Lights, Camera, Action for Campbeltown's restored



Campbeltown Brass Band playing in the main auditorium

One of Scotland’s oldest, purpose-built cinema’s, Campbeltown Picture House, has been re-launched after a £3.5million restoration and extension.

Sitting prominently on the town’s harbour-front, the pretty Art Nouveau building has been extensively restored and the main auditorium returned to its 1930’s design thanks to funding from The National Lottery. A new state-of-the-art second screen, café and education room has been added to provided facilities for today’s audiences.

Restoring a historic gem

The re-launch marks the culmination of almost three decades of work and commitment by local community volunteers to bring the historic gem back to its full glory as a social hub for the town.

Campbeltown Picture House is one of Europe’s few surviving atmospheric cinemas. Popular in the 1920’s atmospheric cinemas transported audiences to exotic places such as European courtyards or gardens, with their ceilings often painted with starry skies or floating clouds and features such as trellises or trees incorporated into the design. Campbeltown’s Picture House includes two plasterwork buildings on either side of the screen to give the ambiance of a Mediterranean courtyard, features which have been meticulously restored.

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Creating a community resource

Lucy Casot, Head of HLF in Scotland said: “To see this much-loved Picture House as magnificent as it was the day it opened over 100 years ago is a delight. With the help of National Lottery funding, history and 21st century design have come together to create an incredible cultural centre for the local community.”

Nicholas Ferguson CBE, Chairman of Savills and Chairman of the Argyll & Bute Economic Forum, commented: “The restored Picture House will offer a wonderful resource the people of Campbeltown and the Argyll peninsular, and we hope will attract people from far and wide to come and visit.”

The re-launch saw the first screening of ‘The Wee Pictures’, a specially commissioned film following the restoration of the Picture House over the last year and a half. It weaves together fascinating footage from the restoration with interviews with key figures from the cinemas past and archive materials to create a unique portrait of the historic cinema.





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HLF ends the year with a sprinkling of fairy dust for Scotland’s heritage