



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## ***LAUNCH OF THE SCOTTISH MENTAL HEALTH ARTS AND FILM FESTIVAL 2012***

**The sixth SMHAFF will launch this Thursday at Paisley Town Hall, celebrating the 2012 programme of events which runs from 1–24 October.**

The national launch, hosted by the Festival's Renfrewshire partners, takes place in Paisley Town Hall on Thursday 27 Sept, 11.30am–12.45pm. Among the speakers will be Lee Knifton, Festival Director, Isabella Goldie, Head of the Mental Health Foundation, Scotland and Dr Sinead McAree, Paisley Community Mental Health Team.

**Susan Philipz, winner of the 2010 Turner Prize**, will present a piece of work especially conceived for the launch and **Rod Jones of Idlewild** will be dueting with Marie Collins, a young musician he has mentored through The Fruitree Foundation project, which aims to raise awareness of mental health issues. This invitation only part of the launch will then be thrown open to the public who are welcome to grab an instrument and join in creating a drum circle for **The Big Drum Event**, a collaboration of drumming groups, using everything percussive from the Charleston drum of Paisley to the djembes of local group Buddy Beat.

**October 1 will see the first of over 250 arts events throughout Scotland, encompassing theatre, film, dance, music, comedy literature and the visual arts.**

This year the theme is 'walk in my shoes' and the Festival, now one of the largest social justice festivals in the world, will explore mental health identities, raise awareness and tackle stigma through the arts.

Highlights of the 2012 programme include The Scottish premiere of ***I, Anna***, starring **Charlotte Rampling** and rare screenings of ***Anti-Clock*** and ***Dali In New York*** with an appearance by radical filmmaker **Jack Bond**, plus the **SMHAFF International Film Awards 2012**.

Comedy is represented by **John Hegley**, **Mark Steel** and others and **Keir McAlister** and **John Scott** are among a group of Scottish stand-ups, led by Scotland's favourite MC **Susan Morrison**, who will be playing various gigs around the Highlands and Islands.

**Falkirk Rocks** is a sonic and spoken word event featuring **Alan Bissett**, author of *Boyracers*, among the Bairn-only line-up along with Grangemouth's own **Gordon Legge**, and **Christopher Brookmyre** will be taking audience questions in Elgin.

**Box of Frogs** is an exhilarating, high-octane performance showcasing circus skills including trick-cycling and acrobalance, inspired by the director, Mish Weaver's, experience of bipolar, and the award-winning Nicola McCartney directs **The Visitors Presents: The Occupation of Heather Rose**.

The Festival will also be teaming up once again with the Fruit Tree Foundation to bring you the return of **Music Like A Vitamin** – a unique collaboration by **Fatherson**, **The Birthday Suit** featuring **Rod Jones of Idlewild**, **Withered Hand** and **Sparrow and The Workshop**.

ENDS

## NOTES TO EDITORS:

For interview requests, images and press tickets please contact Alison Young, Media and Communications Coordinator: [alisonsmhaff@gmail.com](mailto:alisonsmhaff@gmail.com) T. 0141 572 1661 M. 07891 038 053  
Tickets are on sale now. For more information see [www.mhfestival.com](http://www.mhfestival.com)

## **PHOTOCALL: PARTICIPANTS OF THE SMHAFF 2012 LAUNCH WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PHOTOGRAPHS AT PAISLEY TOWN HALL, THURSDAY 27 SEPTEMBER, 12.45 – 13.30**

A PDF of the full Festival 2012 programme and press releases can be downloaded from [mhfestival.com/media.php](http://mhfestival.com/media.php)

**THE FRUITREE FOUNDATION:** [www.fruitreefoundation.com](http://www.fruitreefoundation.com)

**ABOUT SMHAFF:** Now in its sixth year, the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival is one of Scotland's most diverse cultural events, encompassing music, film, visual art, theatre, dance, and literature. The annual festival takes place in venues across Scotland throughout October, aiming to support the arts and challenge preconceived ideas about mental health.

By engaging artists, connecting with communities and forming collaborations, we celebrate the artistic achievements of people with experience of mental health issues, exploring the relationship between creativity and the mind, and promoting positive mental health and well-being.

**PARTNERS:** The festival is supported by **The Mental Health Foundation in association with the following national partners:** Mental Health Foundation, Scotland's anti-stigma campaign 'see me', NHS Health Scotland, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, NHS Lothian, The Royal College of Psychiatrists, Lanarkshire Recovery Network, Voices of Experience, IRISS, University of Strathclyde. The festival is also supported by hundreds of arts, voluntary, community and health organisations across Scotland. These groups programme diverse, innovative events in their own towns and cities on behalf of the festival, utilising local talent and creativity.

**The Mental Health Foundation** is a leading UK mental health charity that conducts robust research, provides practical solutions to help everyone lead mentally healthier lives, and works to raise public awareness and improve mental health services for the entire population. The Foundation is proud of the vital role it plays in hosting, developing and managing the Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)