

• ***The Artistic Enterprise Scheme***

ISupplementary document – distribution list, articles and endorsement

Contents

Distribution list as of the effective end of the project, (24 August, 1998)

Interview in the *Sheffield Telegraph* by Ian Soutar, (12 September, 1997)

Editorial in *The Stage* by Pete Marchetto, (19 March, 1998)

News item in *Dance UK* by Pete Marchetto, (29 May, 1998)

Endorsement from Richard Elis

This document compiled from earlier documents for free distribution
by Pete Marchetto, January 2014

www.petemarchetto.com

•The Artistic Enterprise discussion document

Please copy this notice for distribution with copies of the document.

Known document distribution as of 24 August 1998

Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, MP, **Prime Minister** - Rt. Hon. Gordon Brown, MP, **Chancellor of the Exchequer** - Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, MP, **President of the Board of Trade** - Rt. Hon. Chris Smith, MP, **Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport** (x2) - Rt. Hon. Harriet Harman, MP, **Secretary of State for Social Security** - Rt. Hon. David Blunkett, MP, **Secretary of State for Education and Employment** - Rt. Hon. Tom Clarke, CBE, MP, **Minister of State for Culture, Media and Sport** - Mark Fisher, MP, **Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport** (x2) Tony Banks, MP, **Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport** - Frank Fields, MP, **Minister of State for Social Security** - Rt. Hon. Richard Caborn, MP, **Minister of State for Regions, Regeneration and Planning** - Rt. Hon. Gerald Kaufman, MP, Chairman, **Commons Select Committee on Culture, Media and Sport** - Bill Michie, **MP Sheffield Heeley** - Cast members, **Brookside**, Liverpool - Cast members, **The Bill**, London - Cast members, **Peak Practice**, Birmingham - Chris Chittell, cast, **Emmerdale**, Leeds - Cast members, **EastEnders**, Hertfordshire - Cast members, **Coronation Street**, Manchester - Sally Haynes, Producer, **Casualty**, London - **Sean Bean**, actor, Sheffield - **The Stage** - Howard Ross, television producer/director - Richard Shone, **European Community Economic and Social Research Council** - Ken Ball, **European Community Social and Cultural Development** - Lorraine Harris, **European Social Fund Section, the Department of Employment** - Karen Hennessey, **ProDance**, Ireland - Martin Rogers, **BATS**, New Zealand - Stephen Holt, Director, **New Deal Project** - **The National Lotteries Board** - Tim Eastop, **The Arts Council of England**, London - Adam Baxter, **Equity**, London - **Yorkshire & Humberside Arts**, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire - Jude Kelly, **West Yorkshire Playhouse**, Leeds - Paul Allen, **Kaleidoscope** presenter, BBC Radio 4 - **National Campaign for the Arts**, London - **Cultural Industries Development Unit**, Sheffield - Stuart Rogers, **National Centre for Popular Music**, Sheffield - Matthew Conduit, **Workstation** Director, Sheffield - **National Association of Artists**, London - Roland Miller, **International Association of Artists** - Paul Skelton, Cultural Industries Development Officer, **Sheffield City Council** - Bill Paton, Grant Aid Officer, **Sheffield City Council** - Steve Barnard, **Sheffield City Council** - Lyn Barbour, Arts and Culture Officer, **Manchester City Council** - David Patmore, **Director of Sheffield Arts and Museums** - Bev Webb, Arts Development Officer, **Derby Community Arts** - Ian Soutar, **Sheffield Telegraph** - Chris Wainwright, Dean, **Central St. Martin's School of Art**, London - Professor Malcolm Griffiths, **Nottingham Trent University** - Professor Anthony Everett, **Nottingham Trent University** - Penny Blackie, Senior Curriculum Manager, **City College Manchester** - Deveril Garraghan, **Regional Arts Network** - Karen Hennessey, **Association of Professional Dancers**, Irish Republic - Sian Alexander, **Siobhan Davies Dance Company** - Ken Bartlett, **Foundation for Community Dance** - Suzie Leighton, **Dance UK** - Marie McCluskey, **Swindon Dance, National Dance Agency** - Virginia West, Welfare Benefits Officer, **Equity** - Linda Yates, **Dancers' Resettlement Fund and Trust** - Charlotte Vincent, **The Harbourside Centre**, Bristol - Graham Marchant, General Manager, **Contemporary Dance Trust** - Jeannefer Jean Charles, **Bullies Ballerinas Company** - Nikki Crane, **Eastern Arts Board** - Clare Lovett, Dance Officer, **Arts Council of England** - Graham Hitchen, Corporate Policy Director, **Arts Council of England** - Graham Devlin, Deputy Secretary General, **Arts Council of England** - Piers Gielgud, **Re-Animators** - **Open Performance Centre**, Sheffield - Karl Townsend, **reflex theatre**, Sheffield - Steve Jackson, **Disturbance Index Theatre Company**, Sheffield - Alex Kelly, **Third Angel Theatre Company**, Sheffield - Deborah Chadbourn, **Forced Entertainment Theatre Company**, Sheffield - Tony Clabby, **Third Nail Theatre**, Rotherham - Liz Margree, **Unlimited Theatre Company**, Leeds - Juliet Wheeler, **Rapscallion Productions**, London - Helen Kirelew, **New Works Festival**, Leicester - Emma Perry, **E.C.T. Performance Company**, Sheffield - Rachel Jacobs, **Active Ingredient Arts Network**, Nottingham - Carol Mulcahey, **What If Theatre Company**, Lancaster - Janet Gordon, **Theatre Alba**, London - Bev Adams, **The Faceless Theatre Company**, Wakefield - Deborah Sanderson, **Local Space Theatre Company**, Leeds - Alice Smith, **Mingle Dance Company**, Huddersfield - Jon Potter, **Company Paradiso Theatre**, Manchester - David Leddy, **Polar Theatre**, London - Jacky Wood, **Interface Theatre Co-op**, Leeds - Paul Henson, **De Montfort University School of Performing Arts**, Leicester - Helen Parrott, **Stepping Up**, Rotherham Anna-Maria Wills, **Create**, Huddersfield - Yvonne O'Donovan, **Amber Initiatives**, Sheffield - Chris Longley, **The Foundation**, Sheffield - Simon Evans, **Sheffield Live Arts Trust** - Sharon Gill, Arts Coordinator, **Clock Tower, Northern General Hospital**, Sheffield - Anthony Waller, **Sheffield Dance Project** - Jennifer Davies, **The Hub**, Sheffield - Jan Swain, **The Genesis Project**, Sheffield - Kate Jacob, **Summer Art Markets**, Sheffield - Jo Beddoe, **Zion Centre**, Manchester - John Wilkinson, **Sheffield Co-ordinating Centre Against Unemployment** - Sue Mia, **Access to Activities**, Sheffield - Jo Burns, Arts Consultant, Manchester - Jane DaSilva, Arts Administrator, Manchester - Graham Bowes, Arts Administrator, Sunderland - Shelley Lynne, performance artist, Birmingham - Liza Bixler, artistic director, Sheffield - Mandy Burton, artist, Sheffield - Tim Crosby, artist, Sheffield - Pat Hazzledine, artist, Nottingham - Stewart Lodge, performance artist, Sheffield - Peter Fairchild, theatre designer, Bolton - Gill Clarke, dancer, London - Rachel Krische, dancer - Rachel Gibson, dance consultant - Viv Jakeman, performer

Important - please read

Feel free to copy this document and distribute it to anyone to whom it may be of interest. For further print copies, please send a cheque for £1 to cover costs, made out to *PM Marchetto*, to the address at the bottom of this notice. Any comments or suggestions and details of anyone who has received copies of the document, including their name and their position in any organisation, would be gratefully received. Please do not amend the document.

It would be particularly valuable if recipients of this document were to forward a copy to their MP along with a letter of support for the document's proposals. Please provide me with information on any MP so contacted including details of any position he or she may hold, (such as any ministerial appointment or membership of a select committee), and the name of the parliamentary constituency he or she represents. Written support from anyone in the public eye would also be of value in promoting the document - this should be sent to the address below. Please note that copies of such written support will be distributed with copies of the document.

Suggestions on how to finance further research and development on the ideas in the document and to fund preparation and distribution of the document itself are urgently required; please telephone me with ideas or, better still, offers. Myself an actor/writer on benefits I am unable to work as effectively as I'd like on this project until such funding is forthcoming.

The document is being updated as I receive further advice and information; as of the date at the top of this notice such updates have not led to any substantial revision of the text or the ideas proposed. If you wish to find out how up-to-date your copy of the document is, please telephone me quoting the date at the bottom right of the final page of the document.

For the benefit of art

Ian Soutar reports on a new initiative aimed at helping aspiring creators come off the fiddle and into legitimacy via the National Lottery

It is an open secret that many aspiring musicians, actors, writers, artists and filmmakers fiddle the benefits systems in order to pursue their artistic endeavours. Now an idea has come out of Sheffield for an Artistic Enterprise Scheme, funded with lottery money, to legitimise the endeavours of many emerging artists on benefits.

It is the brainchild of actor-writer Pete Marchetto, who has produced a discussion document which he has circulated among politicians, media and fellow artists.

"I've been amazed at the amount of interest shown in the document," he says. "The problem is that I'm sending out copies, providing updates, attending meetings, trying to prepare a follow-up document and everything else - all on benefit."

The discussion document has been sent far and wide, to Tony Blair, to individual artists, Sheffield performance artist Roland Miller of the International Association of Art took it to a recent conference in Paris of UNESCO, which is preparing a charter on artists within various social security systems of member nations.

Britain has rejoined UNESCO, from which the Thatcher government withdrew. "Things seem to have come together strangely well for the project," says Pete

Marchetto. "A new government, the UNESCO charter and Britain rejoining the organisation."

Within the current rules of the Job Seekers' Allowance, claimants are permitted 16 hours per week in pursuit of any artistic project but only on the understanding that they apply for "real" work at the same time.

This presents considerable difficulties, says Marchetto, giving the example of a semi-professional theatre company setting up a small tour on which the actors were paid a token £50. If they declared that, they would be admitting to having been unavailable for work for several weeks. And the whole production would always be under threat of one of its number being selected for a compulsory scheme such as Job Club.

How would his scheme work? In common with other back-to-work schemes, the Artistic Enterprise one would pay recipients the standard amount of benefit with an additional £10 per week. Deductions would be made for any income earned and the assessment scheme would be geared to dealing with the kind of small, sporadic payments which emerging artists tend to earn.

As to eligibility, Pete Marchetto believes it should be as flexible as possible, with no evidence of previous artistic experience required. "For every actor there's a first role, for every artist a first painting," he says.

He expects the criteria to vary from field to field within the arts. "For example, an actor not involved in a production might be eligible to three months on the Artistic

Enterprise Scheme while attending auditions.

A review at the end of that period would assess the number of auditions attended before a decision was made as to whether the Artistic Enterprise Scheme could continue to benefit the claimant with a three-month extension. An actor who has been cast in a production would be eligible for the duration of that production and perhaps a further three months to audition for further roles.

"A writer would have to demonstrate an idea for a new work or works and be allowed a period on the Artistic Enterprise Scheme suitable for completion. An artist might be expected to show preliminary sketches of new works."

Marchetto appreciates that there would need to be safeguards against abuse of the

scheme and suggests that projects should be assessed for suitability along Arts Council guidelines. Assessors would need to make regular checks that there was indeed work in progress.

The advantages of the Artistic Enterprise Scheme are obvious from the point of view of the emerging artists but, he believes, it should also be attractive from a political point of view by saving the Treasury money (since it would be funded via the National Lottery) and reducing unemployment statistics by legitimising what is legitimate work.

"The Artistic Enterprise Scheme would be popular with its participants and those who succeed would provide high-profile testament to the initiative of the Government in all cultural fields, from the popular to the esoteric.

"Many of today's stars of stage, screen, radio and compact disc have used the benefits system as an unofficial source of funding for artistic enterprise. Within the rules of the benefits system, they have been guilty of fraud and yet the result of their fraud is widely acclaimed success and praise for initiative."

Pete Marchetto can be contacted on 255 2034.

Help us to benefit

Actor and writer Pete Marchetto explains how his Artistic Enterprise Scheme would keep thousands of acts in business and reduce unemployment in the entertainment industry

When she was prime minister, Margaret Thatcher is said to have attended a party at which one of the guests told her he was an artist. "Really?" she said. "You know, I think you people are wonderful. The Government gives you money and you create beautiful things. Then the Government stops giving you money – and you still create beautiful things."

As arts policy goes, this leaves much to be desired, but it is certainly politically astute. Left to their own devices, many artists continue their work even in poverty. But impoverishment leads to benefits and the benefits system is not inclined to leave artists to their own devices. It wants people to work but it does not acknowledge art as work.

The problem is particularly acute when it comes to actors. As an actor and writer on benefits, I have become increasingly frustrated with the inability of the DSS to accept auditions for what they are – interviews for training or work.

Worse, should an opportunity arise to perform with an emerging theatre company whose funding is insufficient to pay living expenses, then the entire production is jeopardised by one of the

cast being dragged off to a Job Club and told to apply for work stacking supermarket shelves.

Those in the cultural industries, as in any other sector, need to be allowed to develop their skills and build their businesses. Thatcher's approach to arts funding missed a crucial point – artists have to be allowed to create beautiful things. If emerging artists are not to be funded, they should at least be left alone.

It is unlikely that this is some malignant conspiracy. After all, there is nothing to be gained from forcing unskilled labour on individuals developing their own skills and careers. The problem is that artists have been overlooked. With the introduction of the Jobseeker's Allowance and further stringent measures being discussed by the Blair Government, the problem is getting worse. And yet the solution is obvious – a benefits scheme which acknowledges emerging artists and artistic groups.

Not having heard this idea proposed elsewhere, I wrote a document outlining an Artistic Enterprise Scheme. Similar to other benefits schemes it would pay the

basic rate of benefits plus £10 per week to any individual on benefits who could show they were working towards a career in the cultural industries.

The scheme is desirable politically for several reasons. By simply legitimising activities already happening it would cut the unemployment figures. Scheme payments could be part-funded by National Lottery income set aside for the arts, thereby saving the Treasury money. Successful participants would be newsworthy since their achievements would be high-profile and media-friendly. Above all, it would be of considerable value to those emerging in a lucrative and expanding sector of British industry.

I began to circulate the document expecting to be

much I can do without help.

There are two things I particularly need if I am to continue with this initiative effectively. The first is endorsements.

There cannot be many people in the country who do not appreciate art, but many think of it as the unintelligible in pursuit of the incomprehensible.

When they realise their favourite actors in popular television series and other media figures are themselves artists, then they will appreciate that the scheme is more than special pleading on the part of a small, elitist minority.

With written endorsements for the scheme from popular actors, particularly those who might have claimed benefits themselves at some stage in their careers, Parliament is far more likely to take up the idea as a popular cause.

The second thing I need is funding. I am still trying to pay for further research, development, circulation and lobbying of the idea out of benefits, so any organisations willing to help finance the project, please get in contact before I am Job-Clubbed myself.

Anyone who can help with endorsements or funding can call me on 0114 255 2034 or write to me at 38 Springwood Road, Sheffield, S8 9TW. Until there is funding, I can only send out the document to those whose support would be particularly valuable in furthering the scheme, but anyone who wants to find out more about the initiative is welcome to telephone me.

Something has to be done. Let's do it.

'Thatcher's approach to arts funding missed a crucial point – artists have to be allowed to create beautiful things'

told that similar initiatives were being discussed and I should sit back and let them develop. Instead, I found myself leading a growing band of enthusiastic artists and arts administrators eager to have the idea seen through to legislation. Over the past few months, I have distributed more than 100 copies of the document, received numerous telephone calls, been asked to lecture on the idea, had the document taken to a UNESCO conference and been consulted about a possible documentary for Channel 4. What started as a statement of the obvious has become a major responsibility – but there is only so

The Artistic Enterprise Scheme

Actor and writer Pete Marchetto explains the Artistic Enterprise Scheme and introduces his document

Artists have been overlooked with regards to the whole benefit system. Many of today's stars of stage, screen and radio have used the benefits system as an unofficial source of funding for artistic enterprise, spending their time working diligently to further their art. Within the rules of the benefits system they have been found guilty of fraud, and yet the result of their fraud is widely acclaimed success and praise for

initiative. With the introduction of jobseeker's Allowance and further stringent measures being discussed by the Blair Government, the problem is getting worse.

In a nation that takes pride - and considerable financial benefit - in its cultural contribution to the world and its support of personal endeavour, that such activity should be classed as fraudulent is clearly unacceptable. However fortunately such personal initiatives can be easily legitimised within the benefits system through a simple 'back to work' scheme; a scheme, furthermore, which may be funded by lottery money that exists to support artistic enterprise.

The Artistic Enterprise Scheme is one particular proposal of a benefits scheme which acknowledges emerging artists and artistic groups. Similar to other benefits schemes it would pay the basic rate of benefits - plus £10 per week to any individual on benefits who

could show they were working towards a career in the cultural industries. The Scheme is desirable politically for several reasons as by simply legitimising activities already happening it would cut the unemployment figures, and Scheme payments could be part-funded by

National Lottery income set aside for the arts, thereby saving the Treasury money. Successful participants would be newsworthy since their achievement would be high profile and media-friendly. Finally it would be of considerable value to those emerging in a lucrative and expanding sector of British industry.

*Peter Marchetto's document on the Artistic Enterprise Scheme, has been widely circulated, and needs funding and endorsements. If you can help, please contact him at 38 Springwood Rd, Sheffield, S8 9TW
Tel: 0114 255 2034.*

In relation to this article see Suzie Leighton's report on p15 ■

Dear Pete,

Unfortunately, or rather fortunately,
I myself have never been on benefit,
but a lot of my friends have and
still are on benefit. Therefore I fully
understand for actors/writers to be
put on Jobseekers allowance would be
a gross mistake. I fully support your
document and hope that the powers
that be are alerted to their mistake
by your stand.

Yours sincerely

Richard Elis

Richard Elis plays the character Huw Edwards in *EastEnders*