Sunday Times as contributing towards making Kendal one of the top ten market towns in England.

breweryarts.co.uk