

Monday, May 18 2020

PRESS RELEASE

HOME launches campaign to highlight cost of empty seats to arts venues



Thursday, 10 September 2020

HOME have today launched their Empty Seats campaign that highlights the cost of the seats that arts centres currently cannot sell due to social distancing regulations.

The arts centre – which includes cinema, theatre and gallery spaces – is one of the first live art venues in Manchester to reopen, but the new campaign highlights the fact that doing so does not come without its own risks.

The tongue-in-cheek campaign depicts a cinema seat “attempting” a number of alternative job roles – including barman, lighting technician and Box Office assistant – with disastrous consequences. In the end, it turns out, a seat is not much use if it is not used by an audience member.

Although the images are intended to provoke laughter, the serious message behind them is that over 700 seats must be held off sale to allow for social distancing. Each seat

HOME

has a potential income of up to £130 per week, representing a huge shortfall to the organisation.

Roisin Joyce, HOME's Director of Development, said: "We're so excited to be reopening our building to the public – but the arts are still facing one of the most pressing challenges we have ever known. Reopening our doors comes with a huge financial risk, caused by the fact we've had to take 700 of our theatre and cinema seats off sale to enable us to socially distance our audiences.

"We're launching this campaign with the message that an empty seat is just that – it can't perform any other function for us, be that pulling a pint in our bar, selling a ticket at box office or assisting our technicians with their lighting rig. An empty seat is worth up to £130 per week – and so we are asking the public to step up to the challenge of helping us make up that shortfall until we're back to full capacity. The reaction to our Coronavirus Response Fund was amazing – we hope to inspire the same incredible generosity until we can once again fill our empty seats."

HOME's cinema, bar and restaurant reopened under social distancing guidelines on Friday 4 September, and their theatre is set to return from mid-October. Multiple screenings over the opening weekend were sold out, demonstrating the public appetite to return to independent cinemas where it is safe to do so, but with capacity running at around 25-30% this still represents a major challenge for venues.

Donations can be made online at www.homemcr.org, by phone or by contactless payment in-person at HOME.

Notes to editors

HOME is Manchester's centre for international contemporary culture. Since opening in May 2015, HOME has welcomed over two million visitors to its two theatres, five cinemas, art gallery, book shop and restaurants. HOME works with international and UK artists to produce extraordinary theatrical experiences, producing an exciting mix of thought-provoking drama, dance and festivals, with a strong focus on international work, new commissions and talent development. HOME's ambition is to push the boundaries of form and technology, to experiment, have fun, take risks and share great new art with the widest possible audience. The patrons of HOME are Danny Boyle, actress Suranne Jones, playwright and poet Jackie Kay CBE, artists Rosa Barba and Phil Collins, filmmaker Asif Kapadia, and actress and author Meera Syal CBE. www.homemcr.org | @HOME_mcr | Facebook HOMEemcr

FUNDED BY:

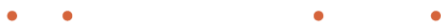


Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

GMCA GREATER
MANCHESTER
COMBINED
AUTHORITY




EUROPA CINEMAS
MEDIA-PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN UNION



FOUNDING SUPPORTERS:



Did you know that HOME is a charity? We need your support to bring the best film, theatre and art to Manchester and inspire the next generation. Get involved at www.homemcr.org/support

