Annual Report

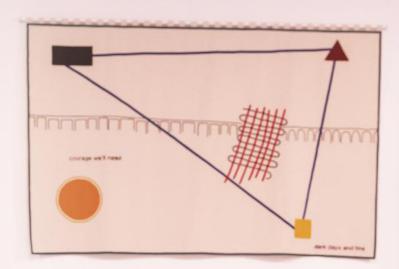
2024-25



DCADundee Contemporary Arts

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Cover: Claudia Martínez Garay exhibition opening. Photograph by Erika Stevenson

This page: Soft Impressions exhibition opening, Photograph by Erika Stevenson

Welcome

Our nomination to the shortlist for Art Fund Museum of the Year, the world's biggest museum prize, in April 2024 meant that we started the new financial vear with incredible energy, enthusiasm and focus. Making the most of press and profile opportunities, communicating to our audiences and supporters, ensuring our building was feeling fresh and welcoming, and preparing for the judges' visit was a huge team effort and kept everyone very busy! While we did not win the final award, the nomination and the whole process was a huge success for DCA, all our staff and stakeholders, and we welcomed the opportunity to showcase the brilliant, impactful work we do, and to say thank you to everyone who makes it possible.

Having started the year with such exciting news, it was a rollercoaster few months as we navigated delays and threats to our core funding. We took the decision to advocate publicly for DCA's need for ongoing investment, and for the risk to the wider sector to be recognised. Although this high-profile messaging was tough at times, we focused on communicating carefully and clearly with staff, and ensuring that we profiled the breadth, depth and quality of the work that we deliver across our four programme areas: Exhibitions, Cinema, Print Studio and Learning.

With this in mind, we were delighted to receive good news from Creative Scotland in January 2025, with a significant increase in our funding from 2025-2028. This uplift means that for the first time in many years, we can operate from a position of relative stability and plan for the future with some certainty. Funding challenges of course remain as public sector funding faces further restriction, but we are very grateful to Creative Scotland and Scottish Government for their recognition of the benefits of a funding increase to our organisation, staff, audiences and artists. We also thank our partners at Dundee City Council for their ongoing support even as local authority budgets face unprecedented pressure, and local supporters Northwood Charitable Trust and Tay Charitable Trust for their continued support.

What follows in this report is a summary of some of the remarkable work we have delivered this year. The talented and committed teams at DCA have worked with artists, participants and audiences on the most tremendous programmes. I'm particularly proud of the production residencies that we are hosting in the Print Studio that support our exhibitions, with artists spending time developing their print practices, collaborating with Print Studio staff, and creating new work which is then displayed in DCA Galleries. We know that it means a lot to artists and audiences to create and encounter this work, and we're looking forward to more of these residencies in the future.

The incredible range of guests and collaborators we work with through our cinema programme is continually inspiring, responding to local demand, Scottish themes and international releases. Dundead deserves a horror-filled shout out for again seeing a huge increase in audience numbers, with a packed programme for a dedicated audience, confirming its status as Scotland's leading horror film festival.

There are so many partners and impactful projects across the Learning team but the wonderful book Hello In There Wee One really deserves a special mention. A partnership project between DCA, Dundee City Council, NHS Tayside Infant Mental Health Team, and the University of Dundee, this new book features illustrations co-designed by Louise Kirby and parents. Given to every expectant family at their 16 week scan, Hello In There Wee One supports parents-to-be to bond with their baby before birth, and has now been translated into nine languages, including Dundonian Scots.

My thanks as ever go to everyone who has made this such an important year for DCA and who is working with us to create success and impact for the future. From audiences and artists, to funders and patrons, from supporters and partners, to collaborators and colleagues - a huge thank you to each of you.

Beth Bate, Director



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We started the new **financial** year with incredible energy, enthusiasm and focus

2024-25 at a glance

artists supported through work across our programme

Print Studio production residencies by artists making work for our exhibitions programme



66

Love DCA, only lived here 3 years but for me it's the jewel in the crown of Dundee.
Great staff, great venue.

Audience feedback

DCA is one the key institutions making life in Dundee worthwhile.

Audience feedback

12,380

people engaged with our Learning programme 589

Print Studio workshop attendees

2,835

film screenings

Top 10 films by attendance:

Bridget Jones:
Mad About the Boy
A Complete Unknown
Nosferatu
Paddington in Peru
Gladiator II
Wicked

Conclave

The Outrun Mickey 17

The Brutalist

270/oincrease in Dundead festival admissions



Dundee Contemporary Arts – DCA – is a beacon of creativity and innovation for Scotland. It provides not just a platform for world-class exhibitions but a space where people of all ages can explore their creativity through printmaking, film and digital art. It is a hub of learning, inspiration and connection that reminds us of the vital role that cultural institutions play in enriching our lives and strengthening our communities.

Maggie Chapman MSP

2024-25 at a glance

April 24

Spring Holiday Pop-up

Art Fund Museum of the Year shortlisting

Sukaina Kubba exhibition opens







May 24

Dundead Festival

DCA joins Gallery Climate Coalition

Steve Grimmond appointed Chair of DCA

June 24

New editions by Sukaina Kubba, created in DCA Print Studio, launched

August 24

Claudia Martínez Garay exhibition production residency in DCA Print Studio

Claudia Martínez Garay exhibition opens



July 24

Art Fund Museum of the Year ceremony

Zineb Sedira Print Studio residency

September 24

Surrealism on Film season begins

Made in DCA Print Studio exhibition

Hello In There Wee One, book launch







January 25

Creative Scotland funding announced

Hiya in There Wee Bairn, Dundonian Scots book launch

December 24

Soft Impressions exhibition opens

CRAFTED Market

October 24

Discovery Film Festival

Dundead Halloween

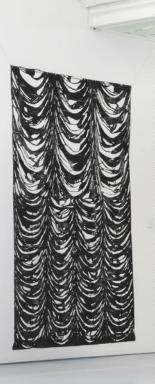
Drop in and Play gaming event



March 25

First DCA wedding hire

Photographs by Ruth Clark, Helen Macdonald, Jennifer Phin and Erika Stevenson













Top: Sukaina Kubba, *Turn Me Into a Flower* Bottom: Claudia Martínez Garay: *Every seed is awakened* Photographs by Ruth Clark

Exhibitions

66

With her acts of repetition, of tracing and copying again and again, Kubba finds new languages to reveal Persian rug patterns afresh.

Crystal Bennes, e-flux

It is fantastic that
Dundee has a venue
like the DCA that
puts on such highquality exhibitions.
DCA is a huge asset
to this city.

Audience feedback

We began the year with *Turn Me Into a Flower*, the first UK solo exhibition by artist Sukaina Kubba. Kubba presented existing works alongside new commissions created during a month-long production residency in DCA Print Studio in January 2024. During her residency at DCA, Kubba visited several Scottish collections of carpets and textiles, including the Stoddard-Templeton Design Archive at the University of Glasgow; the National Museum of Scotland; and Morton Young Borland Lace Mill in Ayrshire.

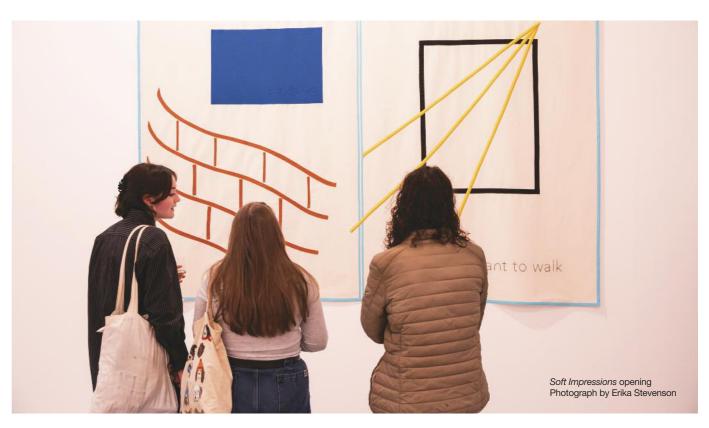
Kubba's works in print were displayed across Gallery 2: working on an ambitious scale and largely in monotone, she created a number of works to be suspended from the ceiling. They sat alongside work recently created as part of the artist's participation in the SPACE billboard commission at Mercer Union, Toronto.

This exhibition was made possible thanks to support from British Council, Canada Council and the Quebec Embassy.

In August, we presented *Every seed is awakened*, the first solo exhibition in Scotland from Claudia Martínez Garay. Martínez Garay is a Peruvian artist who lives and works between Amsterdam and Lima. Her practice encompasses painting, sculpture, printmaking, video, and site-specific installation.

For this major new solo exhibition at DCA, Martínez Garay brought together existing works alongside three new commissions, two of which were created during a production residency in DCA Print Studio. The artist's other commission was sculptural, featuring bold graphic sublimated prints onto aluminium which stood in 3-D against a mural designed for DCA, supported by the Henry Moore Foundation. The exhibition coincided with Discovery Film Festival and we were pleased to welcome a number of school visits. Thank you to the Mondriaan Fund and The Kingdom of the Netherlands for their generous support towards this exhibition.





Exhibitions

...the work approaches questions of race and identity from a variety of angles but, as the title suggests, it does it softly, in nuanced ways, sometimes inviting surprise.

Susan Mansfield, The Scotsman In December, we were proud to present *Soft Impressions*, a group show of work by Helen Cammock, Ingrid Pollard and Camara Taylor. This major cross-generational exhibition spanned both gallery spaces and included new and existing print work from the early 2000s to present day. *Soft Impressions* focused on the artists' shared engagement with and strategic use of the medium of printmaking, contextualised alongside works in installation, moving image, textiles and a painted mural.

Soft Impressions engaged with printmaking's role in the historic distribution of ideas about race and depictions of otherness, and its use as a tool for both political activism and propaganda. Both Helen Cammock and Ingrid Pollard undertook production residencies in DCA Print Studio, creating new works for the exhibition. Support from Ampersand Foundation, Diversity Art Forum and the University of St Andrews was vital in making this major group show possible.

Throughout the year we were pleased to enliven our exhibitions programme through a series of talks, events and activities, including our regular invitation to artists to select a programme of film screenings in our cinema to accompany our exhibitions and our lively exhibition openings, sponsored by 71 Brewing. We also launched a new publication to accompany *Soft Impressions*, featuring a new text by Professor Susannah Thompson.



Cinema

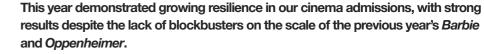


Great films, great people, great venue.

Audience feedback

The evident enthusiasm and passion for film of the programmers and cinema staff add to the whole experience.

Audience feedback



Our top performing films for the year continue to reflect the breadth of our programme and audiences, with major mainstream releases like *Wicked* and *Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy* featuring alongside 3.5 hour epic *The Brutalist*, Bong Joon-ho's sci-fi comedy *Mickey 17* and Scotland-set drama *The Outrun*.

Dundead returned in May for its 12th edition, in which it continued to cement its place as Scotland's leading horror film festival. We exceeded the previous year's best-ever attendance with a 27% increase in admissions across a long weekend of premieres, previews and a slashers retrospective. This year also featured a 90s DJ set to coincide with our 35mm screening of *Scream* and festival cocktails from Jute Café Bar. We continue to develop festival audiences through our monthly screenings throughout the year and an expanded Halloween programme which this year included six screenings, including a chance to see David Lynch's *Eraserhead* as part of our Surrealism on Film season.

Collaboration with partners continues to be an essential part of our cinema programme and this year we were pleased to once again programme a season of events in partnership with V&A Dundee, to coincide with their *Kimono: Kyoto to Catwalk* exhibition. Season highlights included a special Q&A event between costume designers Carlos Rosario (*Shogun*) and Jane Petrie (*The Crown, Fish Tank*) and a 35mm screening of *Sanjuro*. We also worked with Dundee Pride, Catalan Film Festival, Japan Foundation Touring Film Programme, FOKUS: Films from Germany, UK Green Film Festival, Solar Flares: Deaf Heritage and many more.

To celebrate the centenary of the first Surrealist art manifesto, we programmed a special Surrealism on Film season featuring guest speakers, live music and 35mm screenings. Highlights included *Le Regard: An evening celebrating women in surrealist silent film*, which included two live performances from Hoolan Ensemble; and a chance to see *Symbiopsychotaxiplasm: Take One*, one of the first Afro-Surrealist films.

We joined the BFI's nationwide Art of Action season with a programme of films celebrating action cinema in all its forms, from classics like *Seven Samurai* and *The Wild Bunch* to a Discovery Family Film Club crossover with *Kubo and the Two Strings*. We were delighted to receive funding through Film Hub Scotland's New Producers scheme, enabling us to offer a three-month programming placement which culminated in Celebration of Celluloid, a one-day programme of analogue cinema.

Throughout the year we were pleased to welcome many special guests to the cinema for introductions and Q&As, offering audiences a host of unique experiences. Highlights included a screening of *Mogwai:* If the Stars Had a Sound followed by Q&A with director Antony Crook and Mogwai's Stuart Braithwaite; a Q&A with Mark Cousins following a screening of his film A Sudden Glimpse to Deeper Things, and a sold-out screening of Since Yesterday: The Untold Story of Scotland's Girl Bands followed by a Q&A with the film's directors.



Discovery Film Festival

The kids loved the short films and drawing afterwards – thank you Discovery film

Audience feedback

festival! Wee

minds blown.

Absolutely
FANTASTIC! My
son's first cinema
experience and he
loved it! He was
even up dancing!
Thanks so much!

Audience feedback



Discovery Film Festival celebrated its 21st edition with a packed programme of the latest international cinema for young audiences for both schools and members of the public.

The festival began with the chance to see our popular programmes of specially-selected short films, followed by a screening of Peruvian-Chilean drama *Through Rocks and Clouds*. Our opening reception was once again generously sponsored by Fisher and Donaldson, who contributed delicious cakes for our guests.

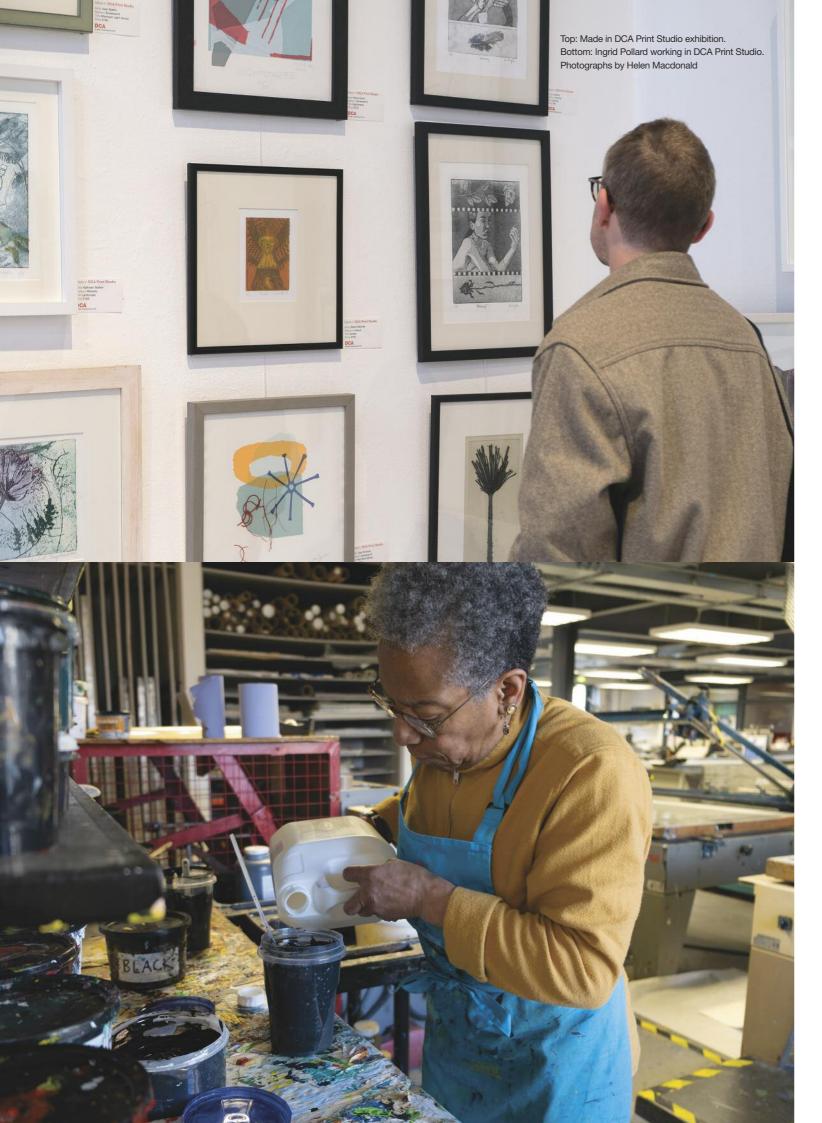
Further festival programme highlights included animated features *Chicken for Linda!* and *Tony, Shelly and the Magic Light*; documentaries *Once Upon a Time in a Forest* and *The Walk*, and dramas *Lars is Lol* and *Okthanksbye*.

The festival's Discovery Young Ambassadors, a group of teenage volunteer programmers, selected three compelling new films for young people to show at the festival, including Argentinan coming-of-age drama *Alemania* and powerful French-language drama *Sisterhood*.

As ever, the festival also featured a vibrant and busy programme of schools screenings. Our work with schools was supported by a group of dedicated teachers, who helped to draft our curriculum focused resource packs and advise on programming. We welcomed 33 schools from across Tayside, with subsidised bus travel remaining a key part of the festival offer for schools.

Film Hub Scotland continue to support Discovery's touring offer, providing cinemas from across the UK with the chance to book and screen our packages of short films for young audiences.

Audience development for the festival continues year-round through our programme of Discovery Family Film Club screenings, all with the same Donate What You Can pricing as the festival itself. Programme highlights for this year included screenings as part of our BFI Art of Action season and a programme of half-term shorts screenings in the run-up to the festival.



Print Studio

66

Enjoyable, enlightening. Wonderful tutor steeped in experience and so happy to impart her skills on us.

Workshop feedback

Using the studio has been very therapeutic at a very difficult time in my life. It's brought me contentment and joy (tempered with the occasional frustration!), relaxation and sociability. It enriches my life.

Registered User feedback



Another fruitful year in DCA Print Studio saw us work more than ever before with artists from our exhibitions programme alongside a busy programme of courses, workshops, collaborations and residencies. We are deeply grateful for the continued support from Freelands Foundation, which was instrumental in delivering our work.

The results of a month-long production residency from artist Sukaina Kubba in January 2024 were exhibited as part of her exhibition *Turn Me Into a Flower* including work made using paper pulp casting, embossing and laser engraving as well as screen prints made on DCA's large-format press, one of the biggest in Scotland's printmaking studios.

Later in the year, Claudia Martínez Garay created three new risograph works for her exhibition *Every seed is awakened*, which went on to be featured in her exhibition at Grimm Gallery in London. In the autumn both Helen Cammock and Ingrid Pollard completed production residences focused on new works for our group exhibition *Soft Impressions*.

We continue to work with exhibiting artists on new print editions as well as work for their exhibitions. Sukaina Kubba's limited-edition laser etchings, *Afterfeather: Poplar Tree* and *Afterfeather: Caspian Tiger*, were co-published between DCA and Mercer Union, Toronto, through the support of Creative Scotland and British Council, and have been among our most popular editions to date. Ingrid Pollard and Helen Cammock also made new DCA editions, to be launched in 2025.

Outside of our exhibitions programme we were pleased to welcome Zineb Sedira back to the studio for a week of experimenting with different printmaking processes and equipment; and to collaborate with DC Thomson by offering illustrator Kate Benzie a year's access to the studio.

Access to the studio for the public and our registered users remains at the heart of our work, and throughout the year we welcomed 589 people to 105 printmaking courses. We introduced new courses in Hardcover Bookbinding with Suminagashi Decoration, Soft Ground Etching with Feathers, Japanese Cloth Covered Accordion Album Bookbinding and Aquatint Etching.

Our Made in DCA Print Studio Exhibition returned to DCA Centrespace from Sat 28 September to Sun 6 October. This selling exhibition for registered users of our Print Studio included 43 artists, with a total of 107 prints shown.

We continue to collaborate with other teams across DCA, from launching our popular new Sip and Print workshops in partnership with the Learning team, to creating special letterpress prints for the Museum of the Year judging panel and risograph prints for DCA Members, Friends and Patrons. We worked with the Learning team on a range of printmaking activity for Spring Holiday Pop-up 2025, and welcomed groups including ST/ART with Tayside Healthcare Arts Trust, Access to Creative Education Scotland (ACES) and Dundee International Women's Centre's Friendship Group to the studio.



Learning

66

We love the create space for our toddler. It's great having somewhere free and safe to let her explore and play:)

Audience feedback

A busy year for the Learning team saw us to continue to deliver work across our core priorities: community partnerships, families, schools and young people, engaging over 12,300 people.

The year began with Spring Holiday Pop-up, when the Learning team takes over Gallery 1 for a programme of free activities during the school holidays, combining bookable workshops with drop-in sessions. This year's event had a printmaking focus and included an exhibition of print works made by participants of all ages in our community projects alongside a programme of free, drop-in activities, 19 bookable printmaking workshops and a family tour of DCA Print Studio. This year's expanded event was made possible by funding from UK government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. This support enabled us to double attendance at the event from the previous year, reaching over 2,000 people.

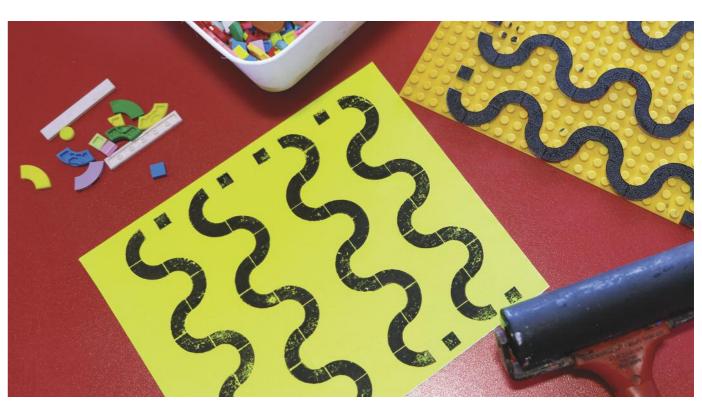
We continued to focus on work with families this year, with nine Family Art Labs linked to our exhibitions programme and 14 public workshops during Discovery Film Festival, welcoming over 300 participants. Our ongoing partnership with Soundplay Projects brought nine fully accessible interactive digital sound, music and projection sessions to DCA, with closed family activity in the morning for families of children with complex support needs and busy public drop-in sessions each afternoon.

Our work with schools included monthly workshops at DCA for groups from Kingspark school for children with additional support needs and repeat visits and print sessions with Craigie and Harris Additional Support Needs and Inclusion classes. We engaged with 115 Higher students through our annual Art & Design Pupil Study days and delivered nine schools' workshops as part of Discovery Film Festival. Throughout the year we responded to many individual requests from schools for visits, workshops and activities.

We continued our relationships with local organisations including Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre, Dundee International Women's Centre and Options in Life. We also spent the year engaging with Arthurstone Youth Group supported by Dundee City Council Community Learning and Development Central Youth team staff to explore a wide range of art sessions, visits to DCA and co-design a Summer Art Camp.

Our creative sessions for adults included 14 of our much-loved Craft Sundays, featuring skills and techniques including felting, paper folding, botanical skincare and macramé, with 220 attendees across the year. We also expanded our ever-popular Drop in and Play events, supported by Ninja Kiwi, with three events across the year in which local games developers showed new and prototype work, giving audiences the chance to be amongst the first to try new games. This included a sold-out event focused on how to develop a career in the games industry.





Learning



The pay what you can option was brilliant. As I'm on maternity leave at the moment this class would have been a luxury that we couldn't afford. Our kids loved it and we all had a brilliant time together without feeling financial pressure.

Audience feedback



We continued to deliver a range of partnership projects with the aim of improving health and wellbeing outcomes through engagement with arts and culture. Our long-running ST/ART project, delivered in partnership with Tayside Healthcare Arts Trust, focuses on adults isolated through long-term health conditions. This year we ran 24 sessions across eight courses with three wonderful displays of work made engaging 48 participants and 14 freelance artist tutors.

Art at the Start, our award-winning collaborative project with the University of Dundee and NHS Tayside Infant Mental Health team, continues to expand and develop. We ran 37 free, public Messy Play sessions for over 400 0–3 year-olds and their caregivers at DCA and in community centres. Our collaborative book project to support parents and carers to bond with their unborn babies, *Hello in There Wee One*, was launched at a special event at DCA in September and has since been given to every expectant family in Dundee and translated into multiple different languages, with a Dundonian Scots version launched in January 2025.

We could not have delivered this year's Learning activities without additional generous support from trusts and foundations including Alexander Moncur Trust, Corra Foundation, Engage on behalf of the Max Reinhardt Charitable Trust, Gordon Fraser Charitable Trust, Leng Charitable Trust, Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Fund and the R J Larg Family Trust.



People and Planet

66

For me, the experience has been affirming, motivating, and, I believe, a genuine turning point in my early career.

Art Fund placement feedback



Our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) informs all aspects of work at DCA, from training to programming.

This year we were pleased to launch new sensory boxes to accompany our exhibitions, allowing visitors to touch and experience materials used in each show. We also significantly expanded the number and range of captioned screenings available in our cinema programme, to offer on average one captioned screening per day including one-off and special screenings where possible.

We invited experts in access to provide training for our team, alongside a mandatory programme of online learning for all staff covering topics including EDI, Neurodiversity Awareness and Gender Identity & Expression.

Our Paul Hamlyn Foundation-funded partnership project with Collective and Lux Scotland, We Contain Multitudes, is a multi-year project enabling us to develop new commissions with disabled artists, while exploring the ways in which we can tackle ableism across the sector. This year we carried out a programme of studio visits and announced our exhibition, titled *We Contain Multitudes*, which will take place in early 2026 and feature the work of Andrew Gannon, Daisy Lafarge, Jo Longhurst and Nnena Kalu.

Fair Work

We were delighted to be able to offer a series of placements for staff this year, funded by Art Fund, providing paid opportunities to gain experience in our Print Studio, Learning and Exhibitions teams and addressing long-standing staff feedback about the desire to develop skills in these areas. Following this, we followed up with paid placements for people from global majority backgrounds, to gain experience of working with teams at DCA.

We created and updated a range of policies and procedures this year in order to support a fair and equitable working experience at DCA, including a new Inclusive Recruitment Policy, and new Freelancer guides to ensure all freelancers working with us have a positive and welcoming experience.

Environment

We continue to work to reduce our environmental impact across all areas of our work, supported by the work of our cross-department Green Team.

We have significantly reduced our domestic travel emissions through the introduction of our Sustainable Travel Policy, and this year were able to experiment with international slow travel for the first time, thanks to funding from Creative Scotland.

We were pleased to have been awarded the status of Active Members in the Gallery Climate Coalition.





Commercial activity

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Our user group, teachers from across the city, felt welcomed and at home during our sessions. Thank you once again – we would recommend DCA without hesitation.

Events & Hires client feedback

DCA's commercial subsidiary, 152 Trading, exists to generate income for the benefit of DCA. This year several new projects and initiatives allowed us to further diversify our income streams. We hosted our first wedding in March 2025, with multiple areas of the building in use to provide a ceremony, gallery tour and sit-down meal for the happy couple and their guests. We transformed one of the rooms in the lower areas of our building into a new media suite, available for audio recording, and continued to welcome a wide range of clients for a busy programme of conferences, events and cinema hires throughout the year.

Our retail team achieved an 8% increase in turnover from the previous year, with our most successful year for print sales to date. This success was supported by a range of special events, from our annual CRAFTED market to our Members, Friends and Patrons festive shopping event and our Made in DCA Print Studio exhibition.





Made In DCA. Photo by Helen Macdonald

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DCA supporters

DCA would like to thank the many stakeholders, funders, partners, and visitors who have supported us this year. Every contribution, large or small, makes a difference.

Stakeholders & Partners







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Michael Hall

Frank Krikhaar

lain Luke

Duncan Mitchell

Kirsty Noltie

Jeanette Paul

Peter Rowson

Kat Small

Alastair Stewart

And those who wish to remain anonymous.

Support DCA

DCA has provided a vibrant social and cultural hub in the centre of Dundee since 1999. Our vision is to enrich people's lives through art, culture and creativity. We're only able to do this thanks to the generous support we receive from our donors, funders and visitors.

As a charity all the income we receive goes straight back into enabling audiences, artists and participants to see, experience and create, through our four programme areas: Exhibitions, Cinema, Print and Learning.

Thank you again to all our supporters. If you'd like to find out more about ways to support DCA, please contact Shelley Barclay Horban on shelley.barclay@dca.org.uk or visit our website www.dca.org.uk/about/support-us.

Board and Staff

Board

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Deputy Director and Head of External Relations

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Valerie Norris: Exhibitions Coordinator Kaylyn Hamlyn: Exhibitions Assistant

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Cinema Young Audiences Coordinator

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Jack Dow: Operations Assistant

Jackie Handy, Ralph McCann, Alex McDonald, Ian Stewart:

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Photo by Erika Stevenson



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Scottish Charity No: SC026631