

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Barbican Centre Board	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
<b>Subject:</b> CEO Report by the Barbican's Directors	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>1,2,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,12</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Report of: Claire Spencer, Chief Executive Officer</b>	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report authors: Chief Executive Officer and Directors, Barbican Centre</b>	

### **Summary**

The CEO Report comprises current updates from across the Centre.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to:

NOTE the Report and ENDORSE Management's approach to future activities.

## **Chief Officer Report**

As usual, it's been a busy time at the Centre as we continue to accelerate the delivery of our strategic framework.

Our main areas of progress since our last report, in delivering on our purpose, are as follow:

### **Excite and Engage our Audiences**

- Our new Audience Strategy was approved by the Board in September and delivery has commenced with an initial focus on data.
- Commencement of the programme with Bloomberg Digital Accelerator to revamp our audience focused digital infrastructure.
- Completed our Annual Report for 2023

### **Fuel Creative Ambition**

- Our proposal for Barbican Immersive was approved by the Board and we have commenced the development of the next exhibition, including a new partnership.
- Delivered a rich, purposeful programme across all artforms
- Commenced new programmes for Artistic Talent Development
- Commenced a mid-term review of the Conservatory Commission

### **Invest in our People and Culture**

- Appointed and announced our new Head of Music and commenced preparations for their onboarding in early 2024.
- Approval to recruit a new Director for Arts and Participation with Green Park appointed as the Headhunter.
- Approval to recruit a new Director for Audiences has been secured, with Gatenby Sanderson appointed as the Headhunter.
- Approval to recruit a new Director for Buidling and Renewal has been secured, with McClean appointed as the Headhunter.
- New internal communication and engagement programme launched (“Ask Me Anything”)

### **Revitalise our Place**

- Developed a proposal with City Surveyors that will allow us to commence urgent works for Barbican Renewal in early 2024
- Developed plans for Exhibition Halls and Conservatory, for consideration at this meeting

### **Build an Enterprising Business**

- Commenced the replacement of our Event Delivery System (at the heart of any Art Centre’s successful operation)

- Advanced the preparation of our 2024/25 budget
- Completed a reforecast for 2023/24
- Finalised preparations for a relaunch of the Level 1 Restaurant
- Secured a food and beverage consultant who will work with us on both the 2024 Tender and the F&B components of Renewal.
- Re-set our membership of Corporation Risk Management Forums.

### **Working in Line with our Values**

- Furthered our work around our Code of Ethics for approval in January 2024

More detail is contained within this report. Thanks as always to the remarkable team at the Barbican who continue to address the challenges that each day presents whilst keeping their eyes firmly on the future.

Claire Spencer  
CEO, Barbican Centre  
October 2023

## **Fuel Creative Ambition**

*RE/SISTERS: A lens on gender and ecology* opened on 4 October in the main gallery receiving 4 star reviews from the [Guardian](#) and the [Evening Standard](#). The *RE/SISTERS* introduction film, created in partnership with earthrise, was released via [Instagram](#) to over 2000 likes and 98,600 views.

Ranjani Shettar's site-specific commission (in partnership with the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art) – *Cloud Songs on the Horizon* continues in the Conservatory. Reviews have been positive with many mentioning Shettar's aim to spark joy and encourage visitors to explore the plant collection. Open for free to the public on Friday evenings and Sundays advance tickets are fully booked. In addition, year 1 students completed a biodiversity themed treasure hunt and students from Ickburgh SEN/D school took part in a sensory soundscape workshop as part of this month's community day. A longform studio film including footage of Ranjani Shettar in the Conservatory and edited together with footage from Ranjani's studio in Karnataka is now a key asset included in the digital exhibition guide, pre-visit emails and on the website.

Julianknxx continues in the Curve gallery – the team worked with 180 Studios and WePresent to collaborate on digital content released around the launch on 13 September and are forging plans to continue this content partnership throughout the run. And *Julian knxx: Chorus in Rememory of Flight*, a studio film with Julianknxx, filmed at 180 studios, was released at the end of October.

In the Theatre and Pit we have seen an intensive period of work presenting an exciting array of international companies. Belarus Free Theatre's haunting folk tale with opera and orchestra performing alongside their acting ensemble in *King Stakh's Wild Hunt*; Eun Me-Ahn's *Dragons* from South Korea featured inventive choreography illuminated by state-of-the-art projections; Why Not Theatre from Canada filled our main house with their spellbinding new adaptation of the *Mahabharata*, which included a meal and storytelling in the Pit; and our season closed with US choreographer Pam Tanowitz and composer David Lang exploring their Jewish heritage through movement and music in *Song of Songs*.

At the same time the Pit was home to 5 companies bringing a range of vital small scale works covering poetry, dance, film, music, storytelling and another popular *Pit Party*. The whole season garnered a clutch of 4 and 5 star reviews performing steadily at the box office.

A new Music season is underway – highlights from the Barbican's Classical programme in September and October included visits from the Ukrainian Freedom Orchestra and the Bayerisches Staatsorchester, while the LSO welcomed their chief conductor designate Sir Antonio Pappano for a performance of Beethoven's 7th Symphony.

Contemporary concerts included a welcome return for techno legend Jeff Mills with a new project called *Tomorrow Comes The Harvest*, an all-day event celebrating the enduring folk music of *The Unthanks*, a typically maverick new project from composer Matthew Herbert, and a one-off collaboration between singer-songwriters

John Grant and Richard Hawley, who joined forces to perform the songs of Patsy Cline. We also look forward to the return of the Darbar Festival (of Indian classical music) and of the London Jazz Festival during the Autumn.

Barbican Immersive received board approval at the September 2023 meeting for an ambitious new programme to deliver annual immersive exhibitions at the centre each summer to grow Barbican's gen Z and A audiences and deliver additional revenue. The first project in this new plan will launch in 2025. Production for this new programme has begun, starting with the *Fundamentals of Music* project.

In October, Creative Collaborations produced *Nina Simone: Legacy* at Milton Court revisiting Josette Bushell-Mingo OBE's 2017 international theatre production about her relationship with Nina Simone: *Nina: A Story about Me and Nina Simone*. The sold-out evening included a screening of the London premiere of a film about the production, *CALL NINA!* directed by Lamin Daniel Jadama, as well as a panel discussion on race activism and performance, and concluded with a live performance of Nina Simone's songs. In November, Encounters talk series (curated for younger audiences) will present two discussions:- the first with Turner Prize-nominated artist Sin Wai Kin and singer-songwriter, producer and composer Planningtorock who will explore world building at the intersections of visual arts and music.

The second event is with multidisciplinary artist Ronan McKenzie talking to artist and designer Mac Collins about their processes from ideation to realisation. The team will also kick off the first Club Stage gig, a new strand of music programming aimed at a younger and a more culturally diverse demographic. Opening with *Greentea Selecta* which sold out in three days. The next Club Stage event in December is in partnership with Bootylicious the longest running Black gay club night in the country.

During September and October, Cinema programmed a number of high profile ScreenTalks including Nick Fontain for the premiere of the new Restoration of *I Heard it through the Grapevine*; Emerald Fennel for *A Promising Young Woman* ahead of her new film, *Saltburn*, opening the London Film Festival; and Cannes Un Certain Regard winner *How to Have Sex* with director Molly Manning Walker and actor Mia McKenna-Bruce. Our Hidden Figures regular strand held its most successful programme with Binka Zhelyazkova rare films. October saw the continuation of Cinema's collaboration with Headway East London, following their exhibition in the Curve Gallery, with an *Experiments on Film* screening with artist Zara Joan Miller.

The latest in our *Experiments on Film* series took place earlier in the month, celebrating Isaac Julien and his work around Frederick Douglass, including a panel discussion and book signing. *Visions of Haiti* opened in October, a programme exploring films engaging with Haiti, drawn from across the history of cinema. October ended with our annual half term family film offer: Family Film Week which included a preview of *Chicken Run: Dawn of the Nugget* with a Studio Ardman model making workshop. For the first time we offer a Relaxed Screening as part of the programme, with *Spider-man: Across the Spider-Verse* and a draw along session.

## **Content Reach and Intellectual Property Development**

The Visual Arts team is collaborating with ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum in Denmark to show Soheila Sokhanvari's *Rebel Rebel* exhibition from January - June 2024, co-curating *Unravel: The Power and Politics of Textiles in Art* (opening 14 February 2024) with the Stedelijk, Amsterdam where it will open in September 2024 and planning for *RE/SISTERS* to travel to FOMU, Antwerp 29 March – 18 August 2024.

The Barbican Immersive team has confirmed two venues to continue *Game On's* tour in 2024. The exhibition will visit the Doncaster Dome (Jan-April) and the National Museum of Scotland (June-November). The team are currently working on combining *Game On 1&2* to present the best version of the show yet. Final preparations are being made at the CCCB in Barcelona for the launch of the *AI:More Than Human* exhibition. Due to this project's ongoing interest and success, Barbican Immersive is considering extending the exhibition tour beyond 2024. Preparations for the *Virtual Realms*, *Our Time On Earth* and *Mangasia* tours to continue in 2024 are underway.

## **Artistic Talent Development**

Creative Collaborations is in the process of recruiting for two annual Young Barbican programmes Barbican Young Poets and Young Film programmers to start in November '23. Over 500 applications have been received and the team have delivered open days and opportunities for participants to meet the facilitating artists.

In Theatre, Julene Robinson, Emma + PJ, the *PappyShow* and Rhiannon Faith are all alumni of our past Open Lab programme and featured in this autumn's public Pit programme. They are testament to the value of the Open Lab development process which supports new ideas and helps companies learn how to take their work to the next level through the technical resources and producing expertise we provide.

The American vocal ensemble *Roomful of Teeth* built successfully on their previous visit (as part of Max Richter's 2018 Sound And Vision weekend) by selling out Milton Court in a programme of music by young composers including Caroline Shaw and Angelica Negron. Electronic musician Laurel Halo also sold out her first headlining performance as part of the Barbican programme. The London based *Balimaya Project*, whose music fuses jazz and West African influences, successfully graduated from a Milton Court show in 2021 to the Barbican Hall in 2023, attracting by far the largest audience of their career so far.

## **Notable Production Activities**

The *Mahabharata* brought to us in this new version by Toronto's Why Not Theatre was of particular note as it gave a new generation a chance to experience an epic scale retelling of these iconic stories which has not been seen in this country since Peter Brook's celebrated version in 1985. It brought a new audience to the Barbican with 42% first time bookers, many of whom were multi-generational families visiting the Barbican specifically to immerse themselves in this thrilling durational production. By significantly exceeding target it has shored up those shows in the season who have just fallen shy of their targets. We are grateful to our colleagues in

Security and AEX who worked with the Theatre team to provide extra security for audiences, artists and staff during the run of *Song of Songs*, at a particularly difficult time.

### **Spotlight moment - Outdoor Cinema 2023**

Barbican Outdoor Cinema returned in August/September with an expanded programme and increased capacity. Over 6000 people attended 11-screenings, which included a corporate sponsor for the first time and an enhanced look and feel of the space. The programme attracted a wide audience and received high level of media attention, while generating net profit. Barbican outdoor Cinema has been nominated for [The Big Screen Awards](#) – Event of the Year. A tribute to all those who worked on it and made it an astounding success. For more information, please refer to the Barbican Outdoor Cinema 2023 Evaluation paper in Appendix 1 in the Information Pack.

## **Excite and Engage our Audiences**

### **Communications**

During September and October the press focus has been on the autumn season's programming. We delivered well attended media view events for *Ranjani Shettar: Cloud Songs on the Horizon*, *Julianknxx: Chorus in Rememory of Flight* and the group show *Re/Sisters*. All three exhibitions received favourable media coverage, with highlights including a beautifully eloquent preview of *Cloud Songs on the Horizon* in the [Financial Times](#) including an interview with Head of Visual Arts Shanay Jhaveri, and an 10-minute segment on BBC Radio 4's [Women's Hour](#) (from 33:46) with *Re/Sisters* curator Alona Pardo. In the Theatre and Music programmes we ran over a dozen press desks for a wide range of shows, and received some excellent coverage including, for example, for *Mahabharata* in the [Telegraph](#), *Song of Songs* in the [Observer](#), and the Bayerische Staatsorchester conducted by Vladimir Jurowski in the [Times](#). In Cinema the forthcoming Visions of Haiti Film Festival and Family Film Week both received good press previews.

During the period we also brought a renewed focus to the Barbican's [LinkedIn account](#), which is an excellent place to connect with our stakeholders, donors, and industry partners. Among other topics, we posted about: the Bartholomew Fair; the departure of Artistic Director Will Gompertz; the Sir David Attenborough waxwork that was unveiled by Madame Tussauds in the Conservatory; our Black History Month programming; London Fashion Week shows we hosted; the City's new Lord Mayor; the Vestiaire Collective partnership for *Re/Sisters*; and the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday of our cousin, the Sydney Opera House.

In internal comms Town Clerk Ian Thomas attended an all-staff Town Hall meeting on 25 September and took part in an 'in-conversation' discussion with CEO Claire Spencer and took questions from the team. We also launched a new initiative called 'Barbican AMA': open-invite sessions in which individuals or teams talk through a project they've been working on – these are intended to increase staff understanding of different parts of the organisation and break down silos. To date, topics have included fundraising, the shop, and Barbican Renewal.

### **Headline Visitor Numbers**

For the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 – 13<sup>th</sup> October 2023 overall visitor numbers are up 8% on the same time last year as the market continues to improve from the impact of Covid.

Some strong uplift across Cinema and Classical Music with new release titles *Barbie*, *Tar* and *Oppenheimer* as well as our resident orchestras, LSO and BBC all performing well. Gallery has been impacted negatively this year as it is comparing against the *Our Time On Earth* Barbican Immersive Exhibition in 2022.

Artform tickets	2022	2023	% difference
Art Gallery	142,842	90,709	-36%
Cinema	91,996	127,161	38%
Classical Music	136,203	174,187	28%
Contemporary Music	103,774	115,056	11%
Creative Collaboration		1,275	
Membership	1,517	2,428	60%
Other	169,717	162,803	-4%
Theatre	225,576	265,292	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>871,625</b>	<b>938,911</b>	<b>8%</b>

*Note:*

*Other includes non-artform events e.g., Conservatory, graduations, tours, etc*

## Marketing

Some marketing highlights from September through to December include:

### Membership & Young Barbican

The Membership team is now managing the Young Barbican scheme, so a key priority over the next few months will be maximising the synergies which come with this change. We'll be reviewing and enhancing our CRM journeys, communications and seeking to apply the same audience-first approach to customer service which we've rolled out for Members to Young Barbican. Working closely with Creative Collaboration, we're aiming for a 'relaunch' of the scheme to coincide with a Young Barbican Takeover in April 24.

### Mahabharata and the Darbar Festival

*Mahabharata* opening in the Theatre was a big audience development opportunity where we worked closely with the theatre company to build a campaign that was highly targeted to South Asian audiences across London. Anecdotally, this led to one of the most diverse audiences we've ever seen in the Theatre.

The first-time booker rate was 46% across these performances compared to an average of 32% in the theatre. We developed new relationships with digital outlets including The Times of India and Hindustan Times where we delivered digital advertising across the campaign. *The Darbar Festival of Indian Classical Music* which has taken place at the Barbican for 6 years is also important in bringing new audiences to the Barbican and most events are currently sold to 70% of venue capacity or higher.

### Launch of the Barbican ClubStage

We've launched our pilot ClubStage with two events aimed at younger more diverse audiences. The Marketing team have worked with both Creative Collaboration and

the event producers to ensure the campaigns for these events are authentic and successful in attracting new audiences to the Barbican:

- Dollop presents *Greentea Peng: Greentea Selecta* on 4 Nov. The event sold out within four days of going on sale due to the high profile and popularity of this artist
- On 9 Dec London's legendary QTIBIPOC club night *Bootylicious* takes over the Barbican ClubStage for a celebratory party night with DJ's playing everything from RnB, Hip-hop, Dancehall, Afrobeats, Amapiano and more.

## **Content Production**

Some exciting content has been created around our Gallery and Classical Music programmes including:

- Our RE/SISTERS introduction film, created in partnership with earthrise, via Instagram to over 2000 likes and 98,600 views (and counting). Earthrise (269k followers) shared four posts about the exhibition and CEO Alice Aedy (143k followers) dedicated multiple stories to the film and exhibition.
- A longform studio film with Ranjani Shettar, filmed in the Conservatory and edited together with footage from Ranjani's studio in Karnataka. This is now a key asset included in the digital exhibition guide, pre-visit emails and on the website.
- A studio film with JulianKnxx, filmed at 180 studios to coincide with our current free Curve commission *JulianKnxx: Chorus in Rememory of Flight* will be released by the end of October.
- A video of the BBC Singers rehearsing in Maida Vale, with a video of their Chief Conductor Sofi Jeannin, to showcase the ensemble ahead of their concert in Milton Court on Friday 13 Oct.
- Radio 1 Presenter Sian Edwards brought our classical season launch to a wider audience with an amazing Instagram video. We asked her to talk about what she's excited about in the new season.
- A Barbican session with violinist Fenella Humphreys who is doing a concert of music from female composers in November in Milton Court also created a video for our socials.

## **Festive Feels at the Barbican**

Plans are underway for a Barbican brand marketing and communications campaign promoting the diverse range of experiences we have to offer at the Barbican over the festive period from the traditional *Raymond Gubbay Christmas Festival* to the RSC's *My Neighbour Totoro*.

With many people visiting London, it's an excellent opportunity to highlight the Barbican as an overall destination with a great range of events, films, bars, restaurants, and festive gifts including Barbican Membership.

## **Revitalise our Place**

### **Barbican Renewal**

Design development and business case work continues on the projects funded to be taken forward during the current phase of work. Surveys also continue across the building, with the initial condition survey nearing completion and measured surveys progressing well. In October, Planning and Inclusive design consultants were appointed work with on the project following competitive tender processes. A more detailed update on early design and business case work on Exhibition Hall 2 and the Conservatory is provided in the non-public papers.

Work to scope and deliver early infrastructure works also continues, with a paper seeking endorsement for the draw down of funds to begin to address the most urgent works and the proposed approach to procuring a building services contractor for the major infrastructure renewal works included in the non-public papers.

## Invest In Our People

### **Recruitment Planning**

Following our last update, Members may recall that we will be recruiting for the following roles:

- Director for Arts and Participation
- Director for Buildings and Renewal
- Director for Audiences
- 

Seven recruitment partners were invited to submit proposals for managing the recruitment campaigns. The agencies were those with which the Barbican either had an existing relationship, had been recommended by peers across the arts sector or within the City of London, or had been recommended by members of the Barbican Board.

### **Process**

Following an initial telephone discussion, the recruitment partners were invited to an introductory online briefing, run by Ali Mirza, Director of PCI. The purpose of the online sessions was to provide context on the Barbican transformation journey and further detail about each of the three roles. It was a chance for the partners to begin understanding specific requirements, and how potential candidates might fit within the culture of the Barbican. They also had the opportunity to meet key members of the Barbican team i.e. those who would have a direct connection to each Director role. The partners were advised that they could submit proposals for all three roles, or per role.

The partners were given 10 days to submit proposals. To objectively score each proposal, the following criteria was applied:

- *Price*
- *Timeframe* (would the proposed timeframe match our aspirations to make an announcement before the end of December?)
- *EDI* – approach, track history, level of understanding and expertise, development of tools, use of advisors, networks
- *Experience in the field* – similar successful campaigns and appointments
- *Alignment with organisational values* – had the agency understood the culture of the Barbican, our journey, and aspirations?
- *Creativity and innovation* – specifically around recruitment practice
- *Relational working/partnership approach* – how much was there a meeting of minds? What was the approach to partnership-work?

## **Selection**

The three highest scoring agencies who were subsequently invited for a further conversation between the CEO and Director of PCI were Green Park, McLean and Gatenby Sanderson, with the resulting partnering arrangements as follows.

- Director for Arts and Participation - Green Park
- Director for Buildings and Renewal – Mclean
- Director for Audiences – Gatenby Sanderson

## **Next steps**

An initial planning meeting is being held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> October where we anticipate mapping out milestones to inform more detailed scheduling. We also intend to set out the 'rules of engagement' or in other words, our expectations around how we work in partnership throughout the recruitment campaigns. We want our recruitment partners to fully understand our organisation and culture so that they can support with finding the best possible candidates. For this reason we are investing time in developing a personalised approach, encouraging meetings face to face with key staff and providing a tour of the estate early in the process.

It is worth noting that while the majority of recruiters mention the timeline for an announcement before the festive break is achievable, there will be resourcing implications internally. We are confident timelines will be met but will continue to report on progress and any risk to meeting the anticipated timeline.

## **Build an Enterprising Business**

### **Event Systems Project**

As part of the Event Systems Project, Andrew Hayes – *Head of Systems and Data* along with a working party who represented every possible use of the software across the building, have undertaken an in-depth and detailed review of the venue and event sales and management software with the objective of replacing several out-of-date existing systems with one overall system designed to meet the current and future needs of the Barbican.

6 products began the journey and were scored by the reviewers following documentation, questionnaire responses and demos, and each product was graded against headline areas of the specification. Scoring was done purely on quality, without reference to cost.

The final recommendation was ArtifaxEvent, which is an excellent product. No other software looked at had ArtifaxEvent's balance of features, or the vendor's sector knowledge. Given the work we've already done, and that we already have a sandbox version online, and a potential migration path, it is not only the fastest route to a new solution but offers an opportunity to reduce implementation time and costs, as we are able to reuse as much of the work we've already done as we can, avoiding customisations.

The final quote will bring the total contract value within budget.

### **Development**

#### **Individual Giving**

We're very grateful for a generous gift from longstanding supporters, Trevor Fenwick and Jane Hindley in support of our 23/24 contemporary music programme. Our Patrons programme continues to grow and is on track to hit our target of 25% growth on last year's income. Successful donor events have been delivered for our patrons across our visual arts, music and theatre programme.

Our major supporter and collaborator for Ranjani Shettar's sculpture commission, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, was thanked and celebrated at an opening dinner event in the Barbican Conservatory. We have seen steady giving from visitors onsite and online, which we project will peak towards the end of the year with increased footfall in the Centre.

#### **Corporate**

We are delighted to confirm that Bank of America have renewed their corporate membership, this will be their 12th year of continuous support and we look forward to continuing to engage their employees with the power of creativity through the Barbican's varied arts programme.

We are enormously encouraged to have got through to the next phase of the Bloomberg Digital Accelerator Programme. Over the coming months we will be working with Bloomberg and their advisors to pull together our project and submit our full application at the beginning of January 2024. If successful at this second stage the project would begin in March 2024. This programme not only provides funding and expert support but also important development and networking opportunities for our chosen Bloomberg Tech Fellow, Andrew Hayes. Andrew is already enjoying the programme of events and support this programme is affording him.

On the 4th October we launched our partnership with Vestiaire Collective, the luxury resale platform who are lead sponsors of the RE/SISTERS exhibition. Vestiaire are champions of sustainable fashion and we couldn't ask for a better partner for this exhibition that explores themes sustainability and eco feminism. To date we have delivered two high profile events as part of this partnership to engage Vestiaire and Barbican audiences with the themes of the exhibition. As part of our collaboration Vestiaire have also installed an interactive to celebrate and promote the launch of their impact report, which measured the environmental effects, emissions and positive changes their business model of fashion resale has been making. On completing the interactive quiz visitors to the exhibition will also have the opportunity to win a £1000 Vestiaire voucher. We thank Vestiaire for being such collaborative partners throughout this process.

## **Trusts and Grants**

Since the last board meeting, we have secured grants from the Mactaggart Third Fund, Art Fund's Jonathan Ruffer Curatorial Grant Programme, Canadian High Commission, and Acción Cultural Español.

We have submitted several major grant applications towards ambitious art form projects, which we are expecting to hear back from before the end of the year. We are also discussing renewing support with several current or recent supporters of the Barbican's learning and community programmes.

## **Food and Beverage**

### **Overview**

Currently the traffic flow to the bars and restaurants is largely dictated to by the programme. Below are the covers for the first 6 months of this financial year 23/24, in comparison to 22/23, we have seen significant uplift in 2023/24 compared to the same period last year.

### **Restaurants**

	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/2024</b>
Brasserie (covers)	8,948	9,534
Bonfire (covers)	16,703	22,919
Benugo (transactions)	191,883	239,330

Benugo figures are interesting to note - that despite the removal of the Cinema Cafe (which was taken inhouse in 2023 and therefore not included above), the numbers for this year are pacing ahead of last year which can be attributed in part to the A Strange Loop crowd.

## Bars

The inhouse bars (performance bars, Martini bar, members/late lounge, and Milton Court) are measured by transactions, which total 98,074 from 1st of April – 30th Sep 2023. The current system replaces a previous system in 22/23 where the figures are not readily available for comparison. The lack of an interval during ASL has impacted overall takings, as seen when comparing Bar activity from A Strange Loop with My Neighbour Totoro, although the average transaction value is higher for A Strange Loop:

Show	Length of show run	Total Bar Transactions	Transactions per day	ATV
<i>A Strange Loop</i>	83	46107	556	10.37
<i>My Neighbour Totoro</i>	104	68797	662	9.74

A pop-up bar is currently being operated on Friday evenings as part of the activities to enhance the experience to visitors and maximise secondary spend in the conservatory during the public openings of Ranjani Shettar: Cloud songs on the horizon. Early indications are that this will be successful, and plans are in progress to maximise the opportunities of this additional public opening day.

We are investigating how to maximise and expand the reach of the Martini Bar on Level 1. The mezzanine floor is currently just an extension of the foyer, with a variety of furniture and an ambiance not suited to an evening bar experience. A trial of reducing the lighting levels has begun and a proposal to improve the seating and mood lighting is in progress.

## Restaurants & Cafes

The rebrand and refresh of the Level 1 restaurant from Bonfire to **Barbican Bar & Grill** will be launching on the 8 November 2023, in time for RSC opening and to caputre the remaining season in the Conservatory. The intention is to bring both the branding and interior more in line with the Barbican aesthetic. The rebrand of the Level 2 restaurant to Barbican Brasserie has had the impact of widening the demographic of the audience as it is easier to identify what it is. The expectation is that this rebrand will have a similar impact.

With the recruitment of a permanent Cafe Manager, the **Cinema Cafe & Bar** offer continues to improve under the Barbican Bars team led by Nathan Palmer. In October we launched a Brunch Menu to enhance the daytime offer and Cocktail Menu for the evening offer. Sales are continuing to grow slowly & a marketing push is planned for November targeting local residents and businesses.

The catering consultancy appointed to assist with the Barbican Renewal F&B strategy, have also now been appointed to assist with the Catering Concession Contracts due in the autumn of 2024. They will assist in the stakeholder engagement and help to develop a joined-up vision for the short-medium and longer-term vision for the F&B offer at the Barbican. Residents have been engaged to be part of the panel for the Tender in 2024 through the Barbican Association.

## **Retail**

A new exhibition shop has opened with the arrival of RE/SISTERS in the Gallery. Work began on exhibition product development and selection about 6 months before the show opened. This particular exhibition has allowed us to work closely with the Neo Naturists who are featured in the exhibition, selling a number of handmade items by the group. We have introduced new lines from small businesses and independent makers, such as gifts by the brand Müll Club who are based in Brockley, London and are striving to reduce our plastic consumption and recycle unavoidable plastics. They aim to collect London's waste and transform it into beautiful, useful objects. We have also supported the Development team and their relationship with the exhibition sponsor Vestiaire, giving space in both the Gallery Shop and Foyer Shop for Vestiaire to take over and promote their brand and sustainable clothing vision.

Retail are in the final preparation phase for our biggest trading period, which historically kicks off in late October. The third quarter is where we see a spike in our sales and our targets, but with the return of My Neighbour Totoro in late November, we are expecting it to be as busy in the new year and final quarter as we would be over the festive period. This will be a long and sustained period of big sale targets. In order to meet those targets we began planning and making stock commitments for our season products and high volume sellers in the early Summer. We are now starting to see products arrive into our stockrooms. This is happening alongside the preparation for the RSC's return and an increased merchandise presence on the foyers.

Learning from last year, we wanted to offer a better experience for those wishing to make a merchandise purchase, with an additional pop-up shop at Silk St as well as one in the foyer and RSC product also available in the main shop. We hope that the additional sales points will make it easier for our visitors to make a purchase and ease the queues we saw in the shop in 2022. We earn commission on these sales, the inventory is managed by the RSC's merchandise partner, so our risk is low. However, by maximising RSC merchandise sales we will increase the commission potential.

We held our first 'Staff Open Call' to create a seasons greetings card. All staff were invited to participate, with the winning card being produced for sale exclusively in the Barbican Shop and the official card for Claire Spencer's office this winter. The winner was announced on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup>, and we shall have the card available for sale by the start of November. We were delighted at the number and quality of submissions and hope we can collaborate again with colleagues on a project that shines a light on the incredible talent we have in the centre. The artist of the winning

card received a fee for the use of the commission and retains the rights to their work. Four runners up were awarded gift vouchers.

### **Car Parks Operation**

The new CoL EV charging points operator (Qwello) have been on site to undertake initial electrical surveys. The plan is to replace existing charging points and add additional chargers in Car Park 3. The new EV chargers will have capability to charge a fee for use and the expectation is to then increase the number of EV charging points into Car Park 4 in due course.

As part of our plan to find additional income streams to maximise the use of our Car Parks, a fashion show event in Car Park 5 for London Fashion Week was trialled. The event ran very smoothly and was a success. We are working with the Business Events team to bring similar shows to Car Park 5 in the future.

### **Business Events**

We currently have a Pipeline of £4.6m in room hire for the rest of 23/24 which is primarily for events in the Frobisher Auditorium and Conservatory. Following the success of the Roksanda and Supriya Lele fashion show in September, we are working with a creative agency for the JW Anderson show and pitching the use of the Curve gallery for their fashion show in February '24.

Within the last 3 months we have turned away £0.5m worth of businesses in 23/24 for 23/24. Reasons for refusal include lack of availability in various spaces but with only 2 dates left available for 23/24 in the Hall, this continues to be a key factor. Other areas include the Conservatory as demand continues to be high for this space and availability is limited for the rest of 23/24.

A busy proactive and reactive end to the Summer period and start for the Autumn period has kept the Business Events team on the front foot with attendance at various UK and international trade events and Business Event shows such as IMEX USA which took place last week with the team attending as part of the London & Partners delegation.

### **Significant Events**

Some unusual event spaces were used for successful London Fashion Week, with runway shows for Supriya Lele in Car park 5 and for Roksanda on the Sculpture Court.

Our ongoing relationship with Fane, spoken word events specialist continues to grow and a busy Autumn season is in progress with several talks scheduled including, Sam Heughan and Graham McTavish, sell out shows for Dame Judi Dench, and numerous dates with author, journalist and podcaster Dolly Alderton amongst others, maximising occupancy of the Barbican Hall.

Both 'New London Architecture' and 'Mind the Product' returned for their annual conferences, some of the highlight events that transform the Barbican Foyers to complement their respective events for large scale audiences.

The Autumn also has several returning clients for Graduation Ceremonies with University of Coventry, University of Law and Open University scheduling presentation ceremonies during the period.

## **Working in Line With Our Values**

### **Ethics**

We have continued our work on the Code of Ethics – including workshops attended by team members from across the organisation, particularly including our programmers, event sales teams and fundraisers – as well as other interested parties.

We have drawn on work completed by ALVA and also a Churchill Fellowship which looked particularly at gift acceptance from corporates and individuals.

Following feedback from the People, Culture and Inclusion Committee, we have also focused on decision making flows and governance structures. The final code will be presented to the Board in early 2024.

### **Finance**

Our 24/25 first round budget has been worked through and will be presented to committee in line with our new strategic framework and our underlying principles of focusing on maximising spend per head, attendance capacities and utilisation of spaces. There is currently a projected shortfall in next year's budget, which is not unusual at this point of the year. There will be a director's and management team session prior to November committee with everyone engaged and committed to work through various targets and solutions in the coming months to reach a balanced budget position. In line with this, work also continues on the longer-term business plan.

### **Recognition Scheme**

Following the launch of the City of London's annual Celebrating Our People Awards (COPA), we identified a gap in the nomination process – Casual colleagues were not part of the recognition scheme. Our Casual team is integral to keeping the Centre running and we felt it was crucial they were given the same opportunity to be celebrated. Claire Spencer reached out to Ian Thomas and Alison Littlewood and asked for the awards to expand. The City was very receptive and understood our push for inclusion – so much so that they introduced two new Casual-only awards (Everyone Belongs Here and Inclusive Team Player) to sit alongside the already existing ten. The Awards will also be reviewed so future years remain as inclusive as possible.

### **Barbican AMA**

To continue breaking down siloes and celebrating the work that happens in the Centre, we've launched drop-in Barbican AMA (Ask Me Anything) sessions. Each session will be 'hosted' by a person, team, network, or cross-collaborative group of people talking about what they're doing and how people can help / get involved (if

applicable). And, given the name, it's an open place to ask questions. These sessions run every third Thursday and are open to the entire Barbican team, including Casual colleagues. Looking at AMAs through the lens of our Values, they are rooted in connection and joy. They are also a soft-touch way of supporting development and learning. The first three sessions (listed below) all had strong attendance from across a variety of teams and some attendees got in touch asking to host their own session.

- **Development:** Thursday 14 September 10:00-11:00 (EG-W and GM – what Development does, why it's important, how you can help)
- **Retail:** Thursday 5 October 15:30-16:30 (RG – how does the Shop find merchandise, what does a Buyer do?)
- **Renewal:** Thursday 26 October 15:30-16:30 (NA and the wider Renewal team – programme update, leaving lots of space for conversation / questions)

The final two sessions of the year are with the Music programming and Bars teams, after which we will conduct a mini review to gather feedback and learn how we can continue to support and improve the AMAs. Sessions will pick back up in early January (in final confirmation stages).

### **Information Pack:**

Appendix 1 - Outdoor Cinema Season Review