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News release

Helix Arts appoints new Director

North East arts organisation, Helix Arts (www.helixarts.com), has appointed Scott Burrell, current Head of Programme at Create London, as its new Director.

Scott's appointment marks his return to the North East following three years working with artists and communities in London as Curator of Youth Programmes and Head of Programme for Create London, an arts organisation dedicated to making long-term projects that are useful to society.

Alison Shaw, Chair of Helix Arts, said: "Scott brings a wealth of experience having worked with diverse communities across London and talented artists from all over the world.

"He's helped make a huge difference in the areas he's worked in, developing award-winning projects in collaboration with artists, communities, industry and local government. He has also campaigned for a fairer and more inclusive cultural workforce and is committed to creating meaningful cultural employment opportunities for young people.

"We're delighted he's joining Helix Arts as Director to continue our work in connecting high quality artists with communities across the North East so they can make great art together."

A fellow of the Clore Social Leadership programme, Scott graduated from Northumbria University with a BA in photography. He has previously worked for Arts Council England, South London Gallery and Tyneside Cinema.

Scott Burrell said of his appointment: "Having grown up in North Tyneside I have admired Helix Arts, with its commitment to truly accessible community art rooted in social justice, for many years. I feel very honoured to be given the opportunity to come home and work alongside a talented team to grow and evolve this exciting organisation.

"There is no denying that these are turbulent times, and there are many challenges facing communities across the North East, but I believe that art is one of the greatest tools we have to collectively imagine better futures and bring them to life.

"I look forward to working together with partners from across the arts, social and public sectors, as well as the thriving digital and life science industries, to support a creative and people powered future for the region."

Sinead Burke, Relationship Manager, Engagement and Audiences at Arts Council England, said: "Helix Arts enters an exciting new phase with the appointment of Scott Burrell, who will now lead the organisation in creating inclusive opportunities for communities to work with artists to co-produce great art. It's really great to see this experienced arts leader return to the North East and with a commitment to creating equal opportunities for those facing barriers to engage with publicly funded arts."

Founded in 1983, Helix Arts works with artists, in partnership with other organisations, to create opportunities for people of all ages, whatever their circumstance, to co-produce and co-curate ambitious arts activity.

Current programmes include the dance and health programme with older people, *Falling on your Feet*, digital music making programme *We got the Beat*, and a training programme with community volunteers in Sunderland and Gateshead, *Make It Happen*.

Helix Arts has also formed a new Volunteer Advisory Panel to support its work in providing arts volunteering opportunities for people in North Tyneside.

Alison continued: "Participants in our programmes often tell us their health and wellbeing has improved, they feel more confident and they develop new skills they can use in everyday life.

"Having lived and worked in the region, Scott understands our local communities and has a genuine passion for improving people's lives through engagement with the arts.

"On behalf of the staff and trustees at Helix Arts, I'd like to congratulate Scott on his appointment and we look forward to working with him to deliver our ambitious arts programmes with communities across the North East and beyond."

-ENDS-

For more information, images or interview requests, please contact david@ludlowstreet.co.uk or call 07948 563 612.

Notes to Editor

Helix Arts is proud to be an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

Helix Arts is the only organisation of its type in the North East of England working with artists from all genres and with people of all ages and all abilities, whatever their circumstances.

About Scott Burrell

Scott's work for Create London includes a youth-led community pottery and gardenware enterprise with artist Aaron Angell (*Town Gas / Hoxton Gardenware*), a community printing press run by artist collective One of My Kind (*Rabbits Road Press*), a public space for art and social activity on the Becontree Estate in Dagenham (*The White House*) and a new partnership with the Institute of Race Relations supporting young Londoners to explore the history and legacy of police monitoring (*Activating Newham; Community & Activism 1980-1991*).

He is currently curating *In the Making*, a three year £1.8m programme of artist-led projects in Park Royal, London's largest industrial estate. The project forms part of the *Old Oak and Park Royal Great Place Scheme*, a joint initiative led by Arts Council England and National Lottery Heritage Fund, which aims to renew artistic engagement with British industry on a scale not seen since the 1970s. A series of major new commissions, with industry partners including McVitie's and HS2, have been launched across the site since 2018 by artists Faisal Abdu'Allah, Sam Curtis, Bahbak Hashemi-Nezad, Sahra Hersi, Rosalie Schweiker and The People's Bureau.

Image caption: Scott Burrell, Director of Helix Arts

