Mall Galleries to get underground revamp thanks to Heritage Lottery Fund

25/11/2011

The project will make the stunning brick vaults at 17 Carlton House Terrace accessible to the public for the first time and offer opportunities for volunteers to get involved in heritage projects at the Galleries. The works will provide space for new exhibitions, and an exciting learning programme will be devised for people of all ages, including Key Stage 2 and GCSE/A-Level school workshops on architecture and the Victorian era, family sessions, and opportunities for individuals to train in building conservation, heritage and learning activities.

Constructed to a typical period upstairs-downstairs design, the vaults were divided into ten multi-purpose spaces including kitchens, pantries, servants' dining areas and quarters, sculleries, larders, wine and meat cellars, workshops and fuel stores. The vault layout – which is nationally important - remains virtually unchanged with the exception of a few blocked up windows that would have originally provided light and ventilation to the rooms.

Designed by the architect John Nash in the late 1820's but constructed in 1863, No 17 Carlton House Terrace was the last to be built in a symmetrical row of palatial terraces and is one of London's greatest landmarks. It is built on the site of the now demolished Carlton House, once the London home of the Prince Regent (later George IV). The building is now home to the Federation of British Artists (FBA), a registered charity established in 1961 consisting of eight of the UK's leading art societies, and the Mall Galleries' aim is to promote, inspire and educate audiences about the visual arts – showcasing work in different media by well established and new emerging artists.

Sue Bowers, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund said: "This wonderful project will not only conserve the historic vaults of one of London's grandest terraces, where damp means that urgent action is required, but will also see them open to the public again for the first time in 11 years and act as a new dedicated learning space which will make a very welcome addition to the Mall Galleries."

The new Mall Galleries Art and Heritage Learning Programme will be offered free to all audiences. The history of the building will be explored and shared with local, as well as regional communities, and audiences will experience their built heritage, trace their own memories of the area and at the same time acquire a sense of belonging and ownership.

Lewis McNaught, Director at Mall Galleries, explained further how the HLF grant will help achieve this new vision: "We have collaborated with community leaders, teachers, other local organisations and heritage experts in order to ensure that the new Heritage Learning Centre and Programme are responsive to the diverse needs of our audiences. This project will transform our organisation and will help us deliver huge returns by way of free arts and heritage education."

The works are expected to start at the beginning of 2012 and will take 4 months to complete. The Federation of British Artists would also like to hear from further potential supporters, as there is £120,000 still to raise in match-funding to enable this exciting scheme to go ahead.

Please contact education@mallgalleries.com or telephone 020 7930 6844 to get involved.

Further information

HLF Press Office: Vicky Wilford, HLF press office**;** 020 7591 6046, email vickyw@hlf.org.uk
Mall Galleries: Lewis McNaught, 020 7968 0952, email lewismcnaught@mallgalleries.com

Notes to editors

Mall Galleries
Home to the Federation of British Artists (FBA), a registered charity established in 1961 consisting of eight of the UK's leading art societies, the Mall Galleries' aim is to promote, inspire and educate audiences about the visual arts – showcasing work in different media by well established and new emerging artists.