

Culture at your fingertips from home

- Across the UK, arts organisations, museums and theatres are unveiling innovative digital plans to ensure culture and creativity is accessible for all
- Online offerings to the public set to increase over the coming weeks thanks to Arts Council England's £160m support package and the DCMS funded Digital Culture Network

Over the past week, arts and cultural organisations have launched a range of digital initiatives to ensure extraordinary national collections and performances can be enjoyed by everyone whilst following the latest guidance from public health experts to stay at home.

The range of online opportunities spans theatre, dance, opera, literature, museums and fine arts, all of which can be accessed at the click of a button, from the homes of millions of people across the UK and the rest of the world.

Culture Secretary, Oliver Dowden, said:

The UK's cultural sector is one of our great global calling cards, and these new digital initiatives are ensuring they will continue to be enjoyed by people across the country and around the globe in these difficult times.

Thanks to the innovation shown by our world class cultural institutions, we can continue to enjoy the fantastic work of UK artists as we all do our bit to stay at home, save lives and protect our incredible NHS.

Offers include:

- A number of DCMS-sponsored museums and galleries, including the British Museum and National Gallery, are offering virtual tours of their permanent displays, ensuring the national collection remains accessible for all.
- Under the hashtag, #ConnectedByArt, the Government Art Collection will be sharing images of artworks currently on display in government buildings around the world, helping to start important conversations around loneliness and isolation.
- Sadler's Wells is sharing new content on its "Digital Stage", including digital premieres of full-length dance performances, screendance – choreography designed for film – and new dance workshops that have been specially created for families with young children and the over 60s to take part in at home.
- The National Theatre's "National Theatre At Home", an initiative which makes a selection of much-loved National Theatre Live productions available to stream for free on YouTube.

- City Arts in Nottingham has developed a free app which features artworks and artefacts from collections across the UK, including the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, The Lowry and the Pitt Rivers Museum. The app, available on Apple and Android devices, also has special features for users with dementia.
- The Royal Opera House is offering a free programme of curated online broadcasts, musical masterclasses and cultural insights, as well as free, weekly ballet and opera productions streamed on demand via Facebook and YouTube.
- BFI Player is offering a 2 week free trial for everyone to enjoy the best classic and contemporary world cinema with curated selections from Parasite director Bong Joon-ho, Tilda Swinton and Mark Kermode, 1000's of free archive films through Britain on Film and a special BFI Flare at Home online festival from the 2020 edition, including filmmaker Q&A's and Spotify playlists
- The Southbank Centre's new weekly "Culture Fix" shares literature, music and visual arts content with subscribers. This week's edition included podcasts with Louis Theroux and Hilary Mantel as well as playlists and archive imagery of past Hayward Gallery exhibitions.
- Sage Gateshead is linking up with 25 concert halls as part of the European Concert Hall network to stream archive performances on social media every evening.
- From Monday 6 April, six rotating Shakespeare's Globe productions will be available to watch for free on the theatre's video-on-demand service, Globe Player. Featured films will be captioned to make sure they are as accessible as possible. The Globe Player will also host all 37 'Complete Walk' short films for free.
- Projects have been developed to inspire creativity in the home, for instance 64 Million Artists have set up 'Create to Connect' with daily creative challenges to participate in and Fun Palaces have set up Tiny Revolutions of Connection, looking at how to use creativity to support those who are self-isolating both online and offline.

The UK's cultural sector has been supported in developing its digital content over the last year through the support of the [Digital Tech Champions](#) network – a DCMS funded initiative as part of the Digital Culture Network. These champions are now working remotely and can provide cultural organisations with one-to-one support and resources on:

- working and collaborating remotely
- keeping up engagement with audiences
- strategies for generating income for the sector through online retail and donations
- digital strategy, data analysis, and search engine marketing

The Government will support digital content offerings to increase over the coming weeks, for instance by enabling funding to contribute to Arts Council England's (ACE) £160m support package, part of which is funding the development of creative responses to the Covid-19 crisis through participatory digital content for people self-isolating.

In addition, as part of BBC Arts' [Culture in Quarantine](#) initiative the BBC

and ACE has created an artist fund that will commission and distribute around 25 new works by independent artists.

The Culture Diary is also compiling a list of online arts events which will be regularly updated during this period. You can view the full list [here](#).

Notes to Editors

The Chancellor announced that music venues and theatres, along with any other business in the hospitality and leisure sector with a rateable value of less than £51,000, will pay no business rates for 12 months and will be eligible for cash grants of up to £25,000 during this period.

Arts Council England (ACE) announced a £160 million emergency response fund, made possible by Government funding, to complement the package of financial support set out by the Chancellor. The ACE funding will focus on stabilising arts and cultural organisations, as well as supporting freelancers and individual artists.

This week, the BFI, PRS for Music and Musicians' Union all launched funds to provide further support to the creative industries.