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THE ARCHES “LEFT WITH NO OTHER CHOICE” THAN TO GO INTO ADMINISTRATION

Directors thank Creative Scotland, Glasgow City Council, staff team, artists and public for 25 years of support

Following a meeting of The Arches Board of Directors, and having taken due legal advice, the decision was taken today (Wednesday June 10) to start the process of appointing administrators for both Arches Theatre and Arches Retail Company Limited.

This follows last month’s decision by the Glasgow Licensing Board to curtail the licensed hours of the leading multi-arts venue, effectively preventing the organisation from continuing its very successful and popular programme of club nights.

Without the income generated by this strand of activity, which generated over 50% of the companies’ annual turnover, The Arches’ business model is untenable.

Gordon Kennedy, Chairman of The Arches Board of Directors said:

“The Board has taken professional advice and is left with no other choice than to begin the process of appointing administrators for both The Arches Theatre Ltd and Arches Retail Ltd. This decision has been taken with deep regret as it will have a major impact on our staff, business partners, customers, and on Glasgow’s reputation for night time economy.

“Our hope is that the administrators, working with partners and stakeholders, can salvage some of the activities for which The Arches is renowned.

“The Board sincerely thanks our staff, customers, supporters, performers and partners for their support over the years. This is a very sad day for The Arches and for the city of Glasgow.”

Mr Kennedy continued:

“We were disappointed and surprised at the outcome of the Licensing Board. The Arches has a zero tolerance approach to drugs and has cooperated with the Police over many years.

“For an unprecedented six years The Arches won gold standard under the Glasgow Community Safety/Strathclyde Police Best Bar None awards - recognition of best practice in maintaining safe and well-run premises. No other venue in Scotland has achieved that.

“We are very grateful to the almost 40,000 people who have signed and shared the petition to reinstate our licence and to everyone who has joined the #savethearches social media campaign. We are humbled by the hundreds of artists and industry professionals from all disciplines who have lent their signature and their voice to the cause.

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“The Arches has its roots in the 1990 City of Culture and has since been recognised as one of the UK and Europe’s leading music venues, an internationally renowned arts and creative learning hub, and a venue for major corporate events such as last year’s MTV European Music Awards after party. It is one of Glasgow’s iconic venues.

He added: “The Arches as a multi-use space depends heavily on income from nightclub events. Given that the Licensing Board’s decision effectively prohibits this part of the business, it has become clear to us that The Arches in its current form is no longer viable.

“Since the decision we have been in discussions with partners Creative Scotland and Glasgow City Council to explore whether a funding package could be put in place to allow us to continue in some form. That would have taken significant amounts of additional funding. Unfortunately, despite the very supportive approach of the partners for which we are extremely grateful, it has proved impossible to come up with a sustainable model in the very tight timescales available. We would like to thank the partners for their efforts to find a solution.

Lucy Mason, Artistic Director for The Arches said: “The atmosphere and architecture of The Arches have helped to shape and define a generation of enquiring and vital artists. It’s shocking that this building which has inspired such creativity, devotion and ambition, should cease to exist as an Arts venue.

“The Arches has developed an international reputation as a producer and programmer of distinctive performance, providing opportunities for artists at all stages of their career to experiment and hone their practice. Without The Arches, the radical energy at the heart of Scotland’s theatre-making community will be greatly diminished, and the future for many individual artists suddenly feels very uncertain.”

Mark Anderson, Executive Director for The Arches said: “Changes to club event door policy, recommended by Police Scotland in early 2014, resulted in a major downturn in related income and a significant overall trading deficit for the year. With the Licensing Board decision effectively cutting off our main source of income, and serious uncertainty around the outcome of an appeal hearing, particularly given the clear view of Police Scotland, we have regrettably found ourselves with no ability to continue trading as a going concern.”

“Not only will the local economy suffer through the loss of a unique and important venue for clubbing, live music, and corporate hospitality to the city’s valuable conference and event business, but Glasgow’s reputation as a vibrant and progressive city of European culture suffers with it. Everyone connected to the Arches feels an overwhelming sense of injustice, but we can hold our heads high and be immensely proud of the lasting legacy we undoubtedly leave.

“We would like to gratefully acknowledge the invaluable contributions made by all staff, board, artists and partners over the years, and offer heartfelt thanks to our loyal customers who supported us throughout the years and were instrumental in making The Arches the iconic venue that it will always remain.”

ENDS (10/6/15)

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NOTES TO EDITORS

- All events scheduled at the Arches from 10 June 2015 are now cancelled.

Issued by The BIG Partnership on behalf of Arches Theatre and Arches Retail Company Limited
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