

PRESS RELEASE 14 September 2017

Theatres Trust announces programme for Conference 2017 exploring the role theatres play within placemaking

Theatres Trust has announced the programme of speakers for **Conference 17: Theatres & Placemaking** which will take place on **17 October** at the **Lyric Hammersmith, London**. Speakers will be discussing the role of theatres and the wider cultural infrastructure within placemaking. Teams behind recent theatre projects will explore how community and placemaking plays a fundamental role in the future proofing of their venues with **Storyhouse Chester, Tara Arts, New Diorama Theatre, Royal Town Planning Institute, Argent LLP** and others joining in the discussions.

Jon Morgan, Director of Theatres Trust says: "Conference 17 will stimulate conversations around theatre buildings and their role in placemaking – ranging from their impact on vibrancy of place and the local economy, the physical and philosophical relationship of theatre buildings to their community and their contribution to wellbeing and identity. Our speakers and case studies bring with them a wealth of fascinating stories and experience from across the country."

The annual conference, now in its eleventh year, has attracted a high number of key decision makers, influencers and practitioners from the cultural sector, from theatre operators and local authority planners, to developers and architects, theatre suppliers, manufacturers and installers. In a break from the usual format delegates will be able to participate in a range of plenary and break-out sessions whilst listening to inspiring case studies to inform their discussions.

Conference 17 Speakers include:

Dr Cara Courage an independent researcher and strategist at **Futurecity** - a leading culture and placemaking agency - will discuss the concept of 'placemaking' and its context for Conference 17.

Graham Lister, Project Director for **Storyhouse Chester** and **Cllr Louise Gittins**, Deputy Leader of **Cheshire West and Cheshire Council** will jointly discuss the recently opened Storyhouse and the important role local authorities play in supporting theatres and placemaking.

Jatinder Verma from **Tara Arts** - one of the country's best known and longest established multi-cultural theatre companies recently worked with **Julian Middleton** from **Aedas Arts Team** on the refurbishment of their theatre building which won **The Stage 2017** inaugural **Sustainability Award**. Together they will be discussing how they designed a new space to reflect the needs and identity of their local community in South West London. **David Byrne** from **New Diorama Theatre** and **Anna Devlet** from **British Land** will be talking about their partnership to create and support the **New Diorama Theatre** as the creative heart of **British Land's** development and placemaking work at **Regent's Place** near Euston Station.

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Chair Tim Eyles **Director** Jon Morgan

Trustees Richard Baldwin, Paddy Dillon, Ruth Eastwood, Dame Penelope Keith DL, Dara Ó Briain, Peter Roberts, Ann Skippers, Anna Stapleton

Damian Cruden from **York Theatre Royal**, and **Angus Morrough-Ryan** from **De Matos Ryan Architects** will discuss their recent award winning redevelopment of **York Theatre Royal** and how it reflects the theatre's place in York and its ethos of creating a democratic space which engages with the community. **Paul Callaghan**, Chair of **Live Theatre** and **Trustee of Sunderland Music, Arts and Culture Trust**, will explore the role of culture within regeneration as part of the MACQ (Music, Arts and Cultural Quarter) project in Sunderland, re-establishing the area's previous importance as the Edwardian heart and soul of the city. And **Ian Timms**, Assistant Director for Business Development at **Taunton Dean and West Somerset Council** will be talking alongside leading architect **Tim Foster** about the plans for a new cultural quarter based around the redevelopment of the **Brewhouse Theatre**.

Daniel Rose, Executive Director, **Mechanics' Institution Trust** will introduce the work of his organisation, a social enterprise and building preservation and development trust, and their motivation to bring the **Swindon Mechanics' Institution**, back to life and to nurture it as a community run organisation in a Grade II* listed building fit for the twenty-first century. **Hannah Garrow**, Fundraising and Community Engagement Director, **Leith Theatres Trust**, will talk about their success in the re-opening and animating of **Leith Theatre** in Edinburgh, and the inclusive role it is playing in providing a versatile space to encourage a vibrant creative hub as part of the regeneration of the Leith area.

The conference will close with an **expert panel**, chaired by **Tim Jones** of **Futurecity**, discussing how stakeholders can work together on maximising the placemaking benefits of theatres and other cultural buildings. Panellists include **Sian Alexander**, Executive Director at the **Lyric Hammersmith**, **Anna Strongman**, Partner at developers **Argent LLP** and **Richard Blyth**, Head of Policy at the **Royal Town Planning Institute**.

Gold Sponsor Paddy Dillon, Director, Allies and Morrison said: "We have a keen interest in working with theatres, having helped to shape places such as the Royal Festival Hall, Shakespeare's Globe and Snape Maltings. We believe arts institutions can have a positive impact on the wider contexts in which they inhabit and take particular joy in working with performing arts clients. It makes being a Gold Sponsor of the Theatres Trust Conference this year a natural fit."

Gold Sponsor, Steve Tompkins, Director, Haworth Tompkins said: "Theatres should be one of the physical highlights of our cities, the places that bring public space into vivid focus and generate a powerful impetus for positive change around them. They should also be at the heart of our communal life, the places where we meet to hear one another's different stories and to sharpen our capacity for empathy. Our best theatre buildings manage to be both these things simultaneously, which is why they are uniquely important."

For more information on **booking tickets** please visit:

theatrust.org.uk/latest/events/232-theatres-trust-conference-17-theatres-placemaking

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Theatres Trust is the UK national advisory public body for theatres. We believe that current and future generations should have access to good quality theatres where they can be inspired by, and enjoy, live performance. We champion the future of live performance, by protecting and supporting excellent theatre buildings which meet the needs of their communities. We do this through providing advice on design, planning and development, supplying resources and advice to make theatres sustainable and offering financial assistance through grants. We help people discover more about theatres and campaign for theatres at risk.

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