

# City to take a bite out of Big Apple

**B**ELFAST businesses will be urged next week to take a bigger bite from the Big Apple.

The city's business community believes that greater collaboration between New York and Belfast will help secure future economic, cultural and social progress and success.

And closer ties will be forged at a major summit entitled 'New York-New Belfast' which takes place in New York City next Wednesday and Thursday.

It represents a major opportunity to showcase an emerging and vibrant Belfast to some of New York's most influential business, political and civic leaders.

The two-day event will feature world-renowned speakers and influential representatives from across New York with the aim of opening up not only investment opportunities, but stronger cooperation on tourism and issues linked to regeneration so that the eco-

nomonic benefits of progress can be felt throughout Belfast.

It will feature a high powered delegation from Belfast's business, culture and arts and civic community such as CBI chief Terence Brannigan, renowned artist Rita Duffy, Tourism Ireland chief executive Niall Gibbons and Richard Williams, who heads up Northern Ireland Screen.

The seminar will also hear from an impressive line-up of US speakers including US Economic Envoy to Northern Ireland Declan Kelly, world-renowned architect Michael Sorkin; New York City Comptroller John Liu; business leader Shaun Kelly of KPMG and Ben Chrnelic of NYSE technologies.

The event has been organised as a follow-up event to the successful City of Quarters conference in Belfast in March, during which a series of investment announcements were made including government funding for the Univer-



■ **TRANSATLANTIC LINKS:** Helping to launch the New York-New Belfast summit are Len O'Hagan, chairman of Belfast Harbour, and KPMG partner Eamonn Donaghy with artist Rita Duffy

sity of Ulster Belfast Campus and an integrated transport hub for bus and rail service for Belfast city.

Len O'Hagan, chairman of Belfast Harbour, who will be attending the seminar, says closer ties between one of the world's most renowned cities and a new, outward looking Belfast would provide a logical step in formalising already

strong links between both cities.

"Belfast is redefining its international image and it is important we build on our long-standing relationship with the US, particularly New York City," he said.

"This 'New Belfast' has much to offer the overseas investment community, not least the various regeneration projects

underway throughout the city."

The private-sector led initiative will also see the launch of the Belfast Ambassadors Network during the event in the US.

The ambassadors will promote transatlantic partnerships across a range of sectors and is being supported by Tourism Ireland.