

LOOK AGAIN

VISUAL ART & DESIGN FESTIVAL

MEDIA RELEASE

1 February 2017

Record Funding Secured for 2017 Look Again Festival

Organisers of the annual Look Again Visual Art and Design festival reveal today (1 February 2017) they have received record levels of funding for this year's event.

A combined £93k has been secured through grants from the National Lottery through Creative Scotland's Open Project Fund and Aberdeen City Council. The public body which supports the arts, screen and creative industries across Scotland contributed £73k to the annual festival – more than double its funding package in 2016. Robert Gordon University has also provided substantial support to the event.

Now in its third year, the Look Again festival is spearheaded by Robert Gordon University and Aberdeen-based art curators SMART. Look Again showcases the very best of contemporary art and design, inviting the public to see Aberdeen through fresh eyes and 'become a tourist in your own city'. It is intended as much more than an annual event, but as a partnership project to build a sustainable cultural economy in the Northeast.

Sally Reaper, Look Again Visual Art & Design festival director, said: "We're thrilled to have secured such fantastic financial assistance for this year's Look Again – without which the festival would not exist. Following two hugely successful festivals, it's encouraging that the funding has grown so significantly in this third year - and we take it as a clear message that our supporters recognise just how valuable this festival is to the Northeast."

Amanda Catto, Head of Visual Arts at Creative Scotland said: "Look Again is a young festival that has achieved a lot in its first two years. The festival has demonstrated both its curatorial ambition and also a clear appetite for visual art and design programming in the North East. We look forward with much excitement to this year's programme."

The Look Again festival has become a firm favourite on Aberdeen's cultural calendar, attracting world-leading artists such as last year's headline act Turner Prize winners, Assemble, and American performance artist Doug Fishbone, along with leading artists and designers from the North-East. Taking place from Thursday 27 April to Monday 1 May, this year's line-up is still to be announced but is expected to include some firm favourites and household names, as well as a raft of brand new artists.

Professor Ferdinand von Prondzynski, Principal of RGU, said: "We are extremely grateful to have secured this level of support from Creative Scotland and Aberdeen City Council for this year's Look Again Festival.

"This will allow us to build upon the success and showcase an even wider range of talent which exists locally, nationally and internationally.

"Events such as this are of huge importance to our cultural economy, and we look forward to seeing the impressive range of exhibitions, talks and events going on across the city."

Today's funding announcement follows the launch of a new Seed Fund initiative last month, which will see four north-east creatives receiving funding to realise exciting art projects that, respond to the local area and be shown at this year's Look Again. Supported by Aberdeen City Council, the Seed Fund is open to north-east artists and designers at any stage of their creative careers.

Ends

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Notes to editors:

Look Again Visual Art & Design Festival is spearheaded by a collaboration between Robert Gordon University and local art agency SMART, the festival is now in its second year. It aims to establish Aberdeen as a centre of excellence for contemporary visual art

and design while leaving a lasting legacy for the region. It encourages people to become tourists in their own city and have a fresh appreciation and understanding of their surroundings

SMART is one of the north-east's leading art agencies. They run art projects and support established and emerging artists/designers by providing platforms for them to exhibit and sell their work to the wider community of Aberdeen and beyond; this is achieved through gallery programmes and pop up events. For more visit www.wearsmart.co.uk

Robert Gordon University (RGU) provides industry led undergraduate and postgraduate courses leading to highly relevant awards and degrees. Situated on one of the most beautiful campuses in the UK, the university is investing £120m in a master plan development project aimed at providing all staff and students with state-of-the-art facilities. Teaching staff have an outstanding reputation for quality and academic research and our track record in graduate employment is the best in Scotland. The range of degree courses include online degrees as well as traditional taught courses in subjects as diverse as art and design, management and engineering.

Creative Scotland is the public body that supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all parts of Scotland on behalf of everyone who lives, works or visits here. We enable people and organisations to work in and experience the arts, screen and creative industries in Scotland by helping others to develop great ideas and bring them to life. We distribute funding provided by the Scottish Government and the National Lottery. For further information about Creative Scotland please visit www.creativescotland.com. Follow us @creativescots and www.facebook.com/CreativeScotland