



Movie Memories at Glasgow Film Theatre

Highlights from an accessible cinema programme evaluation

GLASGOW FILM THEATRE







Contents

"From the second you turned up... it was

always great because they put the lights on outside, the old movie lights on, as they turn up, and the build-up was from that part on. And it was just... you can never lose that feeling of walking through the door, going into the cinema."

Daughter attending with her stepfather who has dementia and her mother who is his carer

4 About this report

- **5** Glasgow Film Theatre
- 7 The Movie Memories programme
- **10** Highlights from the evaluation
- 27 Cinema for all in the context of dementia
- **29** Statement of intent

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About this report

This report presents some highlights from the evaluation of the Movie Memories programme at Glasgow Film Theatre undertaken by HammondCare. This programme was funded for three years by the Life Changes Trust and is focused on a monthly cinema programme designed for people living with dementia and unpaid carers to enjoy together. Thank you to everyone who participated in the evaluation.

Please see Christie, J., Yates-Bolton, N. and Thompson-Bradley, O. (2021) Movie Memories at Glasgow Film Theatre: An evaluation of an accessible cinema programme for people living with dementia and unpaid carers. The Dementia Centre, HammondCare for the full evaluation report, including a Social Return on Investment analysis.



Foreword By Agnes Houston, Dementia Coordinator

I welcome this evaluation of the Movie Memories programme. What Glasgow Film Theatre has done is give back a movie experience that had been lost to people with dementia and their families. Many people with dementia live with sensory changes. I have hyperacusis (when everyday sounds seem much louder than they should) and lots of sensory issues. My last memory, before Movie Memories, of going to the theatre was awful. It was too noisy; it was too busy, and it was painful. A new movie would come out, and I would say 'that's not for me'. I would not even contemplate it. And I am not alone, this is the experience of many people living with dementia and their carers. Movie Memories have given me, and people like me, this experience back. So, nothing is impossible with a little work and looking out for others. For me, if my daughter was treating me to a day out, we now we have a place to go together, to have that cinema experience. It has given me back the experience of going to the movies as a pleasure, to share with others, in my home city of Glasgow.

Glasgow Film Theatre

Glasgow Film is a national centre for film and moving image, where audiences and filmmakers alike are welcomed to experience and debate cultural practice and ideas through diverse, unique, and quality programmes, that transform the way people see the world, through film.

Glasgow Film comprises Glasgow Film Theatre (GFT), Glasgow Film Festival (GFF) and Glasgow Youth Film Festival (GYFF), as well as an extensive range of engagement, outreach and educational programmes that aim to reach people of all ages and backgrounds. As a not-for-profit educational charity, Glasgow Film depends on audiences, public funding, sponsorship and support from Charitable Trusts, and individuals to deliver cultural, learning, engagement, and outreach activities (Cinema For All). The ethos is using film as an effective, accessible, enjoyable tool for learning with people of all ages, abilities, and income. The aim is to provide connection, community, and culture through engagement with film, for people of all ages.



Time to relax before a film

Glasgow Film Theatre

Glasgow Film Theatre (GFT) is an independent cinema in Glasgow city centre which plays a leading role in the cultural life of the city. Opening in 1939 as The Cosmo in an iconic building, the GFT was established by the Scottish Film Council in 1974. GFT prides itself on being Scotland's most diverse independent cinema and is host to the annual Glasgow Film Festival and Glasgow Youth Film Festival. Teaming up with partners allows GFT not only to add breadth and depth to the programme, but also to reach new audiences in innovative ways. GFT has attracted new and established talent. forging links with film exhibition collectives such as The New Black Film Collective and We Are Parable; advocacy and equality rights organisations National Autistic Society Scotland and deafscotland; human rights organisations such as Scottish Refugee Council and their annual Refugee Festival Scotland and Scottish strategic racial equality charity Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER) producing Black History Month film events. In addition, they have an Equalities, Learning and Engagement team who work across all of Glasgow Film's activities, both physically and virtually, to deliver the audience development and engagement aims of the organisation through a programme of learning and participation work integrated into the programme, engaging audiences, and those least likely to engage in formal cultural activity. Equalities, Learning and Engagement activities include screenings, debates, courses, workshops, interpretation, Q&As, seminars and project funded outreach work.

Building resilience and connections are key drivers for Glasgow Film. Over the recent past the organisation has developed three primary accessible programmes: D/deaf and Hard of Hearing-friendly Visible Cinema, an autism-friendly Access Film Club, and Movie Memories – a monthly dementia-friendly film programme. This report focuses on Movie Memories.

The Movie Memories programme

In 2017, GFT received three years of funding from the Life Changes Trust to launch Movie Memories; a monthly cinema programme designed for people living with dementia and unpaid carers.

Movie Memories includes classic and contemporary film screenings alongside a programme of live music for people living with dementia, carers, and members of the public in a safe and social environment where anyone is welcome.

The Movie Memories programme is staffed by the Public Engagement Coordinator, Development Manager, Projectionist, front of house staff and volunteers (Movie Memories Ambassadors).

Members of the public book tickets online or purchase them in advance while attending a Movie Memories film screening event. The front of house staff retains tickets to be sold on the day of screening for people who haven't made an advance booking. This decision was made to avoid disappointing people who were not aware of the pre-booking option. Volunteers (Movie Memories Ambassadors) are available throughout events to support people attending, from the moment they arrive at the cinema, to when they leave.

The Movie Memories programme

The ethos

- A welcoming and safe environment
- A social space, where conversation is encouraged
- Dementia aware staff and volunteers

Practical details

- There is an interval with live music and free refreshments
- All tickets are £3
- All events will be seated

The venue

- Clear signage
- An accessible toilet
- Flooring in the cinema is short pile carpet
- Well lit the cinema stairs are lit at all times
- Well ventilated

 Examples of films shown at Movie M

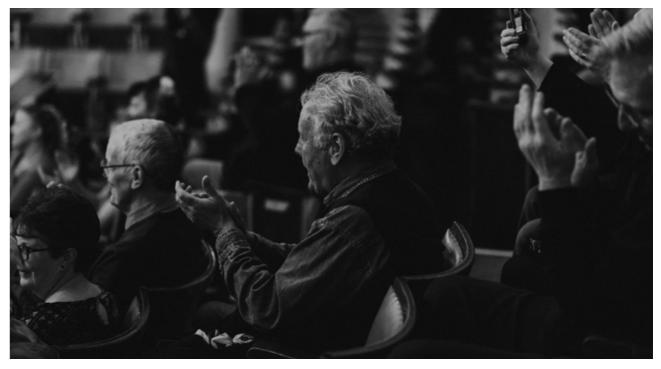
 Whiskey
 Judy

 Galore!
 Judy

 It's a
 Singin' in

 Wonderful Life
 Singin' in

Coast and Sea White Christmas An American in Paris To Have and Have Not



The joy of cinema

Nemories	
Rebecca	Sir Harry Lauder's World Famous Songs and More
Deaf Shorts Showcase	Easter Parade
A Tour Round Scotland	Pink Panther
Mamma Mia!	Summer Holiday

Our evaluation found that it is possible to create an accessible cinema experience for people with dementia.

This is facilitated by a combination of key people who act as champions and are engaged in a combination of advocacy. consultation, learning, and networking, and supporters, in several roles, who are engaged in practical tasks, such as adapting the environment, and supporting people to participate in the cinema attendance and to connect with the GFT community.



Movie Memories presents From Scotland with Love + Q&A hosted by Agnes Houston MBE with director Virginia Heath

Highlights from the evaluation



Jodie Wilkinson GFT Public Engagement Coordinator

Jodie is the Public Engagement Coordinator at GFT. In this role, Jodie has taken Movie Memories from the creation of the project through to implementation and coordination of the programme. Encouraged by the success of earlier inclusive cinema screening initiatives like D/deaf and Hard of Hearing-friendly Visible Cinema, activating the Movie Memories programme was the next logical and important step to build on GFT's equality and inclusion offer. The Life Changes Trust (LCT) funded the programme for a three-year period. This meant that GFT had 'the time to really be able to understand the flow of the audience, what they like and what they don't like'. Jodie explains how, with a venue as busy as GFT, this programme duration provided the opportunity to test different approaches and understand the challenges. In the final year, the team were still finding out new things about the events and how they are delivered.

For GFT and the Movie Memories team, the experience was a great way of developing a cinema community that is then able to reach out to other people from the wider community. 'For me... [we have] an internal community which includes myself and the Development Manager. Then we have the front of house team, and the ambassadors. We have Agnes [Dementia Coordinator] and then our Steering Group. So, all of those circles form part of the wider Movie Memories community. We needed to start by forming a minicommunity - a foundation to develop from.' GFT have taken a learning organisation approach, consulting with, and learning from, people with lived and learnt experience of dementia. What GFT has found is that once they opened the door to providing these screenings, people were incredibly happy to come because the experience is unique. Every month around 100 people come to enjoy a film on a Thursday morning. And as Jodie says, 'That is a great feeling, so we're really proud of this community.'

Movie Memories Ambassadors

Movie Memories Ambassadors, who receive dementia awareness training enhance the cinema experience. They do this in the following ways:

- Lining up from the entrance of the building right through to the cinema; standing in strategic positions along the route, making eye contact and engaging socially with people as they made their way to the cinema.
- Engaging in conversations with audience members at the interval and after film screening; writing down the feedback received to inform the ongoing development of the Movie Memories programme.
- Provide guidance and direction for audience members accessing their seats before the film screening.
- Providing a waiter service at the interval; offering audience members a cold drink with sweets or biscuits.
- · Pointing people in the right direction for the toilets.

Ambassadors now host the events which includes introducing the film, managing the interval, and promoting future events at the end of the screenings.

Highlights from the evaluation



Movie Memories Ambassadors

We found identifiable points of activity where the Movie Memories programme has an impact on people who take part. These are before the event (anticipation and preparation for the cinema experience), during the movie (viewing, participation, and presence), during the interval (belonging and friendship), and after the cinema (hope).. These activity points are important because they create spaces to connect and grow. In addition, the space between the cinema as a cultural centre and the community of Glasgow, and the wider cinema community is a space full of potential. We will take each of these in turn to explore the micro-activities that work together to build the whole experience.



Movie Memories Ambassador hosting a live pop-up event

Highlights from the evaluation

Anticipation and preparing for the cinema experience

Preparatory activities such as booking tickets and getting ready to attend the cinema are all part of the Movie Memories experience. Families and couples, and care home staff who assist residents to attend Movie Memories all shared their experiences of the anticipation. "Do you know what, they spend a lot of time talking about what do they put on, extra time with their makeup or their hair. So, it is not just that moment, it's the anticipation and excitement that they have before they go, and then that will be back to the care home and spoken of at dinner and excitement and that... So, that is what you do when you're going and it's special, you know." (GFT staff member).



Arriving at a Movie Memories event

At the movies: during the cinema experience

Movie Memories embraced the enjoyment of being back in the cinema and not just of watching a film at home which can be a solitary experience for many carers. Memories were evoked by being in a traditional theatre with curtains that open and close and red plush fabrics. While the Movie Memories team hoped that this would provide a real joy in reminiscence their focus was as much on the present as the past. "For a lot of people also it's the hubbub, it's the chat, it's the interaction with the Movie Memories Ambassador. Being in the moment and being talked to; people wanting to have a conversation with you..." (GFT staff member).



Social and cultural meaning

Attending a film screening in a cinema is a recognised cultural experience. "So many people who come along have a very strong memory [of the cinema] because cinema, specifically in Glasgow... was really important. There used to be 250 cinemas in the city centre or something like that in the forties and fifties." (GFT staff member). The Movie Memories team were keen to evoke memories for people through presenting a film, ensuring that there was space and time around the film showing for people to talk; and providing live music acts at the events, sometimes using the baby grand piano in the cinema, at other times guitarists and singers.



Chatting with a Movie Memories Ambassador



Being immersed in the stories of films and cinema

Audience members are encouraged to sing and talk during film screenings. This encourages a mix of factual reminiscence alongside escapism and fun. "You hear in the background [someone] saying, my Uncle Walter worked there. Is that my Uncle Walter? And then someone will say, do you know, my brother Jimmy worked there. And that's allowed an intimate [aspect] to the atmosphere, that this is my history, it's not history. This is people's life, that they remember." (GFT staff member).

"We also have people who just love the escapism of being able to sit and watch a film. The singing element as well, people really love that kind of expression, being able to sing along. When we did Calamity Jane, I came in at the back of the cinema and a woman just had her arms outstretched and she was just singing along, and there was kind of ... those visuals really stay with you as well as how people feel, that liberation, really, to respond." (GFT staff member). These events became a blend of the past and the present, meaning the audience could bring their thoughts, their feelings, their responses to the interaction to create a new cultural event in that moment. This approach empowered audience members as individuals to contribute in their own way.



Live music before a Movie Memories event

Highlights from the evaluation

John's story

John, who attended Movie Memories with his wife who has dementia, shares how the live music at Movie Memories had such an impact on his life as a carer for his wife:

- Oh, just tremendous, I used to video it and do a, they call it a tag on Facebook or whatever... I would take photographs or videos of the singers or the piano player, the guitar player... the actual entertainment around the film, was amazing.
- When you go [to Movie Memories] and see all these people made me euphoric, just by their skill at playing.
- Sometimes [the benefit of listening to the music] that could last days... They were high, high days, but they also benefitted [me] in that when the cinema finished and I

from the Conservatoire in Glasgow... they would sometimes come along and play their instruments... and some of them

would go home, I was back into, I mean this in the best way, I was back into my... routine [as a carer] which can't alter. So that level [of impact]...it could easily go up to the fourth day.

The interval

The interval was a chance to have a soft drink, a bag of sweets and more live music. The sweets are provided by GFT and are sourced from a well-known traditional sweet shop in Glasgow.



In the interval audience members can also engage with cinematic artefacts from years gone by from Glasgow Museums Resource Centre. Audience members could pick up, look at and talk about these items. This presented an opportunity to talk to new people.



Highlights from the evaluation

Agnes, who is living with dementia shared people's experience of the interval during the film "I was getting feedback [about Movie Memories] I was asking a couple of people who had attended with dementia, so what were their memories?... Every one of them said 'I love the interval'....and it reminded them of years ago, they always had an interval. So, it ticked all the boxes, you know. I think that was as important for the experience as the whole thing...I think if you took the interval away, it would take away something from the experience."



Cinema related items for engagement and exploration

Leaving the cinema

As people left the cinema after a film showing Movie Memories Ambassadors would continue to engage in conversation with the audience about the film. As people leave the cinema information is shared with them about upcoming film screenings. Leaflets are available highlighting the next three films. Bookings for the next film screenings were taken. *"I just feel good. I feel special. I think a lot of people would say they make me feel special. And, you know, you would hardly get a word in, because as people are leaving, everybody is buzzing and chatting ...the excitement of people leaving the movie. It is tremendous...a tremendous feeling."* (Person living with dementia).

Impact on different audience members

GFT collected feedback as part of their ongoing self-evaluation process. Overwhelmingly audience members described the joy and the celebration. *"This has been such a joyful experience." "I love that at Movie Memories natural reactions to film are celebrated."*

Alzheimer Scotland hosted memory cafés which were also attended by audience members. They described how café conversations focused on events at the cinema. This sharing of experiences resonates with the perspective of a researcher in dementia-friendly practices who shared with GFT her observation that engaging with Movie Memories reminds us of the importance of shared experience in all of our lives. Care services do not always prioritise this.

Carers shared how their time at Movie Memories continued to impact on them after the cinema event. John, who cares for his wife Maureen said "If I was to say it, when it was on, the build up to it, the day, and the days after, filled a colossal void. It was the monthly highlight of my life when it was on. But I really loved it and I think through them all, I only missed two, and that was due to hospital appointments for Maureen which we had to attend. I would say that such a service was just a gift from the Gods. And I absolutely firmly believe that it is vital to people who are carers."

Highlights from the evaluation

The connected space between the cinema as a cultural place and the wider community comes to life when the impact of this programme is seen through the views of the volunteers and staff. "This [Movie Memories] was just a little special for me. This was more than just checking tickets and so on. You're actually helping people. So, I think that the main thing that we got out of it... a feel-good factor." (Movie Memories Ambassador).

It has a very warm place in my heart...I have to still say that Movie Memories is my absolute top favourite event because of the happiness on the faces of people when they leave. It's quite infectious and it does make you feel quite emotional that all of the hard work behind the scenes is really worth it because it means so much. It's lovely to be able to chat to, you know, somebody who's come in a minibus from a care home, who clearly hasn't been out for quite a while, who's really enjoyed that whole experience, the interaction with the staff." (GFT staff member).

Added value

The Movie Memories programme can be visualised as a community, centred around a love of cinema, but collectively with reference to the outcomes listed above, achieving much more for everyone involved. Social bonding capital¹ the connections within groups, can be found in the way in which attendees interacted with the team of regular volunteers before, during and after the film screening and the way in which Movie Memories attendees got to know other people who attend. *"We always kind of sat on the same seats, so other carers [with their family members] would come in and they would sit, so you'd end up chatting to the carers; just saying hello and how you doing?"* (Husband attending with his wife who has dementia).

The social bonding experience was nurtured by aspects of the experience such as having somewhere to go together without worrying about the things that you associate with the cinema (the need to be quiet, find your way in the dark, sit without moving around or being in someone's way). *"It was wee things like if Andrew went to the toilet...the volunteers there knew him, knew his face. If he went the wrong way he would have nicely [said] 'Oh, you're looking for your seat?'... He would do it in a nice way, rather than making, rather than make him feel he'd forgotten. So, all that it was a very secure thing. And so nicely done with people you know? People might shout out or say things, nobody bothered, nobody got tense or insecure about that or embarrassed about it." (Stepdaughter of audience member who has dementia).*

Positive outcomes identified for a range of stakeholders related to Movie Memories

Have a joyful familiar experience – 'being back at the pictures' Engage with others through a shared experience (encourages conversation/reminiscence about film/experience/memories)

Carers



Have fun and relaxing experience Sense of support through connecting with other people with and through a shared experience Have opportunity to do something special and enjoyable together

Volunteers

Enhanced wellbeing Increased knowledge and understanding of dementia

Glasgow Film Theatre

Increased inclusion GFT is a model for similar organisations seeking to offer dementia friendly film screenings

¹ Putnam, R.D (2000). Bowling alone: the collapse and revival of American community. New York. Simon and Schuster.

Highlights from the evaluation

People living with dementia

Moira's story

Moira, her mother and stepfather, Andrew, were regular attendees at Movie Memories. Moira shared some of their shared experiences and their strong desire for the programme to start as soon as possible after the lifting of COVID-19 lockdown regulations.

- I mean the whole aspect... from the second you turned up outside the premise, and it was always great because they put the lights on outside, the old movie lights on, as they turn up, and the build-up was from that part on. And it was just... you can never lose that feeling of walking through the door, going into the cinema.
- · I couldn't say to Andrew, well, why did you like Casablanca, vesterday? Well. he won't remember that. but he would remember if we went to see, you know, like a musical, he'd remember that. They'd walk down the street, and they could sing a wee song together, or you know things like that. That would stick with them.
- Depending on what it was and who was in it. It might spark up another memory for him, you know, other than that specific thing. And then, that leads on to conversations, doesn't it? Who did you like to go and see at the movies, who was your favourite, and all that kind of thing. So, it gives you a different kind of conversation as well.

Cinema for all in the context of dementia

The evaluation found that it is possible to create an accessible cinema experience for people living with dementia and that GFT has achieved this. The cinema is more than the movie. It is an experience: the ritual of a shared hobby or outing.

Getting dressed up, looking forward to it, buying your ticket, sharing the pre-movie anticipation. Chatting about it after. Having snacks and drinks. Filling the spaces between – for relationships, support, connections. Shared experiences are what create a sense of community and keep the community strong and together. Including the public in dementia accessible cinema experiences contributes to this sense of being 'together' as a cinema community. Cinema is the place where the telling and sharing of stories happens. It has a cultural significance in society. To include people with dementia is more than a social activity, or something nice to do, it is an act of citizenship, of creating new stories which find space for people with dementia and carers (Christie, 2020)² It does this by reaching out to the wider community (of dementia support networks, care homes, the cinema going public) and fills a space in people's lives. It has an impact on reducing the isolation that carers can experience as opportunities for shared activities dwindle and makes an authentic space for the cinema as a community resource, open to all. This facilitates the citizenship of people with dementia and carers, as they enjoy access to the resources and pastimes there to be enjoyed by everyone. This is no small thing.

Cinema for all in the context of dementia

In conclusion, the stakeholders who form the community of Movie Memories value the programme as an asset that enables them to connect with others and share a joyful arts experience. Carers feel a sense of support through connecting with others with mutual experience, whether that be other carers or other film goers. Volunteers also benefit, through enhanced wellbeing, as well as having an improved understanding and knowledge of dementia. Movie Memories is woven into the wider community through its volunteer network but also its wide range of partnerships. The programme has made considerable contributions to raising awareness and understanding of dementia in the community, while making Glasgow Film Theatre authentically inclusive of people living with dementia, both those living at home and in care homes. It provides a model for other, similar organisations wishing to improve the experience of people with dementia. And as such has achieved its aim of delivering an accessible cinema experience for people with dementia, or simply put, a cinema for all.

Statement of intent

Establishing the Movie Memories programme, and nurturing its growth, has been a significant journey. It has irrevocably changed the nature of participation in GFT for the better.

The formation of a dementia friendly community with cinema culture at its heart was part of the long-term strategy for Glasgow Film Theatre: we reacted and reformed in response to our ageing audiences. The programme's inception came from a thorough review of GFT's engagement pathways and there emerged a clear need for us to provide targeted audience engagement for our more vulnerable and marginalised patrons.

For many older people, cinema was a big part of their cultural life when they were younger. Most of our older audience members have early memories of visits to the Cosmo Cinema: the first purpose-built 'art-house' cinema to open outside of London in May 1939, renamed the Glasgow Film Theatre in 1974.

Following a research and development period, GFT launched the innovative Movie Memories programme in October 2017 with vital funding from The Life Changes Trust and has gone from strength to strength. Guided by a steering group of dementia support and advocacy organisations, our dementia coordinator Agnes Houston MBE, a brilliant front of house team and volunteer ambassadors, we reached our 1700 audience target 9 months ahead of the planned project end. Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic has forced a pause to the in-house programme, we have adapted by providing online engagement and will restart live in-house activity as soon as it is safe to do so.

GFT is committed to ensuring that people with dementia, their families, carers and friends can continue to enjoy a cinema experience. The power of the moving image cannot be underestimated for the potential impact it can have on people's perspective on and understanding of the world. Films, no matter what genre, bring us together. They move us, inspire us and allow us to escape, even comfort us. Sharing laughter or tears together is proof that we have so much more in common than we can

Statement of intent

sometimes think. Movie Memories strives to seize that shared experience to build a dementia friendly community, providing excellent cultural experiences to participate in.

On reflection, the programme's greatest achievement might be in its very foundations. The programme was built on a commitment to Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: that "everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts [...] and its benefits." At GFT we believe this is fundamental to the future of cultural activity. As a venue, as a team and as a cultural institution, we believe that it is critical to ensure that marginalised and vulnerable audiences do not go unheard and that they participate and influence the cultural life of the community. A human rights-based approach to cultural participation, based on mutual respect and open dialogue with participants, goes beyond a commitment to our community, vital though that is. It is also an obligation that we have to the people of the city. As we navigate our way out of the immediate impact of a global pandemic, the fallout of which may marginalise and make many more people vulnerable. human rights-based cultural engagement strategies are critical. And if not now, then when?

To date, the equalities and engagement work at GFT has focused on striving to eliminate barriers in cinema accessibility; reviewing physical space design, providing subtitles and captioned screenings, regular audio description provision, reduced ticket costs, physical accessibility support in cinema and installing regular D/deaf, autism, dementia friendly events with front of house staff awareness training. We are committed to ongoing developments, and we will work with communities to make the adjustments they want and need.

At GFT we firmly believe that people with their unique lived experience know what works best for them and their community, and that all marginalised and/or misrepresented persons must be valued as integral and essential contributors. This informed our collaborative approach within Movie Memories development and delivery.

Statement of intent

Watching the Movie Memories programme grow has been a privilege for the GFT and we cannot thank its audience enough. So many important memories have been made and so many lessons learned. One of the most important of those lessons is that film cannot be underestimated for its power to bring communities together and improve individual mental wellbeing and confidence. As Agnes once shared, *"I may not remember the film, but I'll remember the feeling".*

Jodie Wilkinson, Public Engagement Coordinator, Film & Festivals

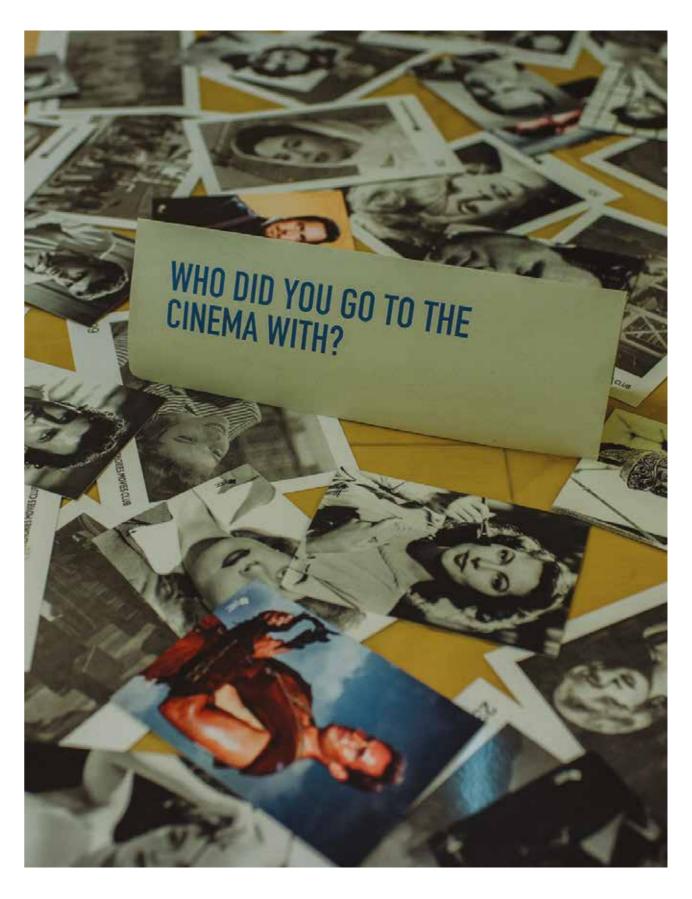
Statement of intent

As a charity, we have to self-generate income from sales from tickets, bars and private hires of our screens. This equates to 60% of the costs and running of the GFT and our community projects. To cover our remaining 40% shortfall, we look to the generosity of individuals and charitable bodies.

We were fortunate enough to have received 3 years of funding for Movie Memories but as of April 2022, we will be looking for a funder to continue to support us on our journey. Equipped with our findings over the years, we are in a strong position of knowledge and are looking forward to the next stage of development and potential partnerships.

In a time where funding is at the most in demand, your support is needed more than ever. If you would like to join us on this journey by donating to Movie Memories, please contact development@glasgowfilm.org or visit our website www.glasgowfilm.org.

Lorna Sinclair, Development Manager, Glasgow Film & Festivals





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HammondCare International Limited is a company registered in England and Wales with company number 10238662

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