

SAU News- Spring 2007

Political Action

The recent publication of the Draft Culture (Scotland) Bill and the forthcoming Scottish elections will dominate the SAU's political activity for the first half of the year. We have continued to build on the work put in during the Cultural Commission's consultation period, engaging with the issues raised at the highest possible level. The SAU's initial response to the Bill was reported in the press (*Sunday Herald* and [a-n]) and put to government officials twice over at parliamentary events (the first organised by Chris Ballance MSP, the second by the office of the Minister for Tourism, Culture & Sport Patricia Ferguson MSP). We have attempted wherever possible to co-ordinate our responses with those of like-minded organisations (most notably Equity and the Musician's Union) and will be submitting a full statement on the Bill before the Scottish Executive's deadline of March 31st. Specifically, we will articulate our great concerns over the new, apparently "enterprise-minded" Creative Scotland agency, the level of Ministerial control under which it will work and the apparent absence of visual & applied arts experience from its interim board, as well as the concept of "cultural entitlements" and the danger they represent for the exploitation of artists by local authorities. We will also be writing to all party spokespersons for culture/ the arts ahead of the May elections, challenging them to explain how their policies may improve the working lives of Scotland's visual and applied artists.

Communicating with You

The SAU has established a forum on Yahoo!, allowing members to talk to each other and, more importantly, to raise concerns with and respond to the actions of their Executive Committee. We encourage all members to sign up immediately at <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/saubulletin/>. We are also aware that the website is in need of attention, and so have decided to redesign it top-to-bottom in the same style as our new print literature. The new website, at the same address www.sau.org.uk, will be up and running in April.

Future Projects

The SAU has initiated research into the possibility of an emergency or benevolent fund for artists in crisis. We hope to be able to report on the matter at the next AGM.

SAU on the Grow

We are happy to report that the SAU has experienced a period of sustained growth that sees membership on track to exceed 400 before the year's mid-point. Nevertheless, we are determined to launch a vigorous recruitment drive and raise our profile at events around the country, both in person and in the form of publicity material. The more members we have, the more powerful a lobbying organisation we become on behalf of each and all. So if you know an artist who's not yet a member, give them a form!

**Get in touch: 07849637546 info@sau.org.uk
www.sau.org.uk re-launches April 2007!
<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/saubulletin/> – join the debate!**