

PRESS RELEASE: 8th February 2016

London's Newest Cultural Quarter moves one step closer

Exciting plans for a new cultural quarter in Woolwich moved one step closer with news that one of the UK's top arts organisations has come on board as a key partner.

Today (February 8) key representatives from Dash Arts signed a memorandum of understanding with the Royal Borough of Greenwich highlighting their commitment to the plans.



Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Josephine Burton and Tim Supple sign the Memorandum of Understanding in the site of the proposed new Performing Arts Theatre

The council will be working with Dash Arts to create a new performance centre in Woolwich.

The Cultural Quarter- on the banks of the River Thames - offers a unique, attractive and ideal setting to establish London's newest cultural destination. The plans form part of the borough's wider regeneration, including the transformation of the immediate Royal Arsenal area, which is delivering 4,500 quality new homes and a new Crossrail station, as well as new shops, restaurants and quality public open spaces and community facilities.

The Royal Borough of Greenwich recognises the value of arts and culture, not just for the entertainment and enjoyment that they bring but also the wider benefits such as tourism and economic development. Tourism and arts already contribute £1.2bn to the local economy each year and supports more than 16,000 jobs.



Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Royal Borough of Greenwich Cabinet Member for Culture and Creative Industries, said, "We are so thrilled to have Dash Arts as our first signed partner for the cultural quarter. It's about putting Woolwich and the borough firmly on the map as a leading cultural destination and it is an important part of our wider regeneration story. Dash Arts reaches large audiences across the world and as a result of this agreement will be based in our Borough."

Josephine Burton and Tim Supple of Dash Arts said: "The extraordinary historic buildings within the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich will house a new kind of performing arts theatre in which international theatre, music, dance, art, film and food can be enjoyed in the same programme. After a decade of award-winning and ground breaking production, Dash Arts is thrilled to begin a long and deep relationship with Woolwich offering audiences, participants and artists a unique blend of performance and experience from far and wide. Despite its international vitality, London is short on venues truly open to the world and this fully flexible, multi-purpose performing arts theatre will offer the people of Woolwich, London and the UK an artistic destination with unlimited global horizons".

Karl Whiteman, Divisional Managing Director for Berkeley Homes East Thames said: "Berkeley Homes East Thames is proud to be working with Royal Borough of Greenwich to develop the Cultural Quarter at Royal Arsenal Riverside and welcomes the announcement of the award-winning Dash Arts signing up to join this cultural hub. Through partnerships like this, Royal Arsenal Riverside will be home to new theatre, dance, music and arts events, engaging residents in the area and bringing visitors and tourists to this first rate destination which is served by great transport links, open spaces and ever emerging places to shop, eat and relax."

The Royal Borough is already recognised as a superb centre of culture, its rich mix of arts and entertainment helping to attract nearly 20 million visitors from all over the UK and worldwide every year. We aim to use Woolwich's military heritage to do for the town what the naval heritage has done to the Greenwich town centre economy.

ENDS

Notes to editors: EMBARGOED UNTIL 6PM 8 FEBRUARY 2016

For more information and pictures (available from the 9 Feb) contact Alex Fearn; Assistant Communications Officer, on alex.fearn@royalgreenwich.gov.uk or 020 8921 2992

The Royal Arsenal is already a base for cultural organizations including The Greenwich Heritage Centre and the Academy Performing Arts.

Dash Arts creates artistic experiences that change the way we see the world. Founded in 2005 by Artistic Directors, Josephine Burton and Tim Supple, Dash Arts has emerged as a unique international award-winning creative force, producing new theatre, dance, music and art events in collaboration with exceptional artists from abroad.

"Work of profound worldwide artistic significance, awakening us to new styles, beliefs and voices" - Toronto Star

www.dasharts.org.uk

Dash Arts, Unit 22, Toynbee Studios, 28 Commercial Street, London E1 6AB
020 7377 6606 info@dasharts.org.uk www.dasharts.org.uk

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"The most magical, fantastical Dream that will be remembered for decades"

The Daily Telegraph on A Midsummer Night's Dream (2006)



Dash Arts has created award winning new work in India, North Africa and the Middle East and currently has projects in development in the post Soviet region, South America and the Far East.

"Wonderful, world class theatre."

Independent on Sunday on One Thousand and One Nights (2011)



Dash Arts productions are created in collaboration with leading venues and festivals in the UK and abroad including National Theatre, Sadler's Wells, Roundhouse, Edinburgh International Festival, RSC, Lincoln Center Festival New York, Luminato Festival Toronto and Ballet Moscow.

"An inspiring night of contrast and contemplation, culminating in a raucous classic hip-hop performance breathed new life into the genre"

The Independent on Lyrical Alliance (2010)



Dash Arts reaches large audiences across the world. Major tours in the UK, Europe, Australia and North America have been widely acclaimed and led to numerous awards and nominations including Olivier, Evening Standard, TMA, Herald Angel and Dora.

"The most boisterous, infectious and downright uplifting live performance I've ever seen."

Time Out on Gogol Bordello (2005)



Outstanding Dash Arts successes include the award-winning Indian *A Midsummer Night's Dream* which played sell out seasons with the RSC in Stratford and at London's Roundhouse before touring world-wide and the double Olivier-award winning *Babel* which was a major success at London's Sadler's Wells and across the world.

"The most fiercely resonant dance theatre of the decade"

The Guardian on Babel (2010)



Dash Arts innovative participation events and workshop programmes engage thousands of young people, students and artists in the UK and abroad. Our fundraising success has so far resulted in £4.3m of support.

Images from top to bottom:

A Midsummer Night's Dream, Babel, Lyrical Alliance, One Thousand and One Nights, Gogol Bordello, As You Like It