

Press Release

6 March 1990



ARTS PLAN FOR LONDON FOCUSES ON THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

The first ever Arts Plan for London has been published by Greater London Arts, to focus attention and efforts on all involved in the arts in the capital on the next five years. The plan was produced for GLA by KPMG Peat Marwick McLintock management consultants and details not only the scope of problems but also the wealth of expertise and experience within the London arts sector, and emphasises the need for a focused effort to push back the barriers to greater arts enjoyment for many Londoners.

The GLA Arts Plan is the first to offer a single, clear vision of how arts in London can be developed to give all Londoners better and more relevant arts provision.

The plan, which highlights the current crisis of confidence in the subsidised sector, will go before the Arts Council for approval on March 13th.

The Arts Plan calls for agreement and partnership from all local authorities, practitioners, arts bodies and sponsors to ensure the future challenges to and potential of the sector as a whole will be faced and satisfied.

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To this end, the plan sets out a detailed programme of 'rolling' objectives and targets for one, three and five year periods.

GLA Chair Jonathan Brill commenting on the plan said, "The arts in the London area are faced with difficulties and problems that demand considerable effort and a willingness to change if the current situation is to be turned around. At the heart of the Arts Plan is a belief in the store of professionalism, expertise and innovation that makes London the national centre of excellence. The future success of the arts in London will depend on harnessing this excellence to a better, more central, understanding of the consumer".

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'REACH THE PARTS THAT ARTS DON'T REACH', SAYS GLA'S ARTS PLAN FOR LONDON

One of the more surprising findings of the first ever 'Arts Plan for London' is that current arts provision does not reach a large number of Londoners who expressed the wish to enjoy more arts. 'High latent demand for all arts' is the key finding of consumer research conducted by Mass Observation for the Arts Plan, to be presented shortly by GLA for Arts Council approval.

The consumer research conducted with a representative sample of 1,042 Londoners, highlights the scope for improving provision, access and information for London arts activity to meet this high latent demand. 'Local events with top class companies and big name performers', for instance, was cited by 40% of respondents in the Greater London area as a way of encouraging their attendance at arts events.

Latent demand comes up against an array of barriers preventing Londoners from fully developing their enjoyment of the Arts as part of their wider leisure activities. Chief among these were problems with transport and fears of safety when travelling and a general perception that many arts were 'high brow' and elitist.

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GLA's Arts Plan for London fully addresses the implications of this research and lays out strategies to break down these barriers over the next five years with set objectives and goals for one and three year periods. This is the first time that such a comprehensive overview of the arts in London has been produced.

GLA Chair Jonathan Brill commenting on the Plan says, "The Arts Plan focuses on the main challenges facing the arts in London, as highlighted by this consumer research and the need to widen the appeal of all arts activity across the region. The role of further targeted research to underpin the Plan implementation is essential to a working and meaningful definition of 'popularity' - the basis of the future development of the arts in London".

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