Mayor to Explore Setting Up Creative Land Trust to Support Affordable Creative Workspace

Wednesday 26 October, 2016

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The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, will announce today (Wednesday 26 October) that he is exploring plans for a**Creative Land Trust** to support London's artists through affordable creative workspace across the capital.

Sadiq is working with a consortium of entrepreneurs and philanthropists, known as '**Studiomakers**'(1), to tackle the problem of rising rents in the capital to ensure that artists and creatives are able to flourish and help to maintain London's status as the world's cultural capital.

The Creative Land Trust will provide faster financing for studio providers looking to buy their buildings, and will be able to hold property for use as permanent affordable workspace for artists.

Speaking this evening at the opening of Somerset House Studios, a new experimental workspace pioneered by Somerset House, the Mayor will thank Director Jonathan Reekie for his contribution to a taskforce on creative workspace(2), which will make a series of recommendations later this year, including setting up a Creative Land Trust to secure studio buildings permanently across the capital.

The Creative Land Trust is an innovative solution to finance affordable creative workspace in London. The Artists' Workspace Study, commissioned in 2014, predicted the loss of 30 per cent of artists' workspace in London by 2019 (3) leaving some 3,500 creatives without workspace in the capital. The booming residential market and liberalisation of planning regulations have resulted in hundreds of artists forced out of their workspaces and many out of the city.

Similar models exist in other cities, notably San Francisco, where the 'Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST)' has begun to change the city's cultural landscape. CAST builds the capacity of arts and cultural organisations in San Francisco to acquire affordable properties, offering access to funding or affordable rents.

The Mayor will praise Somerset House Studios as a model example of how genuinely affordable workspace can be made available to a wide range of artistic talent, bringing together producers, choreographers, architects, fashion designers, visual artists and creative entrepreneurs to create a vibrant community.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: “There are few if any places on earth that can rival our city for its creative industries. Culture is in the DNA of the capital but we cannot be complacent. As property prices rise and new areas of the city grow, artists are finding themselves unable to put down roots here.

“I am committed to improving access to dedicated, affordable workspace so that the next generation of creatives are given the extra support they require to flourish. I want the artists of tomorrow to be able to fulfil their potential and follow in the footsteps of their role models so that London can continue to be the cultural capital of the world.”

The creative industries contribute £32bn to London's economy annually, representing one in six new jobs. They also contribute to London's vibrancy, making London an attractive place to live and encouraging inward investment.

Artists and creatives working in clusters are the 'research and development' department of the creative economy, fostering collaborative communities and knowledge exchange. From cutting edge fashion company Studio XO to Turner Prize-nominee Nicole Wermers, affordable creative workspace is crucial to launching the capital's best creative talent.

Research commissioned by Mayor of London and Arts Council England earlier this year looked at existing financing models for artists' workspace provision and set out a number of recommendations, including the establishment of a central fund dedicated to securing affordable workspace.

The proposed Creative Land Trust will enable access to finance and soft loans to secure ownership for permanent creative workspace. It will ensure that rents for creative workspace are kept affordable in the long term. Firstly, there would be a loan fund to acquire workspace and secondly, the trust would look to protect buildings in perpetuity for use as affordable workspace. The trust will combine public funds,

philanthropy and social impact investment.

Arts Council England(4) and Outset Contemporary Art Fund(5) are supporting the feasibility study into the Creative Land Trust fund to which Mayor of London has also contributed £30k.

Co-founder of Outset Contemporary Art Fund and Studiomakers, Candida Gertler OBE said: “Artists and creatives need affordable workspace in which to develop their ideas. As such, artists' studios are far more than just physical places of work. Instead, they are economic and social hubs, with their own supply chains and communities. Artists' studios are centres for creative exchange, education and mentoring. They also support new businesses, get local people involved and help develop a sense of community. Thus artists and creatives are the original social entrepreneurs.”

Joyce Wilson, London Director, Arts Council England, said: “Across England, artists are feeling the pressure of rising rents and lack of affordable space, but this is particularly severe in London. We cannot risk destabilising the creativity of our capital city. I'm pleased we have been able to support the Mayor of London's plans, and look forward to the solutions this study will offer toward a more resilient future for the sector.”

Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries, Justine Simons said: “Artists and creative people are like the advance party — they find the unusual places that no one sees much value in and they breathe life into them. We can't underestimate the value they bring to the capital's character, identity and success. The trick is to find a way to allow them to put down roots in the areas they have played such an important role in establishing - and not get displaced as prices rise.

“I'm really excited about the Creative Land Trust idea. If we get it right, it could go a long way to addressing this important issue by providing access to much needed finance to secure permanent spaces for the creative community.

“Over the coming months, we'll be announcing further ways in which City Hall is supporting the capital's creative community, including two firsts for London – a new Night Czar and a Creative Enterprise Zone.”

Notes to Editors

- Launched in March 2016, **Studiomakers**aims to provide entrepreneurial solutions to retain existing and create new affordable artist workspaces in London. It looks to partner with organisations in the property industry - from local authorities to landowners and private developers - in response to serious funding needs. It works with studio providers specialised in the field to oversee tenancy and operation of these workspaces. The extent of this will now look for spaces of production, helping not only artists, but also crafts people and other creatives, to ensure that the ecosystem of the creative industry is kept secure in the long term.

Studiomakers is an initiative led by Outset Contemporary Art Fund in association with its founding partners Mayor of London, Second Home, Create London, PLP Architecture and Bolton & Quinn.

- The **Artists' Workspace Advisory Group** includes:

Michael Owens, Bow Arts Trust (Chair)

Tara Cranswick, V22

Anna Harding, Space Studios

Marcel Baettig, Bow Arts Trust

Hannah Corbett, Acme Studios

Adriana Marques, LLDC

Sheena Etches, Partnerships, Place and Culture, Islington Council

Jonathan Reekie, Somerset House Trust

Jake Brodetsky, Peabody Housing Association

Chris Rawcliffe, Relationship Manager, Arts Council England, London

Duncan Smith, National Federation of Artists' Studios Providers

Donald Hyslop, Better Bankside

Matthew Wood, Second Floor Studios

Tim Jones, Future City

Laurence Taylor, Open School East

- According to the Artists' Workspace Study, commissioned by the Mayor of London in 2014. This report predicted the loss of up to 3,500 artists' workspaces – equating to 30% artists' workspace/studio space – by 2019. The Artists' Workspace Study can be accessed here:

- **Arts Council England** champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2015 and 2018, we plan to invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and an estimated £700 million from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country.artscouncil.org.uk
- Founded in 2003, **Outset Contemporary Art Fund** is a hub for creative funding solutions for contemporary art with patronage at its core. Outset is the only international and independent philanthropic organisation raising private and corporate funds to support new art for the public arena. Under curatorial guidance, Outset's trustees, patrons and partners support exhibitions, productions, museum acquisitions and capital campaigns to benefit institutions that range in scale from grassroots organisations to leading international museums. Outset's role is to establish and nurture relationships that allow patrons and corporate organisations to support selected art projects through financial assistance and strategic advice. What sets Outset apart is its involvement with artists and curators at the formative stages of their career, enabling them to realise their visions.

Somerset House Studios is a new experimental workspace within Somerset House connecting around 300 artists, makers and thinkers with audiences. Located inside the former Inland Revenue offices, the Studios are a platform for the development of new creative projects and collaboration, promoting work that pushes bold ideas, engages with urgent issues and pioneers new technologies. The Studios are also home to Makerversity, Europe's most exciting community of emergent makers.
https://www.somersethouse.org.uk/somerset-house-studios

For more information about San Francisco's **Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST)**:
http://cast-sf.org/about/

MEDIA ENQUIRIES: Press information is available by emailing communitydesk@london.gov.uk or calling 020 7983 4755

GENERAL PUBLIC/NON-MEDIA ENQUIRIES: Call the Public Liaison Unit at the Greater London Authority on 020 7983 4100

DUTY PRESS OFFICER: For out-of-hours media enquiries, please call 020 7983 4000

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