

# SCOTLAND'S BEST ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

21 SEP-5 OCT 2006 / ISSUE 559 / FORTNIGHTLY / £2.20

**YOU  
HAVE  
15 DAYS  
TO LIVE**

**THE  
LIST**  
GLASGOW AND EDINBURGH  
EVENTS GUIDE



## AUTUMN MUSIC SPECIAL!

**FROM HIP HOP  
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151 OF THE BEST  
GIGS AT YOUR  
FINGERTIPS  
INCLUDING  
JAY-Z, THE  
FRATELLIS,  
SPARKLEHORSE  
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PIE CHARTS!**

**UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT:  
THE  
ARCHES  
TAKE OVER**

Our guest editors  
expose Scotland's  
hot new talent



UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT:  
**ARCHES**  
TAKE OVER

# Underground resistance

The Arches is 15 years old and plenty of people are celebrating, but getting here has been a rollercoaster ride. Andrew Richardson digs about in the mouldy old basements of the organisation's past

The look on Andy Arnold's face suggests he's more than a little bit gob-smacked to be sitting in his dapper office, in what could only be described as the cockpit of the Arches, talking about how an idea sparked over 15 years ago has led to an arts, club and live music behemoth. Down below us an enthusiastic team of staff buzz about like worker bees, laying the foundations for five furious weeks of forthcoming activities. With a nod to the venue's punk spirit and anarchic past, they've dubbed the celebrations Fifteen Years, Two Fingers, a sentiment which ought to resonate with more than just the thespians and clubbers who've been dragged up at the Arches over the past decade and a half.

In 2006, the Arches ranks among the best multi-purpose arts spaces in Europe. Within its portals you can catch mind-altering physical

theatre, swaggering indie heroes-on-the-make, esoteric world music legends and the odd globe-trotting DJ. On certain nights you could quite easily find yourself in thrall to all of the above. With 65,000 square feet of space, encompassing six massive arches, three bars, the studio theatre and the Playroom – not forgetting the half-dozen rehearsal spaces in the basement – the Arches is big enough, the staff keen and skilled enough to pull off the most ambitious multi-tasking.

**'It all started with a love of theatre, not commerce. No other venue has achieved or maintained credibility in the same way. Andy Arnold has a safe pair of hands, but he's not scared to look, listen, or hand over the reins to the mad people on a regular basis.'**

*Ian Smith, co-director of veteran performing arts troupe Mischief La Bas.*

So, how did these mouldy old Victorian railway caverns become such a vital hub for performing arts and entertainment? And how has the tiny production team managed to make so much happen so consistently for so long, often without as much as a speck of dust from the council's purse – and all on a not-for-profit basis?

Rewind 15 years, and the place looked (and smelled) a bit different. Glasgow was buoyant after winning European City Of Culture in 1990; public money had poured into the city for various large-scale projects. One of these, a temporary exhibition called Glasgow's Glasgow, led to the unused support arches under Central Station being converted. When

everything was ripped out, the infrastructure of a public building remained: toilets, emergency exits, rudimentary lighting.

At that time there was no small-scale performance space in the centre of Glasgow; theatre happened under the proscenium archways of the Tron, the Citizen's and the King's. Enter stage left Andy Arnold, his CV steeped in what he describes as 'community and street art', running Theatre Workshop in Edinburgh for five years and directing London's Bloomsbury Theatre for another three.

'At the time I was fighting to get a couple of thousand quid together just to get fire alarms and a theatre licence,' remembers Arnold today. 'I came back to Scotland because I got fed up with London. I was running a big theatre and I

didn't get any pleasure out of it. From an artistic point of view I didn't like producing work on a big stage – I'd been in a little black box space at Theatre Workshop. In fact, when I tried to get the keys for this place, my aim was to open the perfect small pub theatre.'

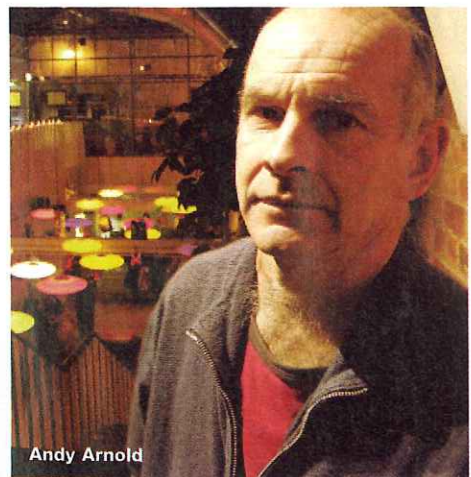
The then Glasgow Development Agency agreed to pay the company's rent for a year, while they sub-let the space on a lower rate, putting on small-scale productions and buying the time to find a way of making the Arches work. 'During that year we didn't come up with an answer,' says Arnold, 'but near the end we had Alien War, a large-scale installation visitor attraction, and then started the club nights with Café Loco.'

That was May 1992. Arnold was approached by Pedro McShane and Dave Clarke, who were

running Slam at the Subclub. McShane recalls 'I was looking for a venue to host a showcase event and I stumbled across the Arches. The space blew me away.' McShane, Clark and Peter Irvine proposed to run a weekly club night as a vehicle for Slam on Fridays. Arnold agreed, on the condition that they assist him running Café Loco, an experiment in bringing theatre to clubbers, on Saturdays.

Slam's rent, and Café Loco in its entirety, proved the lifeblood of the theatre company at this embryonic stage. Eight years ago, Friday Nights with Slam morphed into a massive monthly night, Pressure, which regularly pulls crowds of up to 3000 as well as the biggest DJs in the world. However, Café Loco was, by all accounts, something else altogether.

'It was a zany kind of cabaret carry-on



Andy Arnold



**April 1991**  
Andy Arnold receives the keys to the space under Central Station from British Rail.

**May 1991**  
The Arches opens for the first time with Arches Theatre Company production Noise and Smoky Breath, as part of Mayfest. The production wins the Herald Spirit of Mayfest award and a much-needed prize of £500.

**May 1992**  
Café Loco and Friday Night With Slam kick-start the Arches as a club venue.



**July, 1992**  
Sci-fi visitor attraction Alien War runs for seven months and, with the clubs, helps pay the rent.

**October 1993**  
ATC moves into promenade theatre with Metropolis: The Theatre Cut, an adaptation of Fritz Lang's influential 1922 film.

**September 1995**  
The launch of superclub Cream, the first of the clubs to use the whole building. 5000 people queued outside on the first night, and 1750 made it in.

**October 1996**  
Cream morphs into Inside Out, one of the Arches' longest running, biggest, noisiest, messiest clubs.

**November 1996**  
The National Review of Live Art starts its nine-year Arches run.

**February 1997**  
Daft Punk make their first British appearance at Friday Night With Slam, soon to become hotbed of hedonism Pressure.

**October 1998**  
ATC presents the Scottish premiere of I Licked A Slag's Deodorant by Jim Cartwright.



**February 1999**  
Catwalks run across the venue in all directions, for Intervention – the first large-scale Scottish designer fashion show.

**January 2001**  
After a £3.7 million Lottery award, a year of building work and five years of planning, the newly refurbished Arches, with Argyle Street entrance and adjacent cafe bar, is officially opened.

**April 2001**  
The launch of the Arches Award for Stage Directors, which offers emergent directors the chance to stage a fully-funded production.

# Agenda

## CARTOONS

BOABY 'N' BOABY By NEIL BRATCHPIECE (ARCHES BARMAN)



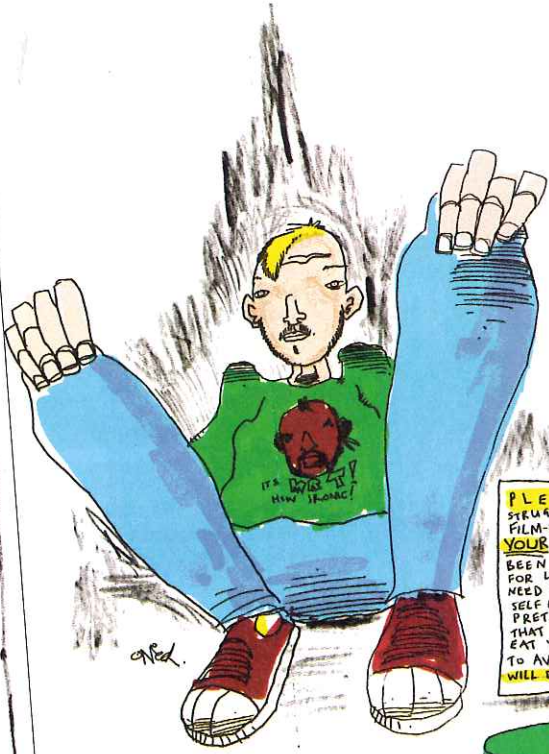
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## Fame.



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Jade Groodie



PLEASE HELP STRUGGLING YOUNG FILM-MAKER NEEDS YOUR HELP/CASH. BEEN A STUDENT FOR 14 YEARS NOW NEED FUNDS TO MAKE SELF INDULGENT PRETENTIOUS "FILM" THAT YOU WOULD EAT YOUR EYES TO AVOID WATCHING. WILL DANCE FOR CASH.

arts access for all?  
Oh - I agree - absolutely -- It's just that ordinary people are so frightfully uncreative



Andy Arnold