EDINBURGH’S SUMMER FESTIVALS AND MOMENTUM

Edinburgh's Festivals are Scotland’s world-leading cultural brand. Collectively they attract audiences of over four million, more than 30,000 artists from over 70 countries and 1,000 accredited media. Year-round Edinburgh hosts 12 major international festivals and five of them are staged in August: Edinburgh Art Festival, Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Edinburgh International Book Festival, Edinburgh International Festival and the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

Momentum is the Edinburgh Festivals International Delegate Programme, taking place in Edinburgh during August and delivered through a partnership between British Council Scotland, Festivals Edinburgh and Creative Scotland, with the additional support of the City of Edinburgh Council, Event Scotland and the Scottish Government. The programme is aimed at leading cultural figures including government officials, heads of funding agencies, independent producers, festival directors, media, cross-art form programmers, curators and cultural entrepreneurs. It also welcomes other high-level cultural figures and in total provides relationships to, and shares knowledge with over 100 delegates from more than 20 different countries.

Momentum provides a dynamic space for international cultural figures to engage and build relationships with the world’s leading Festival City, the wider Scottish cultural sector and the international community that flock to Edinburgh during August each year.

Created in 2013, Momentum builds on work over the last three years which has seen a pioneering cultural diplomacy programme developed by Festivals Edinburgh, the British Council Scotland and Creative Scotland.

Lloyd Anderson, Director British Council Scotland, wrote a lead article in the Scotsman on the importance of Momentum. Learners International is a new online resource jointly developed with Education Scotland, and in collaboration with teachers and education practitioners, to support schools in Scotland and beyond develop high quality, meaningful international experiences for learners of all ages focused on skills development.

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Learners International is a new online resource jointly developed with Education Scotland, and in collaboration with teachers and education practitioners, to support schools in Scotland and beyond develop high quality, meaningful international experiences for learners of all ages focused on skills development.

Through the combination of British Council’s experience in international education policy and practice, including the delivery of global schools linking programmes and the expertise of Education Scotland, this resource supports learners and teachers across Scotland. The website is designed to improve learners’ skills, knowledge and experiences to allow them to compete effectively in the global marketplace. Education practitioners are offered a range of contexts for learning which include participating in programmes such as Connecting Classrooms, Erasmus Plus or eTwinning. These international engagements support learners to investigate the world beyond their immediate environment, recognize different perspectives, communicate their ideas effectively to diverse audiences, and translate their ideas into appropriate personal and shared actions.
The different sections, building on best practice from around Scotland, demonstrate how school partnerships and international education can support delivery of Learning for Sustainability, offer an excellent means for continuing professional development and bring wider benefits to schools and their local communities.

This resource was designed to align with the Scottish Government’s International Strategy, as well as Education Scotland’s International Strategy and the British Council’s approach to supporting Scottish education, and fits within the overall self-evaluation framework as exemplified in “How Good is Our School”.

The Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland’s Languages, Dr Alasdair Allan, launched Learners International on May 28th, 2015, at Queen Anne High School in Dunfermline, Fife. The event was facilitated by young people from Glasgow who are part of the Malawi Young Leaders of Learning (MYLOL) programme.

The second phase of the website will focus on the internationalisation of young people in the senior phase, linking closely with the skills agenda.

To find out more about Learners International click here. You can also read more about the launch event in Dunfermline here.

CURRENT

As part of the UK-China Year of Cultural Exchange, British Council has been working with Cooper Gallery and Shanghai Himalayas Museum on the delivery of a major programme of contemporary art from Scotland.

CURRENT, a four-phase contemporary art exhibition, forum and residency programme in Shanghai showcases for the first time in China the distinctiveness of contemporary art made in Scotland and its keen engagement with social and political debates.

PHASE ONE: 28 June – 9 August 2015

Phase One opened at Shanghai Himalayas Museum with the exhibitions:

Wheat, Mud, Machine by Poster Club and Surplus Cameo Decor: Sindanao 2 by Edgar Schmitz.

It also included an international speakers’ forum with invited speakers Simon Groom, Terry Smith, Wang Nanming and What, How & for Whom/WHW as well as three artists residencies supported by the British Council.

These experiences will be shared with audiences back in Scotland through a programme of events organised by the British Council in collaboration with Cooper Gallery in the forthcoming months.

Curated by Cooper Gallery DJCAD University of Dundee and Shanghai Himalayas Museum and organised in partnership with the British Council, an Official 2015 UK-China Year of Cultural Exchange Event

SALTIRE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL BURSARIES

Run by the Saltire Society and funded by British Council Scotland, these awards are open to outstanding graduating students from Scotland. The bursaries, of £1,500 each, are in the following disciplines: architecture, civil engineering, creative writing, music and visual arts.

These bursaries offer a fantastic opportunity for talented Scots to broaden their life experience and develop intercultural skills. The recipients of the bursaries will have the opportunity to research and explore an idea and make new connections on an international learning journey. British Council Scotland is very pleased to be able to provide funding for the Saltire International Travel Bursaries. International connections have always served to enrich Scotland’s culture, heritage and creativity.

We receive a high calibre of nominations from throughout Scotland every year.

Winners from last year have shared their experiences. Don’t miss out on their inspiring blogs!
ALCHEMY FESTIVAL

Alchemy, Southbank Centre’s annual festival, showcases the best of dance, music, theatre, design, fashion, comedy and literature from the UK and South Asia.

For the first time, Southbank Centre’s cross arts festival was launched in Glasgow and ran between 21 and 24 May 2015. Alchemy Glasgow explored the cultural connections between the UK, India and Pakistan, and celebrated contemporary, classical, folk and traditional styles. The festival was a partnership between Glasgow Life, Celtic Connections and Southbank Centre, in association with British Council and Creative Scotland.

Among the highlights were tabla maestro Zakir Hussain’s Pulse of the World which was commissioned by Celtic Connections and premiered at the Festival in 2011. It featured Indian players who were specially selected by Zakir – Rakesh Chaurasia (bansura) and Ganesh Rajagopalan (violin). They were joined by Patsy Reid (fiddle/viola), Charlie McKerron (fiddle), Fraser Fifield (flute/pipes), John Joe Kelly (bodhran), Jean-Michel Veillon (flute), and Shane McGowan (guitar).

The poetry project, City to City celebrated the twin cities Lahore and Glasgow. The project featured Jim Carruth and Kathrine Sowerby, along with four Pakistani poets and four Scottish poets, who explored their differing cultures through poetry and music.

“Bringing cultures together in interesting and creative ways is at the heart of the British Council’s work. Alchemy Glasgow, a new festival in Scotland, exemplifies this by celebrating the strong connections between Scotland, India and Pakistan. Our cultures are enriched by such exchanges of ideas and the cementing of creative and collaborative relationships. The artists we brought together are all the best at what they do, and the seven performances across traditional and modern cultures offered incredible nights out. We are delighted to have worked with Celtic Connections, the Southbank Centre, Glasgow Life and Creative Scotland to bring these wonderful collaborations to Scotland.”

Lloyd Anderson, Director, British Council Scotland.

FUTURE NEWS

Future NEWS is a conference aimed at young people who aspire to be the next generation of world-class journalists. It provides a chance to hear from leaders in the media field and get hands-on advice and support from the experts.

Building on the success of a first conference, held in Glasgow as part of the Commonwealth Games’ cultural programme, the second conference will take place at the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh from 4-6 September 2015.

British Council has selected participants from more than 20 countries who, on their return home, will hopefully become media professionals themselves, with an enduring memory of their time in Scotland.

The event brings together more than 100 students aged 18 to 25 from across the world. They will be given the opportunity to:

- learn key multi-media reporting and editing skills from established and emerging media and journalism professionals;
- network with the best from the world of media and journalism, and with other aspiring journalists;
- add to their writing and multi-media portfolio to support their CV for future employment.

Future NEWS 2015 is a partnership project involving Reuters, the Herald & Times Group, Tinopolis Interactive, British Council and others, and is financially supported by the Scottish Government.