
PRESS RELEASE

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STAN'S CAFE SECURE TWO YEARS LOTTERY FUNDING TO REMAIN AT BIRMINGHAM HOME

Birmingham based theatre company Stan's Cafe have secured a Grants For The Arts Lottery Award to remain at their home, a venue made from a converted metal works factory, branded "@ A E Harris" In Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter, for another two years. The close relationship between the theatre company and landlords A E Harris (Birmingham) Ltd., who still fabricate metal in the rest of the factory, has won an Arts and Business Award in 2009.

The increased security of tenure secured by Lottery Funding will allow Stan's Cafe to renew their lease and invest further in improving facilities for coming productions. In November the venue will host Igor Stravinsky's *The Wedding* by **Birmingham Opera Company** and in February **Birmingham Rep's** production, *The Rememberers*. Theatre Ark will continue to use the venue every Saturday and Stan's Cafe will rehearse their own new production *The Cardinals*.

Since its inception in 2008 this large, rough and ready warehouse venue has played host to a number of rehearsals, workshops and performances by Stan's Cafe and other companies. Audience response to the space, first used for Stan's Cafe's internationally acclaimed production *Of All The People In All The World*, where population statistics were represented using 112 tons of rice in Autumn 2008, persuaded Stan's Cafe to remain. Other events there include *24 Hour Scalextric* (2009), where the company built a giant Scalextric tracks to celebrate Le Mans alongside other Stan's Cafe productions *Home of the Wiggler*, *Giant Steps* and *The Just Price of Flowers*.

Other Birmingham based theatre companies have used the venue for rehearsals and *Kindle* staged their epic banquet production *Eat Your Heart Out* (2009) at the venue which also hosted the inaugural *BE Festival* (2010) and welcomed companies from across Europe.

Artistic Director James Yarker said "Over the two years we have worked with many small theatre companies in bringing audiences exciting projects which would struggle to find a home anywhere else in the city. Now large companies are also starting to use the space we are offering an even wider range of opportunity. With Funding we can provide a better experience to companies and audiences alike."

Cllr Martin Mullaney, Birmingham City Council Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture, said: "This is fantastic news and richly deserved. Stan's Cafe represents so much of what is great about cultural life here in Birmingham. Yes we have the major organisations and venues but our fringe and independent venues are just as important in a cultural offer that has something for everyone."

Formed in Birmingham in 1991, Stan's Cafe (pronounced Caff) are a group of artists from a variety of disciplines, though primarily theatre practitioners, working under the artistic direction of James Yarker. Further information on their large and diverse body of work is available at their website: www.stanscafe.co.uk

"There is probably no more interesting company working in the UK today" **Lyn Gardner, Guardian**

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