



Artist Callout

About Queen's Hall Arts

Queen's Hall Arts (QHA) is a registered charity and multipurpose arts centre based in the heart of Hexham. We develop and deliver a vibrant arts programme offering a wide range of shows, exhibitions, concerts and special events, support professional and aspiring artists, provide opportunities for our community to take part in the arts and offer a valuable creative resource to our local area. Find out more: www.queenshall.co.uk

About Our Freedom: Then and Now

2025 marks 80 years since the end of the Second World War, a pivotal moment that reshaped life across the UK and beyond. To commemorate this anniversary, arts centres and libraries across the country will be hosting a powerful new programme of community-led creative projects.

Led by **Future Arts Centres**, in partnership with Libraries Connected and supported by Arts Council England, ***Our Freedom: Then and Now*** invites local people to explore what freedom means to them, then, now, and in the future.

As part of this national initiative, Queen's Hall Arts is leading a local commission that prioritises community voices. Inspired by Poet Laureate Simon Armitage's specially commissioned piece *Freedom Road*, our project will connect past and present, honouring personal and shared histories through a contemporary lens.

Our Freedom: Then and Now will run from July to November 2025.

Artist Commission

We are seeking an artist or collective to co-create a new public-facing work that explores the question: ***What does freedom mean to us today, in this place, through the lens of the Second World War and its legacy?***

The project will focus on RAF Spadeadam, a remote site on the Northumberland and Cumbria border. Built in the 1950s to support the Blue Streak rocket programme, the base reflects a moment in Britain's Cold War history. Although the project was later abandoned, parts of the original site remain, offering a striking prompt for creative reflection.

Our starting point will be Simon Armitage's poem *Freedom Road*, which can be used to begin conversations about freedom in personal, political, and historical terms.

A video of Simon performing the poem can be found on our website [here](#).

We are committed to cultural activity that reaches across different communities and lived experiences, and this commission is a part of that approach. We have begun work with the Station Community Support Officer at RAF Spadeadam and will run workshops at their Family Day in August. We will also engage with Air Cadets and local veterans who have a connection to the area and the base. The project aims to include a range of participants, including military personnel, veterans, families and young people.

We are looking for applications from artists working in Animation, projection and moving image-based work. We particularly encourage those with experience in participatory or socially engaged practice and an interest in working across communities and generations. This can be a group of artists working together or an individual artist.

Selection

A panel including representatives of Queen's Hall and the local community will select the commissioned artist (s).

Fee

The total artist fee is **£5,000** including materials, preparation time, travel, and expenses.

Timeline

- **Application deadline:** Sunday 20 July 2025
- **Shortlisted artists interviewed (online):** 24 & 25 July 2025
- **Research and planning:** July - August 2025
- **Workshops with RAF personnel, families and young people:** August – early October 2025.
- **Drop-in workshop for families on Wednesday 6 August.**
- **Public screening(s) and final presentation:** November 2025
- **Project evaluation deadline:** December 2025

How to Apply

To apply, please email the following to workforus@queenshall.co.uk:

- Examples of previous work and links to photos / films
- A proposal of how you will approach the project – including gathering ideas from community participants and translating them into an animation or moving image piece of work. (word limit 300)
- Contact details
- Artists Bio
- Any access requirements you'd like us to be aware of

Deadline for applications: Sunday 20 July 2025.

If you have any questions about your application, please email workforus@queenshall.co.uk.

Additional Information

We welcome applications from artists of all backgrounds and are committed to making this opportunity as accessible and inclusive as possible. Please contact us with any access needs or support requirements.

The successful artist will need to travel in the West of Northumberland and potentially into Cumbria. The workshops may take place at the weekends or in the evenings.

The artist will retain copyright of the final work. Queen's Hall will hold the right to exhibit it in perpetuity, with the understanding that, given the sensitivities of the groups involved, the work cannot be sold or shown elsewhere for commercial purposes.



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