



STRATFORD ARTS TRUST, THE CHARITY THAT RAN STRATFORD CIRCUS, ANNOUNCES LEGACY PARTNERS AS PART OF ITS SOLVENT WINDING UP PROCESS

THREE CHARITIES TO RECEIVE FUNDING TO ENSURE STRATFORD ARTS TRUST'S IMPACT ON LOCAL COMMUNITIES CONTINUES

STRATFORD ARTS TRUST ALSO ANNOUNCES FIVE EAST LONDON EMERGING ARTIST RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT AWARDS

Stratford Arts Trust, which ran Stratford Circus Arts Centre from 2012 to 2020, enters its last month of operating. It has announced the three charities who will receive a total of £125,000 in legacy funding to ensure its impact on local communities continues via the delivery of three key projects after it winds up on 30 November 2021.

Face Front Theatre will receive £25,000 to continue running Blue Sky Actors. Blue Sky Actors is a disability-led theatre ensemble for adults with learning difficulties or disabilities, open to all comers of different abilities and ages for enjoyment and learning. It meets every Saturday afternoon and develops originally devised issue-led theatre leading to public performances. The company is about to embark on a six-week tour into SEN Schools, with the production - It's My Move. For more details: <https://www.facefront.org/education/its-my-move/>

Ray Downing, Artistic Director, Face Front Theatre commented:

"The Blue Sky Actors are a prime example of why we exist - inclusive, playful, full of wonder and jolly good fun for all. We are extremely proud of our partnership with Stratford Arts Trust. The legacy funding for the group means we have a guaranteed future. Thank you."

Eastside Educational Trust will receive £50,000 to run Creative Schools and Colleges, a programme that enables children and young people in schools and colleges with limited arts and cultural provision to experience high-quality creative arts projects with professional artists. Creative Schools + Colleges' 'Slow Symposium will run from 08 - 18 November and will be Stratford Arts Trust's final hosting event for the programme. www.creativeschools.london/slow-symposium-2021

Matt Lane, CEO and Artistic Director, Eastside, commented:

"Eastside is delighted to become the new host for the Creative Schools programme and is pleased to be furthering the outstanding work of Stratford Circus over the last five years. We will continue to work hard to create opportunities to support both young people and creative practitioners, especially

at this time when the creative industries and educational sectors have been so disrupted by the Covid 19 pandemic.

As an organisation we have always worked hard to deliver our work to those young people who need it most. Our values and aims align with the Creative Schools programme and therefore it is welcome news for us to have the opportunity to lead this excellent programme forwards."

Spitalfields Music will receive £50,000 to run New Young Voice Collective (NewYVC). NewYVC is a non-auditioned mixed age youth choir based in Newham, which teaches a programme of music with a clear representation of excellence, values of diversity, inclusion, and social responsibility through choral singing. The choir rehearse weekly during term time and are given opportunities to further their development through conducting courses, performance opportunities and learning from selected guest artists. NewYVC will be performing live on Radio 3 with The BBC Singers on 20th December at 2pm; singing the final verse of each of the 6 finalists of the Radio 3 Carol of the Year competition.

Sarah Gee, Chief Executive, Spitalfields Music, commented:

"We're delighted to be hosting NewYVC and supporting them to rebuild the group after coronavirus made singing in groups so difficult. Spitalfields Music has decades of experience working on singing projects in East London, and we're really looking forward to getting to know Nav and his team, and the singers, much better. Together with our friends at the BBC Singers and Britten Pears Arts, we want to use music to build new communities and provide opportunities for young singers to express themselves creatively."

The legacy funding amounts are reflective of the current running costs for each project and will cover delivery until at least August 2022 with each host organisation committed to securing future funding to sustain and develop the projects. In choosing these recipients, Stratford Arts Trust's trustees and executive recognised that these organisations all share a strategic and cultural fit with SAT, delivering work in East London with the capacity and ambition to deliver and sustain the projects long term. Any remaining reserves held by Stratford Arts Trust, at the point the liquidation process is complete, will be distributed to grassroots organisations working in Newham in early 2022.

As a further commitment to leaving behind a strong legacy, Stratford Arts Trust has also announced five new East London Emerging Artist Research and Development Awards. The awards will support local emerging artists with individual awards of £2,000 each to contribute to their creative practice or the development of a new creative idea which will connect to communities in East London. The five winners of the awards are Korantema Anyimadu, Chloe Bailey, Mathias Lemaitre, Maria Majewska and Anna Strickland (HeardinLondon). Projects proposed include a photography project, a new theatre production exploring themes of heritage and migration within the Polish community, a unique illustrated guide of East London exploring hidden and unexpected places, a heritage zine exploring the under-documented heritage of Black and Asian people, and other people of colour in East London and a series of art therapy workshops for children.

The decision to wind up Stratford Arts Trust was taken earlier this year by the charity's trustees following the termination of its tenancy of Stratford Circus Arts Centre by the London Borough of Newham and the subsequent withdrawal of funding by Arts Council England.

Georgina Philippou, Chair, Stratford Arts Trust, commented:

"The difficult decision to wind up the Trust was made after decisions made by the London Borough of Newham and Arts Council England meant the risks to sustaining the charity and its operations in the

long term were too high. An opportunity to ensure a legacy for three of our key programmes was developed and I am thrilled that we have found new homes for Blue Sky Actors, Creatives Schools & Colleges and NewYVC. Our legacy partners share our ethos and passion for these projects, and we are excited they will continue providing artistic opportunities for people in Newham well into the future."

Lucy Atkinson, CEO, Stratford Arts Trust, commented:

"Everyone at Stratford Arts Trust is delighted that some of our key programmes, which play such a vital role in our communities, will live on after the end of this month. We are incredibly grateful for all the messages of support and gratitude we have received since announcing our decision to close. Stratford Circus was built with and for its community and we will miss you terribly."

"My personal thanks to all the incredibly committed and inspiring staff at Stratford Arts Trust – it's been an honour to work with you – as well as the numerous trustees who have offered support and guidance over the years. Thank you also to the 2,000 artists & practitioners we have worked with, the 350,000 participant who took part in our programmes and the over 1 million audience members who watched performances over the years."

-ENDS-

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Notes to Editors

Stratford Arts Trust

From 2012, Stratford Arts Trust worked to offer creative experiences to the people of Newham and East London, from early years to older adults, young people and groups less likely to have access to the arts through joyful, life-affirming activities.

Stratford Arts Trust's mission was to inspire and develop local talent in collaboration with the best artists in the United Kingdom and internationally. Stratford Arts Trust is due to wind up in November 2021 after nearly 10 years.

<https://stratford-circus.com/>

Eastside Educational Trust

Eastside is a leading youth arts organisation in its 28th year of delivering artistic, creative, technical, and cultural programmes for children and young people across London and England. Its mission is to empower young lives and youth voice through participation in arts programmes with professional artists and creative practitioners that develop their skills and creative thinking.

<https://www.eastside.org.uk/>

Face Front

Face Front has been creating inclusive theatre since 1999 for schools and the public, with disabled and non-disabled performers. Face Front shows and activities transform the lives of disadvantaged people, improving emotional well-being and addressing social injustice.

www.facefront.org

Spitalfields Music

Founded, in 1976, Spitalfields Music is a creative charity based in East London. It uses music to bring diverse communities together through high quality performances, a national and industry leading artist development programme, and award-winning projects with local schools and community led groups.

<https://spitalfieldsmusic.org.uk/>