



Foreign &  
Commonwealth Office  
London

INSIGHT UK

# The Arts

1220–70 Salisbury Cathedral built.

Late 14th Century – Geoffrey Chaucer writes *The Canterbury Tales*.

1600–05 – Shakespeare writes *Hamlet*, *Othello* and *King Lear*.

1798 – Publication of Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads*.

1821 – John Constable paints *The Hay Wain*.

1849–50 – Charles Dickens writes *David Copperfield*.

1931 – Ninette de Valois establishes the Vic-Wells ballet company (becomes the Royal Ballet Company).

1945 – Benjamin Britten's opera *Peter Grimes* performed.

1955 – First performance of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*.

1965 – Sculptor Barbara Hepworth made a dame.

1967 – The Beatles' *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts' Club Band* album released.

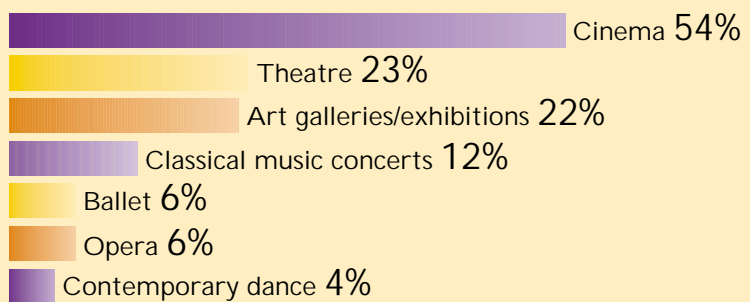
1994 – Release of the film *Four Weddings and A Funeral*.

2000 – Royal National Theatre tops winners list at prestigious Olivier Awards.

## CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

***Eight in ten UK citizens attend an arts event each year.***

Attendance at Cultural Events 1997/98:



Cinema attendance rose by 20% between 1988–98

Box office takings: £332 million

Average audience at the 100-plus West End theatres in 1998 – 744 people

February 1999 – BBC nominates its 20 Top British cultural masterpieces including:

Architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Glasgow School of Art

Painter David Hockney's *Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy*

Designer Harry Beck's stylised map of the London Underground network

Sculptor Anthony Gormley's *Angel of the North*



TOP LEFT: © Edinburgh Festival  
TOP RIGHT: © Creative Photography  
BOTTOM: © Creative Photography

## STATE FUNDING of the ARTS

*'The point of subsidy is that it acts as investment, provides continuity, allows artistic risks, sustains the best of tradition, develops new talent, feeds the commercial entertainment economy, and does all this at reasonable seat prices.'*

Sir Richard Eyre – Director of the Royal National Theatre (1988–97)

### Central Government

In 2001/02 over £250 million is being channelled from the Government to arts and cultural organisations through the Arts Council of England (ACE).

ACE is committed to nurturing creativity, experimentation, technology, diversity and wider audiences for the arts.

March 2000 – 34 galleries share £2 million in grants as part of 'Spaces and Places' scheme designed to support important collections of the visual arts and crafts.

In May 2000 lottery grants of £4,472,000 announced by ACE for 'capital projects' including a new arts centre in Runcorn, Cheshire and the redevelopment of the Royal Shakespeare Company's theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon.

### The Scottish Arts Council Creative Awards 2000 – £25,000 prizes go to 14 artists.

£39 million has been allocated to Welsh Arts. In August 2000, £2,174,000 in lottery fund distributed for various projects including public sculpture in towns such as Usk and Mumbles.

People attending ACE funded arts organisations in 1998/99: 24,554,000.

### Visual arts museums receiving largest state subsidy 1998/99 (in millions):

- British Museum, London – £33,921
- Victoria and Albert Museum, London – £29,147
- Tate Gallery, London – £19,218
- National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside – £12,696

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local authorities run most art venues outside London including 1,000 museums and galleries. The Corporation of London is the third largest sponsor of the arts in the UK.

## The NATIONAL LOTTERY

Ticket sales since the launch of the National Lottery have secured over £26.9 billion, raising £9.3 billion for good causes.

*The average size of grants from the National Lottery is £40,000.*

It would take 17 days non-stop viewing to watch all the UK films supported by National Lottery Funding.

## GOVERNMENT ART COLLECTION

The collection dates from 1898 and now amounts to 11,500 works of art.

The collection is on public display in 150 UK government buildings and 300 foreign locations including Embassies and High Commissions.

LEFT: © Michael Nicholson  
TOP RIGHT: © Pathé Distribution  
BOTTOM RIGHT: © 20th Century Fox



## BUSINESS SPONSORSHIP

Between 1975 and 1999, business sponsorship of the arts in the UK has grown from £600,000 to £141 million.

In 1998/99 businesses put £35.2 million towards the capital costs of arts organisations and gave £8.9 million through corporate membership schemes.

## FESTIVALS

Over 550 arts festivals are held each year in the UK including:

The Edinburgh Festival  
The Notting Hill Carnival  
The London Film Festival

## BOOKS

Figures for February to May 2000 suggest that 6% of all book sales occur over the internet.

*J.K. Rowling's fourth Harry Potter book published on 8 July 2000 – 372,775 copies sold on first day.*

## CRAFTS

Over 6,500 UK craftspeople are on the National Register of Makers.

The Crafts Council in London houses the largest collection of craft works in the UK.

## DANCE

The main subsidised dance companies include:

The Royal Ballet  
The English National Ballet  
The Birmingham Royal Ballet  
Rambert Dance Company  
DV8

Each year 30-plus members of the Royal Ballet tour the country.

The year 2000 saw London's 22nd annual international festival of contemporary dance – Dance Umbrella.

## DESIGN

84% of businesses in the UK employ design staff or consultants.

One in five UK firms has a dedicated design department.

## FILM

The four key British film studios:

Pinewood  
Shepperton  
Elstree  
Leavesden

March 27, 2000 – UK stage director Sam Mendes' first film *American Beauty* carries off five Academy Awards (Oscars).

## MUSIC

The music industry is one of the top 'invisible earners' after banking and insurance. In 1999 it earned £1.3 billion.

## THEATRE

There are over 700 performing arts companies in the UK.

Fringe theatre in London offers over 60 shows a night in addition to the main West End theatres.

There are 40 regional theatre companies across the UK.

Average annual attendance at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre (opened in 1996) – 250,000.



TOP LEFT: © Gateshead Council    BOTTOM LEFT: © Colin Moss  
RIGHT: © Michael Nicholson

FRONT COVER IMAGES TOP: © Edinburgh Festival  
BOTTOM LEFT: © Foreign & Commonwealth Office  
BOTTOM RIGHT: © London Picture Service /  
Foreign & Commonwealth Office

## TV and RADIO

*The broadcast media are by far the most influential of all media in bringing the arts into the home.*

The BBC's *Walking with Dinosaurs* cost £6 million and took three years to make. It won record audiences of 20 million people – half the viewing public in UK. Overseas sales net £60 million.

### The BBC

- operates four television channels
- five national radio networks
- 39 regional & local radio stations
- broadcasts 100 hours of classical and other music each week on Radio 3

### Independent Radio & TV

- 3 terrestrial channels
- satellite TV and cable services funded mainly by subscription
- 3 national commercial radio stations and over 200 local radio services

## VISUAL ARTS

The first painting acquired by the National Portrait Gallery: the 'Chandos' *Portrait of Shakespeare*.

The National Gallery owns in excess of 2,300 paintings.

## 8 million visits a year to the UK's 2,500 museums and galleries.

12 May 2000 – The Tate Modern art gallery opens in converted Bankside Power Station, London. Cost: £134 million. The main turbine hall is 152 metres long, 30 metres high and 23 metres wide. In its first year it attracted 5.2 million visitors.

In 2000, the £20,000 Turner Prize was awarded to Wolfgang Tillmans for an art arrangement of 60 photographs.

## The NEXT GENERATION

Two million children experience live arts performances in their schools provided by visiting groups each year.

Many of the next generation of dancers come through the Royal Ballet School, the Central School of Ballet and the School of Contemporary Dance in Leeds.

To date, the UK's National Film and Television School graduates have picked up 250 awards for their films in international festivals.

## Sources

Brit Arts  
Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Department of Culture, Media and Sport  
Annual Report 2000

Department of Culture, Media and Sport website:  
[www.culture.gov.uk](http://www.culture.gov.uk)

Arts Council of Wales website:  
[www.ccc-acw.org.uk](http://www.ccc-acw.org.uk)

British Council website:  
[www.britcoun.org](http://www.britcoun.org)

British Film Institute website:  
[www.bfi.uk](http://www.bfi.uk)

Dance Umbrella website:  
[www.danceumbrella.co.uk](http://www.danceumbrella.co.uk)

Design Council website:  
[www.design-council.org.uk](http://www.design-council.org.uk)

Institute of Contemporary Arts website:  
[www.newmediacentre.com](http://www.newmediacentre.com)

Arts Council of England website:  
[www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

Scottish Arts Council website:  
[www.sac.org.uk](http://www.sac.org.uk)

© Crown copyright  
Published by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, London  
Telephone: 020 7270 1500    Internet address: [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk)

Details of other FCO publications are available from  
[www.informationfrombritain.com](http://www.informationfrombritain.com)

Written by Jerome Monahan  
Designed by Touchpaper  
Printed by ABC Printers  
on paper produced from trees grown in sustainable forests and made and supplied by an ISO14001 accredited supply chain

April 2001 Order No: 1045

# BRITAIN

*Creativity, innovation and quality*