



Culturing Connections

Issue 40 April 2007

News and opportunities for the West Midlands cultural sector from Culture West Midlands, the Regional Cultural Consortium

1. Culture West Midlands Website Review Online Survey

The [Culture West Midlands website](http://www.culturewm.org.uk) is currently being reviewed. To find out what web users think and need from our website we have posted an online survey to capture these views. To thank our readers for sharing their views, after completing the survey they will be entered into a prize draw to win a pair of tickets to see King Lear at the RSC in Stratford. To view the survey, go to <http://survey.culturewm.org.uk>

2. 'Prepare for 2012 – priorities for the West Midlands'

The West Midlands priorities for the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games were launched on Wednesday 21st March by Councillor Chris Saint, chair of the region's Leadership Group for the 2012 Games at the regional 2012 conference held at the Ricoh Arena in Coventry. The priorities document was welcomed and endorsed by Sports Minister Richard Caborn, world triple jump record holder Jonathan Edwards and AWM chair Nick Paul who hosted the conference. The document carries the region's new 2012 branding and includes plans for how we plan to ensure regional benefit for sport, business, tourism, culture, volunteering and learning. To see the plan go to www.culturewm.org.uk/downloads.jsp or contact the West Midlands Coordinator for the 2012 Games, Jenny Drew email: wmenquiries@culturewm.org.uk

3. National Lottery Awards 2007

The National Lottery Awards are an annual search to find the UK's favourite Lottery funded projects. They aim to celebrate and recognise the difference that those projects have made to people, places and communities all across the UK. The 2007 National Lottery Awards were launched on 7th March 2007 and the entry process is now underway. The deadline for applications is Friday 27th April 2007. A public vote will decide the award finalists and then the winning projects. The awards ceremony will then be held in September 2007 and will be shown nationally on the BBC. This is a unique opportunity for West Midland's projects to be highlighted and to display all the great work that happens in the region. [To nominate a project, visit the website](#)

4. Breaking the Chains - Commemorating 200 years since the Parliamentary Abolition of the British Slave Trade

[Breaking the Chains](#) is a major national initiative that throughout 2007 focusing on commemorating the bi-centenary of the abolition of the slave trade on 25th March 1807. In the West Midlands the BTC Network consists of community and voluntary groups, public and statutory sector bodies and representatives from the commercial sector who have come together to contribute to and support this national programme at a regional level. 2007 makes a unique opportunity to not only address historical struggles against

an inhuman trade, it also presents us with a platform to tackle the resulting inequalities in our society and to demand to know why forms of slavery still exist across the globe. For more information contact Sarah Blackstock by email sarah.blackstock@breakingthechains.co.uk or [visit the breaking the chains website](#).

- 5. MLA West Midlands providing access to funding schemes information**
From April 2007, MLA West Midlands will provide free access to information regarding current and relevant funding schemes on their website. MLA West Midlands has commissioned j4b's Open4Funding service to provide this information. J4b plc is a company who specialize in assisting public and private sector clients to unlock the value of information through a broad range of services. The Open4Funding service contains over 7,500 schemes covering grants. For full details visit the [MLA West Midlands' website](#) from the beginning of April 2007.
- 6. Grants for the arts roadshows 2007**
[Arts Council England](#) provides Grants for the arts for activities that benefit people in England, or that help artists and arts organisations to carry out their work. The roadshow events will show Artists and organisations how they can apply for funding. West Midlands Grants for the arts roadshows will take place at various venues across the West Midlands from May 2007 until October 2007. To find out more about the Grants for the arts roadshows or to reserve a place, contact Mathew Hanratty on 0121 631 5737 or email mathew.hanratty@artscouncil.org.uk
- 7. Sport England 2012 Strategic approach to training camps for the West Midlands**
[Sport England West Midlands](#) has commissioned Reddenhill Consulting to develop a strategic approach for attracting teams and groups of athletes to the region to undertake training and perhaps site their holding camps. This will be achieved through developing a strategy for each sub region and Local Authority and matching what each area has to offer with the requirements of teams. The strategy will also address how individual teams should be approached. Note that this work is now underway and is due to be completed this spring.
- 8. 'Renaissance' for Museums, Libraries and Archives**
Renaissance is the Museums, Libraries and Archive's programme with an aim to transform England's regional museums and galleries. A successful example of Renaissance's funding demonstrated in the West Midland's is with the development of the Learning Zone at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. The Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery Learning Zone will officially open to schools in April 2007, and will comprise of two new learning spaces; displays and interpretation developed specially for children and young people. For more information regarding the [Renaissance programme visit the website](#).
- 9. Join the arts debate**
Arts Council England's first-ever public inquiry, the arts debate is now well underway. This is an opportunity for everyone to have their say about how they value the arts and what they think about public funding. You can see the comments so far and join in the debate at the [arts debate website](#). The online consultation closes on 11 May 2007.
- 10. Making them work for you – Festivals and Events in the Black Country**
Festivals and Events have been key elements of Visitor Economy Strategies for many years and used to great regenerative and economic impact effect across the globe. In June 2006, the Black Country Arts Partnership commissioned an exemplar audit into Festivals and Events in the Black Country. This was a unique programme of work

including consultations with organisers, attendees, local businesses and residents as well as engaging with existing and emerging local, sub-regional, regional and national policies, strategies and reports. [Making them work for you – Festivals and Events in the Black Country](#) is a conference that will offer you the opportunity to discover findings, influence the future development of Festivals & Events in the sub-region and meet colleagues. Please note Monday 16th April 2007 12.30pm to 5.00pm in your diary and contact Anne Marie Pope by email anne-marie.pope@dial.pipex.com or [to book a place fill in the online booking form.](#)

11. London 2012 appoints Head of Education

The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games has announced the appointment of Nick Fuller to the new role of Head of Education. He will join the London Organising Committee in May in a new role to develop the London 2012 education programme and build partnerships with education stakeholders. The London 2012 Educational Programme was launched in September 2006, with the creation of the [‘On Your Marks’ programme](#) of educational materials which have been made available to schools throughout the UK. For further information please contact the London 2012 Press Office on 0203 2012 100 or [visit the London 2012 website.](#)

12. 4Talent Inspiration Sessions

4Talent is offering creative industries participants the chance to work with their creative heroes, with six events exploring key creative industries. Each event will have just 15 attendees, who will spend an entire day working with at least four top creatives, sharing ideas, discussing working practices, and learning from the best in the business. All sessions take place from Monday 23rd April until Friday 4th May and will be held in a luxury city centre location in Birmingham. Due to limited spaces at each session, applicants will need to submit an [online application](#) for more information please [visit the 4Talent website.](#)

13. 1001 Inventions: Discover the Muslim Heritage in Our World

1001Inventions is a unique travelling exhibition, revealing 1,000 years of the rich scientific and technological heritage of the Muslim community. The exhibition comes to the Thinktank in May 2007, as part of a national tour. The 1001 Inventions exhibition brings to life an often overlooked golden age of discovery and innovation from the 7th to the 17th centuries. For more information call 0121 202 2222 or visit the [Thinktank website.](#)

14. Flat-pack Marketing Planning for the Arts

Flat-pack Marketing Planning for the Arts is a one day course, developed by Audiences Central to help and enable participants to produce a marketing plan for their event, project or organisation. The course will be lead by Caroline Griffin, Programme Director, of Audiences Central, who will guide attendees through the key elements within marketing planning. The course will be held at the [Wolverhampton Arena](#) on Wednesday 25th April 2007, 10:00 until 17:00. For more information or to reserve a place email johnathan.branson@audiencescentral.co.uk or telephone 0121 685 2620.

15. Mirage Film Festival

The second Mirage Film Festival, featuring landmark films from contemporary Middle Eastern film-makers is taking place across Birmingham from Thursday 19th until Sunday 22nd April. Screenings will take place at mac, The Drum and the Babouche Lounge in Moseley. The films selected in the programme highlight a new perspective on the Middle East, and detail human stories behind sensationalist headlines. In a pivotal time for Arab

cinema, these film-makers hope they can bridge the chasms between clashing cultures and civilizations. For full programme details visit the [Mirage Film Festival website](#)

16. Disabled artists Wolverhampton

[The Newhampton Arts Centre](#) in Wolverhampton is planning an Inclusive Arts Festival for children culminating in an all day arts fun day in July 2007. Newhampton Arts Centre is interested in hearing from disabled performers and workshop leaders with experience of working with children. For more information or to get involved email admin@newhamptonarts.co.uk or call 01902 57209.

17. The Event

[The Event](#) is a series of artist run activities in permanent and temporary spaces to be held throughout central Birmingham, from Saturday 31st March to Sunday 15th April 2007. Birmingham Contemporary Art Forum (BCAF) was formed to organise a festival to celebrate the increase and acceleration in artistic activity and amplify its emerging culture. The Event consists of exhibitions and performances which have been devised by ten different visual art organisations based in Birmingham. [To find out more about The Event please visit the website.](#)

18. Shakespeare and War

The Independent's award-winning foreign correspondent, Robert Fisk, will be in conversation with Joan Bakewell at The Courtyard Theatre on Sunday 1st April 2007. Robert Fisk has interviewed Osama Bin Laden three times and in 2004 was infamously beaten to the brink of death near the border city of Quetta in Pakistan. Part of the Royal Shakespeare Company's ongoing *Broadside Brunch* series, the session will focus on Shakespeare and War. For tickets or more information call the RSC ticket hotline on 0844 800 1110 or [visit the RSC website](#)

19. Have you ever dreamed of seeing your name in lights?

Name in Lights is a competition to find a name that will be created in giant illuminated letters and installed on a prominent landmark building. Participants can enter themselves or someone else, alive or dead and provide 150 words as to why that name should be in lights. The winning name will then be fabricated as a massive illuminated to be installed on Birmingham Central Library. [To enter or view other submissions visit the website.](#)

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