

FUTURE ARTSCENTRES

Annual Report 2015-16



FUTURE ARTSCENTRES

Summary

This report covers activity undertaken by nine leading UK arts centres during 2015/16, and is intended to provide a snapshot of the artistic, social and economic contribution and impact the arts centre sector is making.

We believe that arts centres can play an essential role in broadening participation in cultural activity – changing who makes art, who experiences it and who manages it.

Increasingly arts centres are playing an active role in the creation of new work, achieving artistic excellence whilst at the same time reaching a wide range of audiences in their local communities. Business models show an increasingly diverse range of income streams and strong partnerships, and diversity is embedded in our work, evident in the range of artists we support, the audiences we attract and the people we employ.

Working from this position of artistic and organisational strength, we are ambitious for growth.

Future Arts Centres

Future Arts Centres (FAC) is a partnership of nine founding partners which supports a wider network of 90+ arts centres. Future Arts Centres was established in 2013 to:

- champion the achievements of arts centres at local, regional and national level
- raise the profile of arts centres' vital contribution to the cultural civic life of our town centres and cities
- support arts centres' sustainability
- drive forward growth and innovation

The FAC partners are:



The wider FAC membership includes more than 90 arts centres from across the UK, representing small, mid and large scale centres from both urban and rural areas, from all four countries. Future Arts Centres members are linked by an active online community providing highly valued peer support as well as national events in 2014 and 2016.

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Artistic achievements

All FAC Partners have an excellent track record of commissioning high quality new work from across many artforms, and of ensuring it reaches a large and diverse audience. Some examples of work supported during 2015/16, which demonstrates our commitment to Arts Council England's Creative Case for Diversity, include:



ARC Stockton supported solo theatre-maker Daniel Bye to create *Going Viral* in association with Durham University, funded by the Wellcome Trust. A Fringe First Award winner in Edinburgh 2016, the show embarked on a 40 date UK tour, reaching audiences of c3,500. ARC also supported 154 Collective - an international, multi artform group, including performers, painters, writers, photographers, animators, dancers and musicians – to create *Under the Bed*, an adult fairytale about childhood trauma told using performance, live music, animation and film, which also toured to eight venues across the North East in September 2016 as part of ARC's strategic touring programme, REACH.



artsdepot invited HighRise to be of their first residency artists in their new Creation Space exploring youth homelessness and care leaving through a contemporary and urban interpretation of Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*. artsdepot brokered a partnership with Centrepont which will see the company co-create their show through a learning programme engaging young people with experience of homelessness resulting in a run at the Edinburgh Festival 2017. The compelling themes of this project have enabled artsdepot to secure £75,000 from an anonymous donor.

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Artistic achievements



Brewery Arts Centre worked with Battersea Arts Centre and producers Fuel Theatre to co-commission Uninvited Guests' production of *This Last Tempest*, originally part of the RSC's Shakespeare Festival at The Other Place, supported by Tobacco Factory Theatres. The production toured the UK in 2014/16. Brewery also supported *Museum of Water*, a collection of publically donated water and accompanying stories from different sites worldwide, brought together by live artist, sculptor and film-maker, Amy Sharrock. The Brewery presented the exhibition in the Old Boat House at Wray Castle, on the shores of Lake Windermere as part of the *Lakes Ignite Festival* in May 2016.



Cambridge Junction supported the inaugural Ahbab Festival, a celebration and exploration of the theme of love in Arabic music and film. Managed by local music producer Gil Karpas, Ahbab featured performances by Natacha Atlas, Tarek Abdullah & Adel Shams, Maya Yousef and screenings of *On The Banks Of The Tigris* and *El Gusto*, attracting 1,000 people over three days. Cambridge Junction also worked with Romsey Mill, a local charity which supports young people who may not be living positively within their communities to stage Rapademic, an showcase of young local hip hop/grime MC's and music makers, celebrating the work of over 50 young people.



Lincoln Drill Hall were a commissioning partner in Zest Theatre's production *Thrive*, supporting Zest as a producing company from Lincoln to develop their new show. The research was carried out in the venue with young people for a show that focused on Post Traumatic Stress and how young people responded positively to traumatic incidents. The piece was premiered at LDH and toured to three other Lincolnshire One Venues in Autumn 2015. Plans for a national tour are ongoing.



As part of *Cannon Hill Art School*, **mac** supported 72 artists from all backgrounds and levels of experience to take part in the summer school, a project developed with artist Trevor Pitt as an ongoing legacy of previous open exhibitions. The experience enabled participants to enjoy lectures from notable artists including Cornelia Parker OBE and curators Gavin Wade and Kathrin Bohm, culminating in an exhibition of the students work in mac's First Floor Gallery.

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Artistic achievements



Rich Mix jointly commissioned a new project with the Southbank Centre. *Songs of Immigrants and Experience* was a performance-based project in which a Muslim teenager tackles love, grief, mental health, and the end of the world. *Songs of Immigrants & Experience* featured a number of the artists who have benefitted from Rich Mix's artist development programme including musicians Junior Bailey, Arthur Lea and Camilo Menjura and spoken word artist Shane Solanki.



Stratford Circus co-commissioned *Chotto Desh*, Akram Khan Company's first work for young audiences, bringing the company together with Newham school children to provide feedback. For the company this international, multi and inter cultural demographic were a great sounding board to test the themes of the piece. *Chotto Desh* was shown to every Year 6 Child in Newham (4,500 children) for free in partnership with London Borough Newham. Stratford Circus also co-produced Upswing's first full work for family audiences, *Bedtime Stories*, a high quality mid-scale circus piece, using digital projection with a diverse cast, featuring a single mother and daughter as the central protagonists.



The Albany commissioned State of Emergency's *Co-Mission*, a bespoke integrated dance project with BAME disabled and non-disabled choreographers and dance-artists. Over a 12-week period the artists delivered workshops with children and families, dance students and teenagers to create a site specific dance film at the Deptford Lounge, alongside their own creation of a new work in progress dance piece presented at the Albany. Ria Hartley's *Untouchable*, also commissioned by the Albany, was developed out of extensive research, beginning with Meet Me at the Albany elders in 2014, uncovering personal family history, and connecting with therapists and domestic violence workers.

Audiences

In 2015/16, more than 2,164,000 people attended events, activities and exhibitions at FAC partner venues. When analysed against Audience Spectrum, FAC partners were engaging an average of 20% of their audiences from the four least engaged categories, compared to the average of 14% across the English regions, demonstrating how successful arts centres can be at attracting non-traditional arts attenders.

Audience Spectrum	National engagement	FAC Partners engagement
Metroculturals	13%	17%
Commuterland Culturebuffs	20%	14%
Experience Seekers	9%	12%
Dormitory Dependables	20%	19%
Trips and Treats	14%	13%
Home and Heritage	9%	5%
Up Our Street	5%	4%
Facebook Families	4%	4%
Kaleidoscope Creativity	4%	11%
Heydays	1%	1%

Over the past year, the nine FAC partners have been working in partnership with Spektrix to analyse and benchmark our audience data.

SPEKTRIX 

Key factors which have emerged from this include:

57% of our customers travel up to **5 miles** to visit us, with another **19%** travelling between **5 – 15 miles**, confirming that we are serving local audiences

The average ticket price across the nine venues is just **£8.75** compared to the national average (according to Audience Finder) of **£22.84**, demonstrating our commitment to ensuring our activity is affordable

The average donation from ticket bookers is **£2.11**

with those living closest to venues giving the most - **£2.28** for those within **1 mile** dropping to **£1.83** for those travelling more than **15 miles**, underlining successful engagement with our very local communities

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Finance and partnerships

With a combined turnover of c£21.6m, the FAC partners are thriving businesses within their communities, with an estimated economic activity valued at £44.5m. With average Arts Council investment of £343,000 per venue, and local authority investment of £153,700 per venue, we are generating an average of 79% of our turnover from earned income and fundraising activity.

Over the past three years, the combined turnover of the FAC partners has grown by 19%, demonstrating considerable growth despite a reduction in subsidy.

Our mixed income models help maintain our financial resilience, and depend on strong, mutually beneficial partnerships forged with a wide range of organisations. Examples of these include:



ARC Stockton's partnership with Stockton & Hartlepool Clinical Commissioning Group and Stockton Borough Council's Public Health has led to an investment of more than £200,000 to date in creative arts activity (both on and off site) for older people at risk of hospital admission or social isolation



artsdepot secured investment from the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts for a significant research project exploring barriers to the arts faced by older people. This led to the launch of a new activity programme which now includes bi-monthly multi art form workshops, weekly dance workshops for the over 60s, and a matinee lunch club targeting socially isolated older people – at a time when the local authority has ended its meals delivery service.



Brewery Arts Centre is the lead organisation for Lakes Culture, a consortium including Cumbria's destination management organisation, Cumbria Tourism, South Lakeland District Council, the Lake District National Park Authority, National Trust, Forestry Commission and arts organisations, seeking to establish the Lakes as the UK's leading rural cultural tourism destination.



Cambridge Junction work in partnership with Creative & Cultural Skills to deliver apprenticeships. Apprentices are taught in a working arts venue by industry specialists and learn the skills needed to become arts professionals. A highlight of 2015/16 was the operations, technical and administration apprentices combining their talents and to lead Junkyard, a professional music festival-in-a-day.

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Lincoln Drill Hall are part of Lincolnshire One Venues, a consortium of 11 performing and visual arts venues. With over £600k invested in the partnership's work for children and young people since 2012 by Paul Hamlyn and Esmée Fairbairn foundations, each venue now has a young programmers/producers group seeking to develop work for their peers and embed the views of young people into the running of venues.



mac birmingham's strategic partnership with Youth Music led to mac makes music, a programme offering experimental music making opportunities for children and young people in challenging circumstances across the West Midlands at mac and off-site with pupil referral units, hospital and special schools. The project has spawned an in-house band – Switch, made up of young people with varying abilities who regularly meet at mac, writing their own music and performing at events.



Rich Mix has worked in partnership with two key private sectors organisations, British Land and the Broadgate Estate on a series of schools projects, entitled Drama in the Mix. The three organisations have identified the need to provide a creative education programme aimed at primary and secondary schools across Tower Hamlets, using drama as the basis to explore a wider range of ideas and subjects which are relevant to East London.



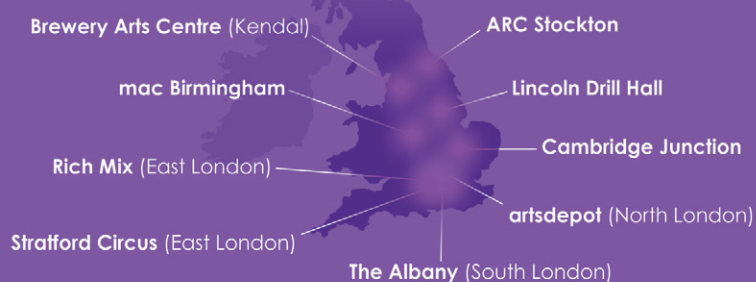
Stratford Circus is a lead partner of the East London Cultural Education Partnership and the three year pilot project, Creative Schools. This partnership of 30+ cultural organisations is addressing the lack of consistency in provision of cultural education across east London schools. Stratford Circus is leading on the schools programme, helping to connect cultural organisations with young people through a focus on school improvement.



The Albany is in the second year of a partnership with Lewisham Homes, who provide housing services to 18,000 households. The partnership, worth over £150K a year, enables the Albany to increase its engagement activities across the borough, together creating new opportunities for young people, older people and families, and supporting the development of thriving neighbourhoods in Lewisham.

FUTURE ARTSCENTRES

Future Arts Centres
is a partnership of nine leading arts centres:



Public investment:



Tax paid **£2.57m**

Economic impact:

Economic
activity



Average % of
earned income



Number of staff
employed



Number of days
employment for artists



No of businesses and
community groups
supported



Cultural impact

Audiences



Children &
young people



Number of events

