

PUBLIC CEO REPORT

Summary

The CEO Report comprises update from updates from across the Centre.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

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

Introduction

We continue to keep focus on our strategic framework and shared goals, to deliver on our purpose: We are London's Creative Catalyst for arts, curiosity and enterprise. We spark creative possibilities and transformation for artists, audiences and communities – to inspire, connect and provoke debate. We are the place to be in this destination city, where everyone is welcome. Our impact is felt far outside our walls and ripples beyond the experiences we offer - locally, nationally and internationally.

Top level delivery and highlights May – August 2024 is outlined below.

EXCITE AND ENGAGE OUR AUDIENCES

Experience Strategy

We will be delivering an Experience Strategy to layout the visitor experience improvement roadmap that will deliver on the four key aims of Barbican's Audience Strategy:

- Increase and diversify audiences
- Drive an org-wide customer centric culture
- Data led decision making
- Growth in consumer revenue

The Experience Strategy is a new 4–5-year strategy for Barbican Centre and is anticipated to show:

- clear financial and non-financial KPI's for our growth path
- guiding principles for behaviour, culture and ways of working
- themes that will prioritise our work and focus
- for each year, detail the planned initiatives to be delivered

The Experience Strategy is data-led, being informed by:

- City of London Corporation Corporate Plan 2024-29
- Barbican Centre Strategic Framework (Our Shared Goals)
- Barbican Centre Audience Strategy
- What our audiences are telling us, through our program of audience research
- What our team and stakeholders are telling us – through a specific survey
- 1:1 Meetings and observations by the Director for Audiences

We look forward to sharing more of this work with you as it is further developed.

Experience Campaign: “*Make concrete plans this summer*”

One focus of our Marketing approach is to find the balance between event-based Marketing and experience / brand-based Marketing. As well as engaging people through what events we do, we also need to engage people through the identity of what Barbican is, the unique value the Barbican experience provides and how we can meet different customer needs. This also builds a solid foundation for future fundraising, dining, tourism and destination campaigns.



Our summer brand campaign has seen over 1.2 million impressions across social media as well as significant reach within the Centre across the summer on posters, the plasma screen network and the Silk Street lightbox. The campaign has built strong brand awareness of our summer offer, including the Conservatory, Lakeside Bar,

Outdoor Cinema and *Our Street*. Pride activity was incorporated in June and July with Classical Pride featuring as headline activity.

Event Campaign highlights:

Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum

Our campaign for Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum's Curve commission will lean into the interdisciplinary influences which Pamela uses in her practice. For example, we will speak about the influence of theatre on her work as well as releasing a series of Instagram posts using her process drawings to lean into the role storytelling tells in her work. We are commissioning a longform artist film, to be shot creatively in a film noir style and to introduce the artist to our exhibition.

Sir Antonio Pappano, new Chief Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra

The London Symphony Orchestra lead on their press and marketing activity, and as Barbican's Resident Orchestra we are right beside them working collaboratively to support their activity.

LSO's new Chief Conductor, Sir Antonio Pappano, will join the orchestra formally in September in his new role, following 22 years at the Royal Opera House as Music Director. We have supported press for the start of his tenure, facilitating interviews with Italian TV station RAI TV, Magic Classical and The Daily Telegraph, which will add to the significant interviews and news stories already publicising the start of this new chapter for BBC's This Cultural Life, Gramophone magazine, The New York Times, The Guardian and The Times. We will also be supporting the start of the tenure with marketing and social media activity – from Sir Antonio Pappano featuring prominently on our Silk Street lightbox to collaborative Instagram posting with the LSO and a foyer poster takeover for one week in September.

EFG London Jazz Festival

Our annual flagship contemporary music festival returns 15 – 24 November. The programme includes jazz concerts in the Hall and Milton Court, live performances on our FreeStage and our Jazz on Screen cinema offering. This year's programme shines a spotlight on jazz's global influence. Marketing activity began when wave one went on sale on 26 April and the focused campaign begins mid-September. The festival is held in partnership with our Associate Producer, Serious, with whom we are again working collaboratively as we build and strengthen the working relationship year on year. The festival will benefit from their joint marketing and press support. The festival and concerts at the Barbican have already secured preview coverage in a number of online

outlets and genre specific magazines from Jazzwise, to The Line of Best Fit and The Quietus.

Voice of Resilience, House, and London Palestine Film Festival

These are three distinct events in the autumn (across literature, theatre, cinema) which provide a platform for many artists from Palestine and Israel to hold dialogues on complex issues, in line with the Barbican's purpose to build understanding, enable constructive debate and counter the forces of polarisation through our enriching and relevant artistic programme. Achieved by representing the widest possible variety of world views and human experiences, these events feature multiple narratives and perspectives on themes including displacement, migration and freedom. We are proud to present these works and to welcome Barbican audiences for them.

We will continue to be "relevant" and topical. We will host a broad range of artists and thinkers, and provide a platform for them to respond to the important global and local issues of the day.

FUEL CREATIVE AMBITION

Our Autumn programme reflects on the unsettling and changing times we live in. It is a space for community and coming together, making space for essential, brave and honest conversations that we need now more than ever.

The following is the Autumn Programme introduction from our new Director for Arts and Participation, which encapsulates our autumn programme and pulls out some season highlights.

Amid multiple campaigns, elections and changing governments around the world, autumn at the Barbican explores the turbulent period we're experiencing through a multidisciplinary artistic lens, striving to make sense of a world more polarised than ever. During unsettling times, making space for the essential voices of artists, for thought provoking ideas, and, sometimes, convening difficult conversations is what we are committed to now more than ever. In The Imaginary Institution of India: Art 1975-1998, our Art Gallery show, and the accompanying cinema programme, Rewriting the Rules: Pioneering Indian Cinema after 1970, we delve into India's negotiations with maintaining a secular democracy during a time of significant transformation. In The Curve, Netherlands-based multidisciplinary artist Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum's first solo show at a major UK institution, It Will End in Tears, guides visitors through an interconnected map of film sets, blurring the line between what's real and what's constructed in times of shifting narratives. As she says: "For me, liminality offers a powerful symbol and speaks to cycles of survival tactics, longing, desire, and the pursuit

*of home and wholeness.” The London premiere of Hanif Kureishi’s iconic novel **The Buddha of Suburbia**, with the Royal Shakespeare Company, lauded film director Amos Gitai’s **House** and National Changgeuk Company’s **Lear** explore the edge of adaptation and interpretation. And Comma Press’s **Voices of Resilience**, is an evening of readings from the diaries of Nahil Mohana, Sondos Sabra, Ala'a Obeid and Atef Abu Saif, reflecting on the current experience of Palestinians in Gaza. Our music programme features Gorges Ocloo’s **The Golden Stool**, which captures a moment of rebellion against colonial rule in Ghana, while Rolf Hind’s new opera **Sky in a Small Cage** is inspired by the life of Rumi. Indigenous female choir **Spinifex Gum** will present their first performance outside of Australia, singing about the polarities of disenfranchisement and industrialisation in their home communities of Pilbara. Our treasured resident, the London Symphony Orchestra, begin a new era with Sir Antonio Pappano, and legendary visiting artists include Yo-Yo Ma, Yuja Wang and Sheku Kanneh-Mason. Two unmissable festivals share music from across the world: the annual festival of Indian music, **Darbar**, showcases an extraordinary array of musicians evolving new traditions from ancient musical roots, while the EFG London Jazz Festival shines a spotlight on the genre’s global influence. Cinema continues to bring the best of contemporary international film and speakers to the Barbican, including 2024 Palme D’Or winning writer/director Sean Baker’s **Anora**, **Screening the Sahara**, a film programme looking at the regions’ storytellers, and the London Palestine Film Festival. Our public talks and literary series include hosting the **Black British Book Festival** and an evening with writer/thinker Dr. Gabor Maté, whose work, including **The Myth of Normal**, explores legacies of individual and collective trauma and how we can move forward into new ways of sense-making. Plus, we have a broad range of exciting programmes for young creatives, families and community partners. In a world of increasing change, the Barbican is a space to explore its complexities through the forefront of artistic practice. Whatever brings you here this autumn, we’re delighted to welcome you.*

Highlights from the recent programme include:

Music: This summer season has been studded with stand-out international stars and local collaborations, attracting multi-generational audiences, generating joy and demonstrating inclusivity. Acclaimed American trans artist **Anohni** performed two sold-out performances with the Johnsons ([The Morning Star, 4*](#) - "a performance for the end of the world.") while **Nils Frahm** garnered four full houses for his spell-binding show [Barry Creasy, MusicOMH, 4.5*](#).

Stand-out classical performances in the main hall included **Sheku & Isata Kanneh-Mason**, [Rebecca Franks, The Times, 4*](#) - "one of the brightest and best sibling duos doing the musical honours.", **Leonidas Kavakos's** complete solo Bach performances, Egyptian mezzo **Fatma Said** in Milton Court, **Collegium Vocale Gent** and the

legendary **Labeque Sisters** performing a Philip Glass project [Andrew Clements, The Guardian, 4*](#) - "elegant, wistful melodic lines that float over his rippling piano textures, is definitely preserved in these piano arrangements, [and] which were played with all the Labèques' usual flair and precision".

A partnership with Classical Pride lit up a July weekend with a range of performances in different spaces, including a concert with the LSO in our Hall. The season closed with a moving, landmark collaboration with the Royal Opera House, their **Songs for Ukraine Chorus** and the Ukrainian Freedom Orchestra in St Paul's Cathedral, featuring Beethoven's Symphony No.9 [Fiona Maddocks, The Observer, 4*](#) - "The concert ended with a hymn-like paraphrase, for violin and strings, of Ukraine's national anthem called We Do Exist, by Yuri Shevchenko (1953-2022). At that moment of stillness, we were all Ukrainians."

One of the most significant creative endeavours of the summer season was the **LA Philharmonic** residency with Gustavo Dudamel, featuring a performance of *Fidelio* with Deaf West Theatre and the Venezuelan White Hands Choir, resulting in a unique, choreographed opera performance. Much work was done to work with the D/deaf community ahead of the residency, with training for Production and Audience Experience staff to help make the venue and performance accessible and welcoming. 15% of the audience were D/deaf.

[Robert Thickness, Gramophone, 4*](#) - "Forget 'signed' performances of opera, with a lone interpreter standing at the side of the stage: this wasn't just next level, it was a whole different universe."

Another unique event was the night celebrating the radical US musician **Arthur Russell, Travels over Feeling** with Speaker's Corner Quartet bringing together an extraordinary diverse line-up of musician fans, including Christine and the Queens, Lucinda Chua, Cate Le Bon, Coby Sey, Loraine James, Trustflow, Tirzah and Nabihah Iqbal.

[India Lewis, The Arts Desk, 4*](#).

The season also featured some ground-breaking Contemporary music collaborations, involving a host of young professional musicians. Brazilian legend **Arthur Verocai** collaborated with NuCivilisation Orchestra (the graduate band of Tomorrow's Warriors) in a sold-out show, while much-lauded Americana artist **Aiofe O'Donovan** partnered with an all-female line-up of the Guildhall Sessions Orchestra for her album show *All My Friends*. The Music team also worked with Creative Collaborations for a highly successful Club Night led by Jamz Supernova in August.

Theatre - the successful continuation of Trafalgar's Kiss Me Kate has run throughout May to July. It has garnered strong reviews, good attendance and very appreciative audiences. Much additional marketing work has been done by the Barbican team to support Trafalgar's above-the-line campaign. The new location of the toilets in the Fountain Room had mainly been appreciated.

Cinema - Marking the centenary of James Baldwin's birth - one of the most influential writers and activists of the 20th century – we presented 'The Devil Finds Work: James Baldwin through Film' a season exploring Black representation in modern cinema.

The programme was in collaboration with scholars at Manchester University and funded by an AHRC grant. It received 2 major press pieces at The Guardian and the Evening Standard, alongside wide media coverage and boasted sell out screenings.

Queer 80s in June focused on films from a decade when LGBTQ+ representation and creativity thrived in the build-up to enormous geopolitical and social change. The programme featured 10 screenings from all six continents, with ScreenTalks with talent such as director Ulrike Ottinger and actor Dirk Kummer, as well as introductions from speakers such as Rikki Beadle-Blair, Tara Brown, Tony Rayns and Rebecca Root. Six of the events sold out and all attracted diverse and very enthusiastic audiences. In June we also hosted a successful Safar Film Festival celebrating Arab Cinema.

Our New Release ScreenTalks programme continued to engage with the best new releases. And International talent from a ScreenTalk with director Rose Glass for *Love Lies Bleeding*, to ScreenTalk with Yorgos Lanthimos and Emma Stone for *Kinds of Kindness*.

In the Visual Arts we opened *Francis Alys: Ricochets* (27 June – 1 Sept). Over 20,000 visitors saw the show. In the press, [The Guardian](#) ran a major preview, including an interview with Francis Alys and exclusive images of the exhibition. Highlight previews elsewhere included [The Art Newspaper](#), [Apollo](#) and Art Quarterly. The exhibition garnered sparkling reviews, including 5*s from [The Guardian](#) and [The Observer](#), and a 4* review from [Time Out](#). Additional highlight reviews were published in [Wallpaper*](#), [Art Review](#) and [Frieze](#). Our star piece of Marketing content was a film partnership with NOWNESS: [PRIVATE VIEW](#), directed by Cat Hyland, featured interviews with both Francis Alys and Rafael Ortega, and starred school children playing inside the Art Gallery. The film was cut down into short cuts for socials and posted collaboratively on Instagram by NOWNESS and the Barbican. Across social media we saw: 132,552 impressions from Francis Alys content and the NOWNESS collaboration had a total watch time 202 hr 33 mins with 51,599 replays, and over 4,000 likes.

A number of Visual Arts projects were also successfully concluded during this period:

Soufiane Ababri: *Their mouths were full of bumblebees but it was me who was pollinated* closed on 30 June having been extended so that it could be open for London Pride weekend. In total just under 30,000 visitors attended. During the closing weekend we collaborated with the City Belonging Project to enable an [after work party](#) on Friday 28 June at the Barbican including a private view of the exhibition, drag performances and a DJ set. The closing weekend also saw 3 dance performances on the final Sunday to mark the end of the exhibition – choreographed by the artist and in collaboration with Guillaume le Pape, this site-specific performance followed a group of people who'd been denied entry to a nightclub. Exploring the politics of queer nightlife, it examined the duality of clubs as both safe spaces and places where certain privileges and oppressions are perpetuated, culminating in an explosion of sound and movement which emphasised the tension between inclusion and exclusion, safety and vulnerability within these spaces.

Ranjani Shettar's *Cloud Songs on the Horizon* closed on 18 July and Ibrahim Mahama's *Purple Hibiscus* was de-installed by the end of the month. Both were intended to celebrate the building and to attract new audiences. In total almost 200,000 people saw *Cloud Songs on the Horizon* and it raised £37,000 in public donations. *Purple Hibiscus* had an estimated reach of over 1,370,872 (this was comprised of 983,233 digital and an estimated footfall of 387,639).

Unravel: The Power and Politics of Textiles in Art closed in Barbican Art Gallery on 26 May having attracted an audience of 58,308.

We continue to work in partnership with international venues. *Unravel: The Power and Politics of Textiles in Art* is due to open at the Stedelijk in Amsterdam on 14 September and *Francis Alys: Ricochets* will open at Serralves in Porto on 18 October.

Barbican Immersive continues to develop the exhibition *Music 2025* to open next summer, with many international partners and collaborators confirmed and it will tour to the Co-Producer in Tokyo in 2026. Immersive is also developing a new version of the touring VR headset experience *In Pursuit of Repetitive Beats* for the Pit Theatre next summer.

Our *Game On* exhibition continues to sell out to record audiences at the National Museums of Scotland, delighting visitors 20 years after it was first shown at the same venue. It is then confirmed to travel to ZeelandHallen in the Netherlands. *AI: More than Human* is concluding its most recent tour to Telus Spark Science Centre, Calgary, Canada and is now confirmed to travel the Frost Science Centre in Miami, USA. Asian

Comics (Formerly Mangasia) will also be travelling to MoPOP (Museum of Pop Culture), After finishing it's current run at Bowers Museum in Santa Ana, USA.

The Bloomberg Digital Accelerator Programme, moves into the next stages of development to inform the direction and programming of Immersive. The first set of research findings and information from OxyInsights was presented across the Centre.

INVEST IN OUR PEOPLE AND CULTURE

People and Leadership

Claire Spencer officially stepped down from her position as CEO in July 2024. The leadership team, Members and City colleagues are reflecting on her departure and will review how best to move forward ahead of plans for recruitment. David Farnsworth will continue as Interim CEO and Ali Mirza as Interim Deputy CEO.

With a recently fully resourced Directors' Group we are working on a leadership team development programme to ensure a strategic, high performing and effective team and develop the team's purpose, leadership ethos, behaviours and ways of working. The programme will empower the Management Team and engage the wider colleague community.

We are further committed to building a sustainable leadership practice and actions will subsequently follow the reflections and review period.

Management Development

We have worked with the City of London Corporation Learning and Organisational Development team who delivered the People Management Programme (PMP) to groups of Barbican managers.

PMP started on 6 June and was completed on 24 July and 18 Barbican managers attended various modules. Overall, the feedback was positive and highlights the importance and value of training our cohort of managers. In September, we will complete the process with an evaluation workshop with all those who participated. The aim will be to ensure transfer of learning, including how we can use this programme to embed further our Values and Behaviours and our wider People and EDI priorities.

Skills for the future – Apprenticeships

We are collaborating with the City of London Corporation and 'Multiverse', a Digital and Data skills training provider to upskill Barbican colleagues with a focus on those skills that are key for our transformation. The first cohort of 17 colleagues was launched nine

months ago. Participants undertake qualifications in Business Transformation and Data and Insights for Business Decisions. An initial evaluation shows that 85% of learners agree that this programme is contributing to their personal career goals and 100% of learners agree that this programme is contributing to the Barbicans organisational goals.

We will be launching our second cohort with Multiverse at the Barbican in September. We will be adding the newly developed “AI for Business Value” programme. The AI for Business Value programme will cover AI fundamentals, understanding the risks and needs for AI, and identifying opportunities to implement AI safely, responsibly and ethically. We will continue to monitor feedback, how we can support the cohort and further how we can best utilise these developed capabilities, to help us through our transformation journey.

Barbican Creative Academy

Barbican Creative Academy (BCA) will be a new, targeted apprenticeship programme investing in young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and help support a creative sector workforce that better reflects the diversity of London. It is envisaged that the BCA will start in May 2025 with a 3-month pre-apprenticeship Foundation course to equip young people with study and employability skills. Participants will be supported to apply to one of the two new apprenticeship pathways: ‘Creative Producing’ and ‘Creative Technical Skills’. These pathways will launch in September 2025 and will include placements across the Barbican’s Music, Theatre, Visual Arts, Immersive, and Creative Collaboration departments. The pathways will prepare the apprentices for creative decision-making roles such as producer, programmer, sound / lighting designer.

We are currently finalising our plans and working with the City of London on how we can use the Apprenticeship levy to support costs.

Ambition 25 Project

Korn Ferry, who have been commissioned by the City of London, have completed the first stage of the project which has determined the “as-is” situation on roles across the Corporation, including confirming ‘hierarchies.’

REVITALISE OUR PLACE

The Barbican Renewal design team has been re-engaged from July 2024 to begin work on RIBA Stage 3 on a series of projects that will form the first phase of the Renewal programme. Projects being taken forward currently focus on the Conservatory, Foyers,

Lakeside and Catering Block, alongside future phases of the building MEP infrastructure replacement programme. This design stage is planned to run until May 2025.

Co-design will be an integral part of the design development of the Conservatory and Foyer projects, and we're currently undertaking a procurement process to appoint an expert facilitator to work with us on this process. This co-design approach aims to ensure current and future audiences are at the heart of shaping proposals for these key areas of the Barbican site, with a particular focus on engaging with the target audiences identified in the Centre's audience strategy.

BUILDING AN ENTERPRISING BUSINESS

Growing Our Income Streams

Development

The Barbican continues to receive support from a wide range of companies, individuals and foundations whose generosity enables our arts and learning programmes to flourish.

Since May we have been thrilled to receive Patron renewals from Louise and James Arnell, Matt Astill and Leigh Astill, Richard Bridge, Richard Hardie, Christina and Ben Perry, Mary Tapissier, Richard Williams, and Lynn Biggs who kindly uplifted her generous support. Our gratitude to Barbican Centre Board Members William Russell and Mark Page for renewing their Patron support, together with Trustees Farmida Bi, and Cas Donald. We have also welcomed six new Patrons into the Barbican family: Graham and Joana Barker, Elizabeth and Michael Corley, Susan Lim, Simon and Siobhan Morgan, Bina von Stauffenberg, and Beatrice Schlumberger who re-joined our patron family. Our Patrons have enjoyed a varied programme of special events including a Pre-show Reception for *Mary Said What She Said*, Pre-Concert Reception for Los Angeles Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel, *Kiss Me Kate* Press Night as well as a special Patrons Evening and Backstage Tour, and a Special Preview for the Francis Alÿs' *Ricochets* Exhibition.

Pamela Phatsimo Sunstum's upcoming Curve Commission *It Will End in Tears* has been generously supported by Mr Harry G David and Goodman Gallery to help ensure the project is delivered without compromise. We are thankful to Clore Wyndham for their donation towards next year's Noah Davis exhibition and are delighted to have secured our first pledges towards Citra Sasmita's Curve Commission *Into Eternal Land* from the Bagri Foundation, the Henry Moore Foundation and the MENÆEA Collection.

In August we delivered our new Outdoor Cinema 2004, partnerships with Mastercard and Culture Mile BID to engage their respective audiences with the programme. We are

thrilled at the success of these new partnerships and look forward to continuing to work with both organisations.

On their return to the City, long term supporters of the arts Deutsche Bank have joined as new Corporate Members, we look forward to engaging their staff in the Centre's broad cultural offering.

We are also delighted that both Norton Rose Fulbright and Standard Chartered have renewed their Corporate Memberships for another year.

The long-term commitment of our Partners is invaluable to the Barbican, and we would like to thank all our supporters.

Business Events

It's been a busy period for Business events since the last report in March, and despite challenges, as appetite for hosted events reduced around the General election, we delivered over 160 events over the past 6 months.

Several repeat events included the annual week-long Yellowstone Tech Media 'SDD Conference' utilising all of Frobisher level 4 event spaces. White October Events hosted their 'Lead Dev London 2024 Conference' in the Barbican Hall attended by over 1300 attendees.

Qualtrics hosted one of Business Events largest events with the 'X4 – The Experience Management Summit', helping 1600 leaders of the world's most successful organisations unlock the value in experience management for their employees and customers.

We also delivered graduation ceremonies in the Barbican Hall for nine different universities. This included utilising one of the car parks for photography for one university to enable the ceremonies to continue to be hosted at the Barbican, due to the Fountain Room being used for alternative purposes, highlighting the creativity of the teams to deliver for our clients and maintain these important relationships.

Looking ahead to September, planning continues for the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBHA) 2024 International Conference. A globally renowned gathering of architects, engineers, urban planners, developers, and industry experts who are passionate about shaping the future of cities. This premier event is known for its rich exchange of ideas, showcasing innovative designs, and exploring sustainable urban solutions. The Barbican was selected as the host venue due to its exceptional architectural heritage and its prime location within the City of London. The venue's

unique design and cultural significance aligns perfectly with the mission of CTBUH, making it an ideal setting for the conference.

WORKING IN LINE WITH OUR VALUES

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The PCI subcommittee received the regular six-monthly update on EDI Strategy progress in July – please refer to the paper for more details.

Additionally, the Access and Adjustments Report and Action Plan has been drafted and submitted for discussion at the PCI subcommittee. The report and actions have been developed in partnership with staff across the Barbican, including the Disability Network, and using recommendations from external stakeholders. This report and action plan follows the recent launch of the Anti-Racism action plan, as part of the wider EDI Strategy.

We have selected a supplier to support us in delivering anti-racism training to all staff, and will be working with them over the next six to 12 months. There will be standard sessions for all staff, and sessions for line managers. We expect the first sessions to be delivered in Autumn. We will announce the provider once final contracts are signed in the next few weeks.