

The first ever UK-wide Family Arts Festival ends but voting still underway to find the UK's favourite event.

- Over 900 organisations hosted over 1,900 events as part of the festival, keeping families entertained during the autumn half-term break.
- Festival organisers urge families to vote for their favourite event in the first ever **Family Arts Festival Awards**.
- Leading figures from the arts including **Lord Lloyd Webber**, **Zoë Wanamaker** and **Ed Vaizey** all expressed their support for the festival in its first year.
- It is today announced that the festival will return next year, 17th October – 2nd November 2014.

www.familyartsfestival.com.



The first ever UK-wide **Family Arts Festival** closed on Sunday 3rd November 2013, having entertained tens of thousands of families across the UK with its ambitious and diverse first year programme.

The organisers of the Family Arts Festival are now urging families who took part in the Family Arts Festival 2013 to visit www.familyartsfestival.com and vote for their favourite events in the first ever Family Arts Festival Awards. Voted for entirely by the public, the Awards will recognise organisations that have produced exceptional family experiences during the festival. The winning organisations and events will be announced early next year.

Festival visitors, performers and host organisations are also encouraged to continue to share stories and photos from events they participated in via the festival's Facebook and Twitter pages:

<https://www.facebook.com/FamilyArtsFestival>

[@FamilyArtFestival](https://twitter.com/FamilyArtFestival)

[#FamilyArtsFest](https://twitter.com/FamilyArtsFest)

Following the event's success, the organisers, the Family Arts Campaign, have today announced that the festival will return next year, 17th October – 2nd November 2014.

This year's festival took place from 18th October – 3rd November 2013 and presented over 1,900 events hosted by over 900 organisations across the UK. Festival partner The Big Draw brought nearly 500 events to the festival in the first year of a two year partnership.

There was life drawing with sheep at the Royal Academy, London, and theatre for babies at Birmingham Rep. In Newcastle, families learnt trapeze skills from the experts at Dance City, and family friendly stand-up kept smiles on faces in Oxford. Aspiring dancers practised their moves at dance workshops across the UK, whilst others tested their lyrical skills at hip hop rap workshops in Louth.

The festival spread across the UK, with the world premiere of *Dragon*, a Scottish / Chinese theatrical co-production in Inverness and an operatic version of *The Importance of Being Earnest* in Derry / Londonderry. *Out of the Shadow*, an extravaganza of dance and acrobatics, took centre stage in Cardiff while in Cornwall dance, music and theatre combined in the spectacular *Stomp*.

Leading figures from the arts, including musical theatre impresario Lord Lloyd Webber, actress Zoë Wanamaker, and Culture Minister Ed Vaizey, expressed their support for the festival in its first year, as they called out for families to take part on the festival's launch day. The Festival was also supported by a range of partners including Mumsnet and Mumsnet Academy.

Plans are already underway for an even bigger and better Family Arts Festival in 2014. Until further details of the next festival are announced, the website, www.familyartsfestival.com, will turn into a venue search where families can find family friendly arts venues across the UK. From 1 December 2013, all organisations featured on the website will have signed up to the Family Arts Standards. Produced in collaboration with the Family and Childcare Trust, the Standards have been developed as a common, recognisable guide for organisations to ensure they are meeting the needs of families and providing a high quality arts experience.

The festival is part of the Family Arts Campaign, a wider programme working to ensure there are more opportunities for families to engage with the arts and to help arts organisations attract more and a wider range of families.

Kathryn McDowell CBE, Family Arts Campaign Chair and Managing Director of the London Symphony Orchestra, said:

"The Family Arts Festival brought together an extraordinarily diverse programme of over 1,900 events, celebrating all aspects of the arts, with something for everyone, wherever they are from, and whatever their interests. We're delighted to have seen so many families take part and are looking forward to presenting an even bigger programme next year."

Althea Efunshile, Deputy Chief Executive, Arts Council England commented:

"The work of the Family Arts Festival and Family Arts Campaign supports some of the Arts Council's key goals to make sure that more adults and young people can be inspired by all that the arts and culture in this country have to offer. The festival's programme truly had something for everyone, as shown by the fantastic response it received. I very much look forward to watching it develop and grow as it now moves on to its second year."

David Brownlee, Family Arts Campaign Director, said:

"It has been fantastic to see so many families across the UK take part in the festival in its very first year. It truly has shown what a huge appetite there is for events that people can enjoy together as a family, but the festival was only the beginning. We hope that arts organisations across the UK will continue to deliver exceptional family events and activities throughout their own programmes, and, with plans already underfoot for the Family Arts Festival 2014, there is a lot to look forward to."

The Family Arts Campaign and Family Arts Festival are initiatives of The Association of British Orchestras, The Theatrical Management Association, The Society of London Theatre, The Independent Theatre Council, The Visual Arts & Galleries Association and Dance UK, supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

For more information on this year's festival, and the latest news on Family Arts Festival 2014, visit www.familyartsfestival.com, or sign up to the [newsletter](#).



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Notes to Editors

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The Family Arts Campaign

The Family Arts Campaign aims to support organisations in providing high-quality family events. It has been devised in consultation with over 1,000 arts professionals and 2,000 families. It is an initiative of The Association of British Orchestras, The Theatrical Management Association, The Society of London Theatre, The Independent Theatre Council, The Visual Arts & Galleries Association and Dance UK, and is supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

www.familyarts.co.uk

Family Arts Standards

The Family Arts Standards are designed to help families know what they should expect from an arts organisation that displays the Family Arts Standards logo. They cover the basic considerations for families, whether it's going to an art gallery, a play, a dance performance or anything else. We ask that across their work, organisations try to appeal to a wide range of family audiences. Not every show or activity held by the Standard Holder will be suitable for families, but organisations that sign up to the Family Arts Standards should provide clear information to enable audiences to decide what is/isn't suitable for families with children and young people of different ages. The standards have been developed to be tested during the 2013 Family Arts Festival.

www.familyartsstandards.com

The Campaign for Drawing and The Big Draw

The Campaign for Drawing aims to get everyone drawing. It promotes drawing as a powerful tool for thinking, creating and communicating. The Campaign's annual flagship, The Big Draw, proves that drawing can be a public activity as well as a private passion. Every year, The Big Draw season includes hundreds of drawing activities in schools, museums, galleries and heritage sites UK-wide, and now in 20 other countries. Launched in 2000, The Big Draw has encouraged an estimated million people back to the drawing board.

The original inspiration came from visionary Victorian artist and writer John Ruskin, whose mission was to teach people to see through drawing. The Campaign shows how drawing can support learning, and connect generations and cultures. 2013 is the first year of a two-year partnership between The Big Draw and the Family Arts Festival.

www.campaignfordrawing.org

Mumsnet and Mumsnet Academy

Mumsnet, the UK's biggest website for parents is the digital partner of the Family Arts Festival. Mumsnet is the UK's largest network for parents, with over 50 million page views and over 9 million visits per month. It has 200 local sites, as well as a network of over 3,300 bloggers. It regularly campaigns on issues such as support for families of children with Special Educational Needs, improvements in miscarriage care and freedom of speech on the Internet.

Mumsnet Academy was established in May 2012 to bring together Mumsnet users offline by offering a series of thought-provoking masterclasses, workshops, courses and events. Users were asked what they wanted from the courses, and the programme is a reflection of their responses - creative writing, history and scholarship, entrepreneurship and social media to name a few. The courses have been run by some of the biggest names in the business including: Kate Mosse, David Nicholls, Mary Beard, Lynne Franks, and Alain de Botton. The Mumsnet Academy is now offering online courses too, including on Starting Your Own Business and Photography.

www.mumsnet.com

Ends