

= Arnolfini =

The Arnolfini is an international arts centre and gallery in Bristol , England . It has a programme of contemporary art exhibitions , artist 's performance , music and dance events , poetry and book readings , talks , lectures and cinema . There is also a specialist art bookshop and a café bar . Educational activities are undertaken and experimental digital media work supported by online resources . A number of festivals are regularly hosted by the gallery . Arnolfini is funded by Bristol City Council and Arts Council England , with some corporate and individual supporters .

The gallery was founded in 1961 by Jeremy Rees , and was originally located in Clifton . In the 1970s it moved to Queen Square , before moving to its present location , Bush House on Bristol 's waterfront , in 1975 . The name of the gallery is taken from Jan van Eyck 's 15th @-@ century painting , The Arnolfini Portrait . Arnolfini has since been refurbished and redeveloped in 1989 and 2005 . Artists whose work has been exhibited include Bridget Riley , Rachel Whiteread , Richard Long and Jack Yeats . Performers have included Goat Island Performance Group , the Philip Glass Ensemble , and Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company . The gallery reached a new audience in April 2010 , when it was chosen to host one of the three 2010 general election debates .

= = History = =

Jeremy Rees started Arnolfini with the assistance of his wife Annabel , and the painter John Orsborn in 1961 . The original location was above a bookshop in the Triangle in Clifton , Bristol . In 1968 , Rees was able to give up his teaching job and with the aid of private funding and Arts Council funding relocated the gallery to Queen Square , then to E Shed , the current home of the Watershed Media Centre . In 1975 , Arnolfini moved to its present home in Bush House , occupying two floors of a 19th @-@ century Grade II * listed tea warehouse situated on the side of the Floating Harbour in Bristol city centre . The remainder of the building was office space leased out by developers JT Group .

The architect of Bush House was Richard Shackleton Pope , who constructed first the south part of the warehouse (1831) then extended it to the north in 1835 ? 1836 . Its original use was as a warehouse for local iron foundry D. , E. & A. Acraman . The building has a Pennant Sandstone exterior with arched ground level entrances and arched windows above . This style of architecture is the first example of the Bristol Byzantine style which became popular in the 1850s . Later conversion to a tea warehouse added interstitial floors .

Originally dedicated to exhibiting the work of artists from the West of England , under the directorship of Barry Barker (1986 ? 1991) the gallery moved towards a more general spread of contemporary art . Barker supervised a successful refurbishment of the gallery spaces and café bar by David Chipperfield . Before development work began , the Arnolfini was attracting over 285 @,@ 000 visitors per year . Subsequent Directors have been Tessa Jackson (1991 ? 1999) , Caroline Collier (1999 ? 2005) and Tom Trevor (2005 @-@ 2013) .

As part of a two @-@ year development project that finished in September 2005 , the old warehouse has been fully redeveloped , adding another attic storey . Arnolfini now occupies the lower three floors and basement , and the upper floors are leased to help pay for the running costs . One tenant is the School of Creative Arts , part of the University of the West of England . Funding for this development was received from the National Lottery and the Barker @-@ Mill Trust , set up by long term Arnolfini patron Peter Barker @-@ Mill . The original committee to support Arnolfini included Peter Barker @-@ Mill , Ann Hower , and Lawrence Ogilvie .

= = Name = =

The Arnolfini is named after Jan van Eyck 's masterpiece The Arnolfini Portrait (1434) depicting the merchant and arts patron Giovanni Arnolfini . The Arnolfini Portrait is one of the earliest paintings to assert the presence of the artist within its depiction (an inscription in the middle of the work and a reflection in a mirror on the back wall) and one of Arnolfini 's consistent concerns : to explore the

role of artist as a witness and recorder of what is around them ? contemporary society . The painting is in the National Gallery , London and it was one of the founder 's favourite paintings .

= = Today = =

Arnolfini has three floors of galleries , a specialist arts bookshop , a cinema which can also be used as a performance space for theatre , live art , dance and music , a specialist arts bookshop , a reading room that provides reference material for all past exhibitions and wide range of books and catalogues , and a café bar . Entrance to the galleries is free of charge . Notable exhibitions have included works by Bridget Riley , Richard Long , Rachel Whiteread , Paul McCartney , Angus Fairhurst and Louise Bourgeois . Regular events include poetry and film festivals , live art and dance performances , lectures and jazz and experimental music concerts , including Bodies in Flight , Goat Island Performance Group , Akram Khan , the London Sinfonietta , the Philip Glass Ensemble , Random Dance , and Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company .

There is an active access and education programme , hosting visits from students , workshops with artists , presenting interpretative information and offering some work experience placements within the gallery. project.ARNOLFINI is an online experimental web site with dumps of digital media related to Arnolfini exhibitions and events , past and present , which may be reorganised by any online user , utilising resources on the web site to create new works and projects under a copyleft license . Arnolfini also hosts events from outside organisations , including the Encounters Short Film Festival (along with the Watershed Media Centre) , Mayfest , the first Festival of British Independent Cinema , the biennial Inbetween Time Festival of Live Art and Intrigue and the Bristol Artists Book Events . In April 2010 , British Sky Broadcasting chose Arnolfini to host the second of the three 2010 general election debates .

Arnolfini receives funding from Arts Council England , and Bristol City Council . According to returns lodged with the Charity Commission for the year ending in March 2009 , Arnolfini had 398 @ ,@ 000 visitors in 2008 / 2009 . Income was £ 2 @ .@ 08 million and expenditure was £ 2 @ .@ 4 million and the gallery employed 44 people .