

 **Media release**

20 April 2022 for immediate release

**Multi-sensory exhibition Human Threads makes connections between people with complex learning disabilities and the wider world.**

**Human Threads**

**Tramway, 11th May - 28th Aug 2022**

**Free entry**

*Human Threads*, a large scale, multi-sensory exhibition curated by the Edinburgh-based organisation Artlink opens this May, presented in partnership with Tramway, part of the charity Glasgow Life.

Conceived as an accessible, creative experience informed by individuals with profound and multiple learning disabilities, the exhibition takes the form of an interactive landscape which invites audiences on a journey of light, sound, touch and smell.

For over two decades, Artlink has pioneered the use of contemporary arts practice as a form of collaborative exploration with partner Cherry Road Learning Centre in Midlothian, Scotland. Artlink paired artists and thinkers with individuals within a care setting over a sustained period, creating the conditions for new ideas and influences to radiate from people with profound and multiple developmental disabilities and their carers.

In 2015, Artlink and partners began to devise a large-scale exhibition that would bring these insights and sensibilities to a broad and diverse public—an exhibition that would celebrate our common threads, making connection between people with complex disabilities and the wider world.

The exhibition is conceived as a series of sensory experiences, from the subtle to the dazzling. They include a huge silk sail which sways softly, changing pattern and shape, and small ‘peep show’ boxes containing colourful kinetic experiences for a single viewer. An analogue projector – light shone through a huge glass vessel – projects mysterious ever-shifting forms. A playful tower emits light, smoke and bubbles to mark the passing of time while a giant ramp translates sound into vibration, a gathering place where noise is made physical.

Each artwork within this gentle fairground offers a new encounter and is informed by the idea that nothing expresses our common humanity more than our embodied, sensory encounters with the world.

‘*In these dark times it is very necessary to be open to changing perception, connecting to different forms of creativity that will make us all feel good, better on the inside; more alive, kinder, compassionate and full of empathy. More able to be in this together*.’

Laura Aldridge, participating artist

‘To bring this way of working into the public realm for the first time and on this scale is a wonderful opportunity for us and all who have collaborated on its development over the years.’

Nicola White and Alison Stirling (Artlink), Curators

The immense scale of Tramway 2 and its utilitarian fabric has allowed the team to devise an experience ambitious in size and accessible to the widest range of people. Throughout the run of the exhibition performances and happenings will animate the space further, some scheduled, others improvised, but all devised to deepen the experience of the installation for visitors.

These events will vary from surprise cabaret acts to improvisations and performances by renowned musicians such as Red Note Ensemble to immersive experiences such as a surround sound Gong Bath by Daniel Padden. Details will be announced via tramway.org through the course of the exhibition.

ends

**Notes for Editors**

**About Artlink**

Artlink is an arts organisation based in Edinburgh. Its creative practice is shaped by a close collaboration with people with complex disabilities, their carers, families, and artists.

Visit www.artlinkedinburgh.co.uk

**About Cherry Road Learning Centre in Midlothian**

Cherry Road Learning Centre offers tailored and personalised experiences that support adults with complex developmental disabilities and adults with complex autism.
Visit www.cherryroadlearningcentre.com

**About Tramway**

Tramway is part of Glasgow Life, the charity which delivers culture and sport in the city. One of Scotland’s leading international art-spaces, the venue acts as a hub for creative excellence in contemporary visual art and performance by developing presentation and production opportunities supporting ambitious commissions and the production of new exhibitions by both Scottish and International artists.
Visit www.tramway.org

Glasgow Life is a charity working for the benefit of the people of Glasgow. We believe everyone deserves a great Glasgow life and we find innovative ways to make this happen across the city’s diverse communities.
Visit www.glasgowlife.org.uk

Artworks by Matthew Ronay, Laura Aldridge & Lauren Gault, Adam Putnam, Wendy Jacob, Laura Spring & Claire Barclay

Performative Collaborations by Kevin McPhee, James McLardy & Francesca Nobilucci

Curated by Nicola White and Alison Stirling, Artlink in partnership with Tramway

Supported by

Creative Scotland, Midlothian Health & Social care Partnership and RS Macdonald Charitable Trust.

**Ends**

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 Glasgow Life

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