

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WE HAVE LIFT OFF! THE QUEEN'S HALL INCREASES ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL

New Mobilift allowing wheelchair access to The Queen's Hall stage will be christened at Drake Music Scotland's 20th Anniversary Concert Centre Stage, 5 May



Neil Patterson, musician in Drake Music Scotland's Digital Orchestra and #LetMeONStage Ambassador unveils the new Mobilift at The Queen's Hall

Thanks to a **generous donation** from one of its members, Professor John Dale, The Queen's Hall has purchased a Mobilift CX wheelchair lift making its stage one of the **most accessible** of any arts venue in Scotland.

The installation coincides perfectly with **Drake Music Scotland's 20th Anniversary Celebrations, Centre Stage**, and the launch of their **#LetMeONStage campaign** which fights for equal access to stages for all performers. **Thursa Sanderson, Chief Executive of Drake Music Scotland said,** *"We need to see more disabled musicians performing and hear their great music. That's why it's so important for stage and backstage access to be considered as well as access for audiences. We're delighted at the forward thinking attitude of this great Edinburgh live music venue!"*

The collaboration between The Queen's Hall and Drake Music Scotland goes back to the latter's founding in 1997, with a 10th anniversary celebration in 2007 and inclusion in the Resonate series of schools' concerts in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council.

Nigel Griffiths, Chair of The Queen's Hall Board said, *"We are delighted to have been able to purchase this lift thanks to valuable support from one of The Queen's Hall's Members. We are already one of Edinburgh's most accessible venues for audience members and this gives equal access to our stage for all performers. The added benefit of the Mobilift's design is that we can easily hire it out to other venues with access issues, supporting Drake's #LetMeONStage campaign in the process."*

The Mobilift CX is operated manually so is extremely portable and easy to operate. Users enter and exit the lift via a ramp which can be raised to a height 1.52m. The Queen's Hall will be making it **available to other venues** in the UK for a modest hire fee and transport costs.

Tickets for Drake Music Scotland's Centre Stage, May 5, 7pm are available **now** from The Queen's Hall: www.queenshall.net / 0131 668 2019.

Organisations interested in **hiring the Mobilift** from The Queen's Hall should contact David Heavenor, Development Manager: davidh@queenshalledinburgh.org / 0131 668 2019.

For interviews, hi-res images and press tickets please contact:

Emma Mortimore, Marketing Manager: 0131 622 7381 | emmam@queenshalledinburgh.org

NOTES FOR EDITORS

The Queen's Hall, established 1979 is Edinburgh's foremost mid-sized live music venue playing host to an extraordinary range of world-class artists from all musical fields: classical, jazz, folk and roots, rock and pop and Americana. Our perfectly-proportioned, intimate auditorium, flawless acoustics and adaptability make us a unique and valuable resource in Edinburgh's cultural life. We have provided facilities for the International, Fringe, Jazz, Film, Fiddle and Science Festivals and for many local amateur and professional groups, as well as being a key venue for music, comedy and spoken-word acts touring (inter)nationally. www.thequeenshall.net

Drake Music Scotland is the nation's leading arts organisation providing music making opportunities for people with disabilities. Our expertise in inclusive music technology and specialist teaching methods support people of all ages and a wide range of disabilities to play, learn and compose music independently. Drake Music Scotland was established as a charitable organisation in Scotland in 1997 and since then has worked with over 13,000 children and adults across Scotland. Our biggest achievements to date include setting up the Digital Orchestra of talented young disabled musicians – a world first. All Join In is our flagship education programme for special schools throughout Scotland and we are world leaders in training and CPD in our field, disseminating our innovative developments in technology and Figurenotes.. www.drakemusicscotland.org

Centre Stage on 4/5 May is Drake Music Scotland's 20th Anniversary Concert and Symposium and launch of their #LetMeONStage campaign. The Symposium will focus on the experiences and musical journeys of disabled musicians and music creators. The concert will feature the world premiere of *Skein* a collaboration between the Digital Orchestra and Aidan O'Rourke of Lau, as well as

performances from Equilibrium, Liveheart, The Varifocals, Audability and Drake Music Scotland soloists.

Symposium: 4 May, 10:00-16:30. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/drake-music-scotland-20th-anniversary-symposium-and-concert-tickets-39915280679?aff=ehomecard>

Centre Stage: 5 May, 19:00. www.thequeenshall.net | 0131 668 2019

Neil Patterson first started taking piano lessons in February 2015 then joined Drake Music Scotland band, Liveheart on keyboards and backing vocals, performing at many different gigs and venues. As a member of Liveheart he was awarded the Drake Music Scotland #iamamusician award for band of the year in 2015. His most recent project with Drake has been in the Digital Orchestra which recently played at the True Colours Festival in Singapore.

Project funders: The Queen's Hall thanks The Russell Trust, The Martin Connell Trust and Professor John Dale for funding project costs and the purchase of the Mobilift. Drake Music Scotland is grateful for support from Creative Scotland, CastleRock Edinvar, The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo and City of Edinburgh Council Culture Fund, PRS Foundation Talent Development Partnership, Culture & Business Fund Scotland and PreSonus Inc. and The Schuh Trust.
