



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

News Release

Issued: 6 September 2016

Peek at £6.5m hall revamp lets music fans sound out rare exhibits

A virtual tour of Scotland's oldest concert hall is giving people a glimpse of the venue's £6.5million renovation.

The free app lets people explore St Cecilia's Hall at the University of Edinburgh and its unparalleled collection of musical instruments, prior to its opening next spring.

The app offers a window on the A-listed building's four galleries and concert hall, telling fascinating stories behind some of the instruments that will be on display.

Highlights include the University's world-class keyboard collection. The app gives a history of the irreplaceable, ornate harpsichords and allows people to hear what they sound like.

Other attractions include a large contrabass serpent – a woodwind instrument more than one metre high – and a Chinese gong that was the on-screen emblem of film giants, The Rank Organisation.

The app also details St Cecilia's Hall's many uses since it first opened in 1763. As well as hosting concerts, the distinctive oval-shape hall has been a Baptist church, a school and a ballroom – popular in the 1940s and 50s.

The Georgian venue – which has been closed for restoration since 2014 – is situated in Edinburgh's old town.

The University of Edinburgh's collection of rare musical instruments will be brought together for the first time when the venue opens its doors to the public next year.

Jacky MacBeath, Head of Museums at the University of Edinburgh, said: "We are delighted to offer people the chance to glimpse into St Cecilia's Hall before it opens next year. We are incredibly proud of the restored building and the instruments it will hold. The virtual tours is a fantastic opportunity to explore the venue and learn more about the exhibits."

St Cecilia's Hall - A Window into the Future is available for download on the App Store: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/st-cecilias/id1074220101?ls=1&mt=8>

It is also available for Android on: <https://play.google.com/apps/testing/uk.ac.luma.StCecilias>

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