



## Dundee Contemporary Arts

### **DCA BACKGROUND**

#### **Vision**

Dundee Contemporary Arts is a world-class centre for the development and exhibition of contemporary art and culture.

#### **Mission**

DCA promotes the development and exhibition of contemporary art and culture through providing opportunities for artists to create, and for audiences to engage with an active, varied and high-quality cultural life for the people of Dundee, Scotland and beyond.

#### **Core values**

Bold, Open, Meaningful, Magical

#### **Key Aims**

1. To present contemporary art and culture of the highest quality.
2. To create clear pathways for engaging with art and culture at DCA.
3. To develop artists and practical support mechanisms for the creation and dissemination of their work.
4. To establish and sustain Dundee as an internationally significant cultural hub.
5. To be a community asset.
6. To maintain a healthy and progressive environment for staff.
7. To create and consolidate the ventures that will provide for a secure and vibrant future.

## **DUNDEE CONTEMPORARY ARTS: HISTORY**

*From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*

### **History**

The DCA opened on March 20, 1999, but the idea of establishing a visual arts centre in Dundee had been discussed by many concerned parties from the mid-1980s. In particular, there was a desire to both nurture the students and graduates of the Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design (now a faculty of the University of Dundee and one of the leading art colleges in the UK) and to build upon the work of those involved with the (now defunct) Seagate Gallery and Dundee Printmakers' Workshop. Additionally, it was hoped that the project would replace and improve upon the only arthouse cinema in Dundee - the part-time Steps Theatre, which closed when the DCA, with its two-screen (and full-time) cinema, opened.

Initiated by Dundee City Council, a partnership was formed between the Council, the University of Dundee and a newly-formed company, Dundee Contemporary Arts. In March 1995, the Council purchased a semi-derelict building at 152 Nethergate, favoured due to its geographical proximity to the Dundee Repertory Theatre and the University. At the time of purchase, the building was being used as an unofficial skate park by local skateboarders. This led to some resentment towards the Council amongst skateboarders, who had invested their time and money cleaning up the original three-storey building and constructing several elaborate, custom-fit ramps (which had to be destroyed). It was not until May 1998, when a local church invested £43,000 pounds in a new skatepark, that the issue was finally resolved.

The subsequent international design competition to create a new building was won in July 1996 by Richard Murphy Architects. The resulting building was instantly hailed as an innovative modern space. The centre currently receives approximately 300,000 visitors per year. On the whole, most local people in Dundee believe the DCA to be a success, although some (particularly callers to the local phone-in radio show, the Tay Talk-In) have criticised it for exhibiting modern, conceptual art at the expense of more traditional work.

### **Facilities**

**Art Gallery.** A large variety of local, national and international artists have had their work presented at the DCA, including: Beck's Futures prize winner Roderick Buchanan, Turner Prize nominee Fiona Banner, and acclaimed video artist Eija-Liisa Ahtila.

**Print Studio.** The DCA print studio offers a range of classes for both professional and amateur artists and also complete beginners.

**Two-Screen Cinema.** DCA's cinema has screened a variety of works, from blockbusters such as The Da Vinci Code to Andy Warhol's rarely seen 1960's "Screen Tests" series. For the most part, however, it screens classic and modern arthouse cinema.

**Shop and Craft Focus** Selling all sorts of gifts and a major centre for the display of craft.

**Visual Research Centre.** Unlike many visual research centres, the one run between DCA and the University of Dundee is open to the public. The Centre itself is comprised of researchers and PhD students belonging to the Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design.